

**Tompkins County Council of Governments**  
 Regular Meeting Minutes - APPROVED  
**Thursday, August 28, 2014 3:00 PM**  
 Scott Heyman Conference Room

**Attendance**

<b>Attendee Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Status</b>
Michael Lane	Member, Tompkins County	Present
Herb Engman	Member - Town of Ithaca	Present
Elizabeth Thomas	Member - Town of Ulysses	Present
Laura Shawley	Member - Alternate, Town of Danby	Present
Mary Ann Sumner	Member, Town of Dryden	Present
Irene Weiser	Member - Alternate, Town of Caroline	Present
Ann Rider	Co-Chair, Town of Enfield	Present
Kelly Smith	Member, Town of Groton	Present
Ruth Hopkins	Alternate, Town of Lansing	Present
Joe Mareane	Tompkins County Administrator	Present
Scott Doyle	Planner, Tompkins County Planning Department	Present
Amie Hendrix	Director of Youth Services	Present
Michelle Pottorff	Minute Taker, Legislature Office	Present
Beth Harrington	Department of Emergency Response	Present
Lee Shurtleff	Director, Department of Emergency Response	Present
Jon Negley	Soil and Water Conservation District	Present
Angel Hinickle	Soil and Water Conservation District	Present
Marcia Lynch	Public Info. Officer, County Administration	Present
Don Barber	Alternate, Town of Caroline	Present

Municipalities Not Present: Villages of Cayuga Heights, Dryden, Lansing, Groton, Freeville, Trumansburg; Town of Newfield; and the City of Ithaca

Guests: Brian Eden, Water Resources Council; Keri Blakinger, News Media; Gary Stewart and Joel Malina, Cornell University Relations

**Call to Order**

Ms. Rider, Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

**Greeting/Sign In/Review Agenda**

There were no changes to the agenda.

**Update from Cornell University Relations (Ithaca/Albany/Washington) and Q&A (ID # 4991)**

Joel Malina introduced himself as the newly appointed Vice President of Cornell University Community Relations. He reviewed the history of the Department and said he views it as how the University engages with all sorts of constituencies and he wants to make sure there is consistency and continuity in how they are speaking with local officials, non-profits, and members of the media when speaking about Cornell. He said he wants to make sure the work they are doing is in line with how stakeholders are staying abreast of the issues. He spoke about government and community relations and said there are a lot of issues where there should be collaboration and in many times it involves how Albany is being engaged.

Mr. Malina said Cornell has an office in Washington, D.C. and in Albany and there are very talented lobbyists in both places. He extended an offer that if members are traveling to Albany and need a

place to take a break or would like to strategize about an issue to let him know. He said Cornell's success is very much tied to the success of the entire Tompkins County community so there is a lot of value to be found in investing the time to work together on issues.

Mr. Stewart said if there are any issues at the State level that TCCOG feels Cornell could help with members should contact he or Mr. Malina and they would be glad to explore ways to help.

Mr. Lane thanked Mr. Malina and Mr. Stewart for helping the community have a voice in the selection process for the next Cornell University President. He said the County Legislature is very grateful for being given the opportunity to communicate those things that the County believes has worked well during President Skorton's service and to also convey other suggestions.

Mr. Malina announced a year-long celebration is about to begin of Cornell's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary and a lot of the activities that will be part of that celebration are very much structured for the inclusion of the surrounding communities. There is a website 150.cornell.edu that will be launched in mid-September and will provide information on the schedule of activities.

In the next three to four weeks there will be an update released to the 2009 study on the economic impact of Cornell on the County, region, and entire State of New York that will be based on 2013 numbers. It will establish a good baseline to ensure that future efforts can build on the impact they are having today to make sure things are moving in a forward and progressive manner.

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### **Report on Storm Water Management**

Scott Doyle said the Hazard Mitigation Plan and all but one town and two villages in the County have adopted a plan. He was impressed that municipalities that were part of it were interested in hearing regular updates on climate information and how that related to hazard impacts and stated he is committed to seeing there is a mechanism to do that. One of the indicators that came out of the Climate Report was that there is a likelihood that the more intense storm events throughout the year are going to continue.

Mr. Doyle said the New York State Climate Air Water Resource Institute has also more recently noted the likelihood of what is considered sub-daily precipitation events (heavy rain event in a particularly short time). There are storm water issues because there is not absorption capabilities and it results in a lot of damage in a short amount of time. He said there needs to continually be improvement in how municipalities work with storm water collectively. He stated this is a watershed-based issue and not something that stops at a municipal boundary line. He and Mr. Negley provided a couple of examples throughout the Watershed and said he hopes the discussion will continue.

Mr. Negley also spoke of the more intense rain events and said the Department of Environmental Conservation is revising its Stormwater Manual and the 110-year storm event is going from five inches in a 24-hour period to eight inches in a 24-hour period. This will require eight inches of storm water volume to be captured now. There are storm water development laws currently on the books; they also work with the ag community and are revamping the strategic plan for that program and will be taking into account these more intense storm events.

Mr. Doyle said there will be a need for identifying more opportunities in the upper watershed to detain water for flood mitigation and water quality. Mr. Negley said there are targeted funding opportunities available to help municipalities.

Mr. Doyle said one area he is encouraged about is the updating of flood maps. After talking to the Department of Environmental Conservation about the needs and concern areas for the update of flood maps, he believes this will be done although it will take some time.

Mr. Negley said in the short-term there are large flooding events and something needs to be done to clean out culverts and maintain the infrastructure. Statewide there has been an initiative of emergency stream intervention that was championed by Delaware County and is being spread across the Susquehanna and is now going Statewide. The program can be brought to Tompkins County if there is interest in being able to get in there and appropriately size the stream so that it can pass the flow and sediment at the same time.

Mr. Negley spoke of working with local partners including Sharon Anderson from Cooperative Extension, the Storm Water Coalition, advisory boards, and the Highway Superintendents.

Mr. Barber referred to comments made about retention early on in the upper parts of the watershed and said it will have to happen at the private property level and not at municipal levels. Many municipalities have storm water erosion control local laws but they only talk about retention other than retaining topsoil. He said as information is developed it can be shared with local governments as they look at their laws and what can happen. As more of the events happen as they have in the Town of Caroline there will be a higher demand from property owners to use the public infrastructure to fix their property and there needs to be a lot of education. Secondly, there are things that local governments can do to be proactive about and he supports bringing the highway superintendents onboard early in the process.

Mr. Doyle agreed that retention of private property and sharing of easement and maintenance agreements are important.

Mr. Lane said he has always felt there should be a sediment collection area upstream and said if it would hold back some of the water and could be a place that dropped some of the sediment before it got to the Lake. This would allot it to be got cleaned out and it would solve some of the issues at the south end. It may also help with problems related to invasive species.

Following a statement about the importance of educating elected officials Ms. Hinickle offered to speak to any municipal board and provide education. The Storm Water Coalition is also a great resource for property owners.

### **Emergency Response and Appointment of TCCOG Representative to Emergency Planning Committee**

Mr. Shurtleff reviewed the four principles of emergency planning: Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. There are systems and plans that already exist that municipalities are a part of; there are six elements of creating a local plan where municipalities can concentrate activities.

- All municipalities are part of the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan and an ongoing participation enables municipalities to be eligible for grant funding.
- One key element of an emergency preparedness plan is having a line of succession. Mr. Shurtleff said municipalities should pass a resolution that tells who the line of succession is and it should go three to four individuals deep.
- In order for a municipality to be able to get hazard mitigation or planning funds they must be in compliance with NIMS (National Incident Management System) and should adopt a resolution that states it will operate under that structure.
- Local planning and coordination - it is always good to know who the key players are in communities and adjoining communities.
- There are opportunities for training for elected officials and supervisory level employees. Mr. Shurtleff recommended the ICAS 100 course that is also available online in addition

to in-person and there are progressive levels of training following that. There is also FEMA ID, Tier III training that is geared to local government officials and executives (they are working on bringing to Tompkins County in September that can be tailored to local needs). Mr. Shurtleff will provide information to members as it becomes available.

- Continuity of Operations Plan - taking inventory of what already exists such facilities, buildings, equipment, phones and computer, services, and records. How are they secured and how can they get up and running in the event of a long-term problem, and how can a municipality function in the absence of those things.
- One of the most important things they ask from municipalities is situational information because they need to know what is going on. Fire chiefs and highway superintendents do a great job communicating but information from public officials is very important.
- Recovery - when a storm is over damage assessments need to be done very rapidly and information needs to be provided to the State. If there is damage to culverts and roads washed away this factors into whether a State declaration is granted. Tompkins County has a threshold of approximately \$360,000 collectively. To get a federal declaration \$24 million is the threshold. Sometimes working with other municipalities can help to meet thresholds.
- The definition of an emergency is when the events are beyond what the local resources can provide.
- What triggers an emergency - life safety issues (fatalities, MCI potential), property endangered (large scale, critical facilities), extraordinary efforts required (immediate or long-term evacuation possibility, executive orders), unmet needs (resources beyond those immediately available); Public information (increasing importance)

Mr. Shurtleff encouraged all municipalities to revisit emergency plans, develop relationships with responders, build basic frameworks, be a part of the Hazard Mitigation Plan, and take a look at training needs.

Ms. Weiser said it would be helpful if municipalities could be provided with models or samples of existing agreements, contracts, and policies and procedures that have been adopted and are being used by other municipalities.

Mrs. Shawley said the Town of Danby has put together a kit that contains the forms that are needed in the event of an emergency and are based on training they have received from the Department of Emergency Response.

The following is a vote result on the motion to Reappoint Ric Dietrich to the County's Emergency Planning Committee:

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Herb Engman, Member - Town of Ithaca
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Elizabeth Thomas, Member - Town of Ulysses
<b>AYES:</b>	Lane, Engman, Thomas, Shawley, Sumner, Weiser, Rider, Smith, Hopkins

**Update on Municipal System and Recreation Partnership (ID # 4990)**

Ms. Hendrix distributed copies of the 2013 Annual Report for the Tompkins County Youth Services Department and stated there are four tiers of what they take on: administration, grant

management, community outreach, data collection and quality management, and technical assistance and training. She reviewed the tiers of service that the Department provides and said recreation is the universal prevention model. She said as you move up in the tiers the services become more costly and the concept is that few youth will be served as you move up the tier. The tiers move from recreation to early intervention and youth development model to targeted intervention and then to treatment and residential placement.

Ms. Hendrix said there were 7,663 youth served in 2013 with the different funding streams through resources provided by the Tompkins County Youth Services Department which are paired up with municipal resources through the Recreation Partnership programming, youth development programming, and other resources. She provided a breakdown of the number of youth services provided by the various tiers.

She reported on challenges facing the Youth Services Department:

- Stabilization of planning and coordination support;
- Reduction of grant programming and services;
- Increasing need of technical assistance by municipalities;
- Increasing needs for quality training of youth workers; and
- Reduction of municipal and agency resources for youth services

Ms. Hendrix reported they currently have a grant that supports some staffing and the Youth Development Survey that all students in the Tompkins County school districts as well as Candor and South Seneca, take the survey on a biannual basis that looks at current trends and what is happening. This grant focuses on many other things including underage use of alcohol and other substances, and funds some staffing in the Department's infrastructure, and will be ending this year. She said it was known for years that this was coming and they have been trying to plan but it does represent a \$200,000 loss in funding. An over target request was requested in the Department's 2015 budget for a 10% increase in the municipal youth services system that is hoped to provide some sustainability and will allow for some technical assistance to those municipalities.

She reported they are taking a look at the quality of services the Department provides and will be providing some training services as well as starting to provide some assessments to ensure that the programs are doing what they are intended to do.

Areas of growth for the Youth Services Department:

- Support of Results Based Accountability to measure the collaborative impact of youth work;
- Validated assessments to ensure quality programming for youth;
- Further collaborations for youth employment by public and private partners; and
- Renewed support of municipal youth programming.

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### **Update from Shared Services Workgroup**

Mr. Mareane provided an updated on the TCCOG Supervisory training program that has been worked on during the last six months and said the first class is full with 25 participants from around the County and plans are underway to begin setting up the second semester class. He is hopeful this will go well and looks forward to hearing the feedback once it is complete.

He reported the Shared Services subcommittee met yesterday and continues to look at the four focus areas: highway, public safety, court system, and central administrative services. Mr. Mareane provided a brief overview of the resolution and said the look-back period is extremely restrictive and what is believed the law allows and what the State Legislature intended. The resolution is a template for all municipalities to adopt and requests the look back period be pushed back. Senator Seward has requested that in the resolution that the look-back period be moved to 2008. The Health Consortium saved 1.2% of the combined tax levies of the participating municipalities and if the State keeps the look-back period at 2012 the Health Consortium would not be acknowledged.

Mr. Lane said he was troubled by the resolution including a date and suggested including a date of 2008 as recommended by Senator Seward. There was not interest in placing a date in the resolution. Mr. Engman noted that individual municipalities could put a date in if they chose to.

**Resolution (ID # 5063): URGING STATE LEADERSHIP TO RESCIND LOOK-BACK PERIOD ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPERTY TAX FREEZE LEGISLATION (ID #5063)**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Mary Ann Sumner, Member, Town of Dryden
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Irene Weiser, Member - Alternate, Town of Caroline
<b>AYES:</b>	Lane, Engman, Thomas, Shawley, Sumner, Weiser, Rider, Smith, Hopkins

WHEREAS, the New York State Legislature and Governor have adopted a voluntary program with financial rewards for constituents if local governments can adopt 2015 budgets within the limits of the Property Tax Cap law and further rewards if by June 15, 2015 those same local governments can reduce property tax levy by 1%, and

WHEREAS, the intent of this law was to induce consolidation and collaboration of services and government entities, and

WHEREAS, Tompkins County and its local governments have been looking for ways to reduce property tax burden for years and have adopted the following protocols: County-wide Assessment, Article 47 Health Insurance, Water, Sewer, Community College, Energy procurement, Highway operations, Records management, and Youth programming and recreation to name just a few, and

WHEREAS, the New York State Legislation creating this “Property Tax Freeze” program did not specify a limit of what could be used to show consolidation or collaboration that resulted in lower tax levy, but subsequent release from the New York State Office of Taxation and Finance puts a limit on what can be considered to a point in time of January 1, 2012, and

WHEREAS, any look back limit has a perverse irony in that the homeowners in those jurisdictions where local governments adopted the innovations years ago will receive nothing, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Tompkins County Council of Governments urges our New York State Senators and Assemblywoman to make this situation aware to their leadership,

RESOLVED, further, That the Tompkins County Council of Governments urges our State Senators and Assemblywoman to draft legislation and communicate it to their leadership that would rescind this look-back period time limit and any other limits on actions local governments have made to reduce the property tax burden on their constituents and use their good offices to have this legislation

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adopted well in advance of June 1, 2015.

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**Report on Gas Drilling (ID # 5015)**

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

**Report from Cable Committee**

Mr. Engman had no report.

**Minutes Approval**

**7/24/2014 Minutes**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Mary Ann Sumner, Member, Town of Dryden
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Irene Weiser, Member - Alternate, Town of Caroline
<b>AYES:</b>	Lane, Engman, Thomas, Shawley, Sumner, Weiser, Rider, Smith, Hopkins

**Next Meeting Agenda Items**

The following items were suggested for the next meeting:

- Report on Gas Drilling (Don Barber)
- Shared Services Update (Joe Mareane)
- A report on the Home Energy Rating and Disclosure Project (Irene Weiser)
- An update from the Health Consortium (Don Barber)

Ms. Sumner suggested the new Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce be invited.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.