

Tompkins County Council of Governments
 Regular Meeting Minutes – Approved 9/28/2017
 Thursday, July 27, 2017 3:00 PM
 Scott Heyman Conference Room

Attendance

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Elizabeth Thomas	Member/Town of Ulysses	Present	
Betty Conger	Member, Village of Groton	Present	
Irene Weiser	Co-Chair/Town of Caroline	Present	
Bill Goodman	Co-Chair, Town of Ithaca	Present	
Donald Hartill	Member, Village of Lansing	Present	
Ann Rider	Member, Town of Enfield	Present	3:19 PM
Ric Dietrich	Member, Town of Danby	Present	
Mark Witmer	Alternate - Town of Caroline	Present	
Linda Woodard	Member, Village of Cayuga Heights	Present	
Joe Mareane	County Administrator	Present	
Marcia Lynch	Public Info. Officer, County Administration	Present	
Michelle Pottorff	Legislature Office	Present	

Guests: Joe Wilson; Brian Eden, Bill Evans, EMC; Nick Goldsmith, Sustainability Coordinator for the City of Ithaca; Michael Thorne, City of Ithaca Superintendent of Public Works; Kate Supron, Cornell University; Terry Carroll, Cooperative Extension Coordinator Clean Energy Communities

Call to Order

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

Greeting/Sign In/Review Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

Minutes Approval

June 22, 2017

RESULT:	DEFERRED
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Announcement - Energy Expo

Ms. Weiser said there has been discussion for several months about putting together an energy expo that would be a gathering at some time in 2018 to draw in people from across the County and beyond to learn about different kinds of energy technologies as well as do-it-yourself kinds of projects. The intent is for the event to be interactive and engaging and to address people's abilities at all financial levels to find things they can do to conserve energy and change their energy use. They will be seeking TCCOG's support of the funding application but do not plan to request funding from TCCOG. She will keep members updated as planning proceeds.

County Administration

Shared Services Update

Mr. Mareane provided an update on the work of the Shared Services Panel. The group met five times and was time well-spent and value in everyone coming together. On July 19th six elements of a plan were approved:

- Training Academy;
- Creation of a Service Modernization Plan to store and manage municipal records and automate a multitude of routine paper-intensive tasks;
- Purchasing pool to facilitate the lowest-cost acquisition of financial software;
- Countywide mass notification system to alert residents to matters of urgent importance;
- Purchasing pool to facilitate the conversion of street lights to high-efficiency LED fixtures;
- Expansion of the Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium. This has the highest dollar impact but is also the least likely to be accepted by New York State. He said every time a new municipality joins it is essentially a new Consortium because a lot of things need to be done and it is a new Consortium. He said the State does not see this as a new reoccurring property tax savings but whenever the State can be reminded that the County did the right thing years ago it should do that.

- Recommended Areas for Additional In-Depth Review:
 - Back-office administrative services;
 - Code Enforcement; and
 - Fleet Maintenance

Mr. Mareane said two public hearings were held and two members of the public attended. Bargaining units were invited to participate and did. The six elements of the Plan are now being presented to the County Legislature. They will make recommendations that will come back to the Panel for final consideration and a vote before September 13th.

Mr. Dietrich commended Mr. Mareane for his work in bringing the Panel together quickly and for doing a thorough job.

Streetlight conversion (ID #7179)

Ms. Thomas said the idea began in the Energy Task Force after a presentation by the New York Power Authority that was followed up by a meeting with Dan Cogan and Michael Thorne in the City of Ithaca who were very interested in moving forward and in a way that would not burden municipalities.

Mr. Carroll distributed a streetlight conversion information sheet that outlined reasons to switch streetlights to LED. Those reasons include: reduce cost; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; maintenance costs are 20-25% less expensive; the failure rate for HPS streetlights is around 18% annually; and it allows for greater control over lighting choices within a municipality.

Other points Mr. Carroll noted included:

- Switch through the utility is currently unavailable in the NYSEG region;
- Municipalities must consider buyback of streetlights from utility company and

- conduct the switch to LEDs internally or through a contract service with consideration to on-going maintenance for lights and pole-rental fees;
- Payback period is five to ten years;
- Interested municipalities should contact Tad Palmer at NYSEG at 607-347-2707 to request NYSEG to prepare a proposal for the sale of NYSEG streetlight facilities to the town or village. There is no deadline to make this request; however, the request triggers a 90-day deadline with other deadline triggers set throughout the process. He said the entire period from beginning to end can take up to 15 months.

Mr. Thorne reported on a conversation he had with NYSEG yesterday and stated the timeframe Mr. Carroll referenced was given to him as well. He encouraged municipalities to make the request as there is no cost to do so. He said the City of Ithaca currently pays approximately \$340,000 annually to NYSEG for maintenance and electricity. The estimate NYSEG provided that the City would save on the maintenance each year was \$175,000; the City estimated it could provide maintenance for \$25,000 annually and would save \$150,000 each year just by owning the streetlights. It was learned that once a municipality owns the streetlights it is required within 24 months to provide a fused disconnect so that it will not impact NYSEG's system. He said the City is trying to plan in a way that will allow everything to be done at the same time. The City is still gathering information, including having a GIS inventory of all sites. Mr. Thorne noted that once a request for a price from NYSEG is made the information is supposed to be confidential as prices are determined by different factors through a negotiation process. The projected savings to the City of Ithaca is approximately \$140 per light per year (5-year payback). He said the City will be making the request of NYSEG no later than October 1st with the intent to own its 1,800 streetlights by January 2019 with work to begin shortly thereafter.

At Ms. Weiser's request Mr. Carroll will provide information on determining whether particular streetlights. It will also include information on what has been done in other places if they are not needed and what, if any, requirements exist to have a streetlight at a particular intersection. Mr. Thorne said by bringing a number of municipalities together there could be additional savings in some of the shared costs and opportunities for the City to provide maintenance.

Mr. Eden provided an updated document from the Environmental Management Council (EMC) entitled "Important Recommendations for Indoor and Outdoor Lighting". He said the EMC is fully supportive of this but noted that not all LEDs are made equally and have different environmental impacts and cost efficiencies. The EMC would like people to make full consideration of all the elements of the decision to ensure the best choice is made for the community.

RESULT:	COMPLETED
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Discussion of EMS Presentation at Last Meeting and Next Steps

Ms. Weiser said at the last meeting members received a very important presentation by Lee Shurtleff, Director of Emergency Response, which he stated the current medical service system is collapsing. It is a very serious concern and warning and municipalities have to be proactive in responding. There are already problems being seen in response and there could be situations where a local community is not able to respond to a situation. She noted Bangs Ambulance has a Certificate of Need to cover the entire County, however, this could result in a very long waiting time for those living a long distance from the City.

Ms. Weiser distributed and reviewed the following document

Strategies for enhanced EMS Service and Response

1. Increase capacity
 - a. Increase volunteer recruitment - Worthy but NOT SUSTAINABLE
 - i. Colleges, BOCES
 - ii. General marketing/outreach efforts
 - b. Increase retention -worthy but NOT SUSTAINABLE
 - i. Dept leadership and culture
 - ii. Training - ongoing training, quick recertification, online
 - iii. Dept of Health leadership/engagement w volunteers
 - c. Increase paid staff/ enhance career opportunities
 - i. Cross train town staff?
2. Decrease call volume
 - a. Coordinated care - DSRIP, paramedicine, other community based solutions
 - b. How to address frequent users, non-emergency uses
 - c. Key populations - elderly, substance abuse, mental health
3. Assess Program Effectiveness = CIPA, Systems Eng., business students
 - a. Evaluate program effectiveness
 - b. Operations and systems modeling, program optimization and efficiency
 - i. Distribution of resources, ALS, BLS, fly cars, paid, volunteer
 - ii. Financial efficiencies
4. Review Successful Programs/County-wide Certificate of Need
 - a. Mentioned by Mark Butler - Albany, Erie, Livingston Co.
 - b. Sydney?
 - c. Explore for others...
5. Ongoing oversight and coordination
 - a. Include multiple stakeholders
 - b. Develop shared vision
 - c. Data collection/management
 - d. Ongoing evaluation, response, improvement

Ms. Weiser said although the need might not appear as dire as emergency services, the same problem is happening with fire services. It is especially being felt at the Dispatch Center with staffing to activate many more departments to get coverage at any fire incident. She said it is possible as the Task Force continues its work that there will be an expansion to thinking about fire service along with EMS service.

She said they hope to have some preliminary recommendations and provided a draft resolution she would like members to consider taking back to their municipal boards to support planning for the recommendations. She noted the resolution commits to set money aside in the 2018 budget and would not be spent until the Task Force provides more information. The resolution is as follows:

RESOLUTION TO BUDGET FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TO ASSIST WITH EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES PLANNING IN 2018

Whereas, the Tompkins County Council of Governments Emergency Medical Services Task Force (TCCOG EMS-TF) has identified that the current system of providing emergency medical response and transport is stressed - with declining numbers of volunteer and paid responders, and Lee Shurtleff, the Director of the Department of Emergency Response has warned that the system could “collapse” without intervention; and

Whereas, timely, competent, affordable emergency medical and transport services are critical and necessary public services; and

Whereas, the TCCOG EMS-TF will be working for the next several months to identify possible solutions to stabilize provision of EMS services and anticipates having preliminary recommendations by March 2018; and

Whereas, it is anticipated that the EMS-TF may require professional services to assist in refining and guiding implementation of proposed remedies; and

Whereas, at this point the EMS-TF is unable to provide specific information as to scope of work or expertise required, but the EMS-TF and the Town of _____ believes it is prudent to be financially prepared to engage such services as may be indicated so that the crucial work of the EMS-TF can continue uninterrupted;

NOW therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town of _____ will provide \$5000 in their 2018 budget to support professional services to assist with planning and/or implementation of EMS-TF recommendations; and further be it

RESOLVED, that the commitment to spend some or all of these funds will be contingent upon presentation by the EMS-TF of preliminary recommendations to stabilize provision of EMS services as well as a description of the professional services, qualifications and scope of work to be provided by the expert, and approval of the Town of _____ to support such proposed work.

Mr. Dietrich suggested getting input from fire commissioners. A sentiment was expressed by some members that while the amount may not represent a large financial burden to some municipalities, it represents a very large amount for others. It was stated this is not a mandated service; however, a question was raised as to whether fire service is. Ms. Weiser addressed comments about the amount being disproportionate among municipalities and stated the Task Force discussed this and felt the towns that have more populous and services are providing a lot of mutual aid to the smaller towns who don't have the capacity to provide services directly and therefore the amount should be distributed equally.

Ms. Thomas said she would like to see information showing what percentage of other municipality's levy is for fire and if EMS if they have it.

This item was deferred to the next meeting due to the concerns. Ms. Weiser asked for feedback ahead of that meeting.

Update on Broadband

Ms. Weiser said Charter Communications is going to be building out over the next five years. They have already been fined by the State for being behind schedule in getting broadband services accessible in the places they were supposed to.

Discussion of Reserve Fund and Structure of Meetings

TCCOG Bylaws (reference information for Reserve Fund discussion) (ID #7100)

Mr. Goodman said bylaws include a reference to the Reserve Fund and information provided show an available balance of \$3,738. He asked if members wished to continue collecting funds or if there were ideas for its use. Ms. Thomas said the original purpose was to have funds to help with costs associated with gas drilling. There are other funds that were set aside for specific purposes such as cable and the cell tower study. Ms. Thomas suggested using some of the available funds to pay for expenses related to EMS or other shared services work that is being done. There was discussion of whether municipalities should be requested to contribute \$250 in 2018; the last time municipalities contributed was in 2012. There was not a strong interest in pursuing a request to municipalities to contribute in 2018 to the Reserve Fund. The Fund will remain as is with the bylaws outlining how an appropriation from the Fund can be requested. Mr. Hartill will look into the reserved cable funds that were contributed in 2013.

Discussion of the structure of TCCOG meetings was deferred to the next meeting.

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Report from Subcommittees

Emergency Services Task Force

Ms. Weiser reported earlier in the meeting.

Sustainability Committee: Community Choice Aggregaton Work Group and Energy Task Force Energy Task Force

Ms. Thomas reported the Task Force will meet after this meeting.

Community Choice Aggregation

Ms. Weiser reported the Committee learned many years ago Cayuga County through a public referendum gave themselves municipal authority to be a public utility. Through this they gave themselves the authority to purchase energy or to manage the grid on behalf of their residents. They have found that it is very complicated and haven't moved forward; however, Bud Shattuck who is now the Mayor in Union Springs has secured funds and is looking at how to move it forward. Ms. Weiser said there are discussions taking place on how to piggyback off of this and it seems like Tompkins County would have to look into also becoming a public utility and State legislation may be needed to allow this to happen. She is unclear whether Cayuga County has done this and has asked her town attorney to look into it. The Subcommittee will meet tomorrow at noon.

Transit Services Committee

There was no report.

Cable Committee

There was no report.

Next Meeting Agenda Items

The following items were suggested for inclusion on the next agenda:

Minutes
Tompkins County Council of Governments
Thursday, July 27, 2017

Structure of Meetings;
Approval of June 22, 2017 meeting;
Sharing information/communication with the public on the Cayuga Lake Blue Algae Bloom;
Presentation by the Cayuga Lake Watershed on what municipalities can do to protect Cayuga Lake
(Mr. Dietrich and TeeAnn Hunter); and
Continued discussion of EMS Task Force resolution request

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.