

Tompkins County Council of Governments
 Regular Meeting Minutes – Approved 9/28/2017
 Thursday, August 24, 2017 3:00 PM
 Scott Heyman Conference Room

Attendance

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Michael Lane	Member, Tompkins County	Present
Elizabeth Thomas	Member/Town of Ulysses	Present
Irene Weiser	Co-Chair/Town of Caroline	Present
Bill Goodman	Co-Chair, Town of Ithaca	Present
Ric Dietrich	Member, Town of Danby	Present
Kelly Smith	Member, Town of Groton	Present
Linda Woodard	Member, Village of Cayuga Heights	Present
Donna Fleming	Vice Chair, City of Ithaca	Present
Mark Witmer	Alternate - Town of Caroline	Present
Joe Mareane	County Administrator	Present
Marcia Lynch	Public Info. Officer, County Administration	Present
Michelle Pottorff	Legislature Office	Present

Guests: C.J. Randall, Town of Danby; T. Hunter, Cayuga Lake Watershed Intermunicipal Organization; K. Supron, C. Maxian, Cornell University

Call to Order

Ms. Weiser, Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m.

Presentation Cayuga Lake Watershed

Mr. Dietrich said information being presented is the result of efforts that have been taking place for a long time by numerous people to address issues and the rationale behind a proposal to address problems related to Cayuga Lake. Tee Ann Hunter, a member of the Ithaca Town Board and Chair of the Cayuga Lake Watershed Intermunicipal Organization, said an update was recently completed of the Cayuga Lake Watershed Plan and a copy has been submitted to all municipalities and it is available on the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network's website (<http://www.cayugalake.org/>). She said the Restoration and Protection Plan Update was completed in the Spring and at the same time the IO applied for a Department of State planning grant to hire the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board to take the recommendations in the Plan and move them along toward implementable projects.

Ms. Hunter explained parts of the update process included an outreach effort to all 45 of the municipalities within the Watershed asking for project ideas. Through that process it became apparent that as a group of Watershed communities there needed to be help in visioning projects, finding project partners, figuring out match, and preparing funding applications. She said the purpose of this presentation is to see if a small Tompkins County group can be formed to start looking at project ideas. Ms. Hunter said they have the draft contract for the next grant that is a three-year project and work could begin soon.

Ms. Hunter introduced C.J. Randall and said she and Mr. Dietrich approached her expressing concern for the Lake and shared a project they have been working on that is the sort of project that should be given thought to and is outlined in the presentation. Ms. Randall, Town of Danby Planner, said she was approached by Town of Danby Supervisor Dietrich about issues the highway department was having

with streambank stabilization and road deterioration issues and impacts related to flooding. She presented members with a presentation on the Cayuga Lake Watershed Restoration and Protection Plan; text from the presentation is below and the full presentation is attached to the outline on the meeting portal.

Why?

- Work Plan for Cayuga Lake Watershed Restoration & Protection Plan (RPP) underway
- Harmful Algae Blooms (HABs)
- TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) - weeds, algal growth, high turbidity impair recreational uses
- 660,000+ cubic yards of sediment to dredge
- Progress on Cayuga Lake Model
- 2016-2018 WRC Water Quality Strategy Priority Action Items
- 2016 Cayuga Inlet Sediment Management Plan
- Stormwater pricing
- Significant Cayuga Inlet streambank sites located in non-MS4 communities / limited planning capacity

Implementation of Cayuga Lake Watershed

- Restoration and Protection Plan coordination, collaboration, and partnerships
- Address Group 1 Priorities for Restoration: Severe local impact + severe lake impact = more than 900 tons / year sediment
- Funding from County Stream Corridor Restoration to conduct feasibility study

Alarming findings

- Annual sediment load of **2,000 tons per year**, equivalent to a commercial dump truck backing up with a full load of silt/sediment into Cayuga Inlet **every other day**

Related concerns

- \$580,000 project to stabilize stream and adjacent road embankment
- Coordinating with County Highway, County Soil & Water Conservation District - Water Quality Improvement Program (WQIP) applications
- How to work with City of Ithaca and Town of Newfield to address low-hanging fruit of stanching sediment loss right where it starts

Mr. Dietrich suggested looking at things that would be implementable and focusing on one aspect. He would like to see a group formed that represents all of the stakeholders to come up with recommendations and to accumulate enough data to apply for an engineering study to compliment what has already been put together, verify what needs to be done, and leverage funds for implementation. He doesn't expect this would cover everyone's concerns but one that makes sense for everyone, including highway departments, and one that could bring everyone on-board.

Ms. Thomas said there was an algae bloom that affected the Lake in July and although it is cleared up now there needs to be a comprehensive look at what causes these harmful algae blooms and how to address the problem. She spoke of nutrients coming into the Lake and noted that agriculture is a big concern but there are others that need to also be looked at. She suggested reaching out to State officials for assistance.

Mr. Lane said he has thought for a long time that there needs to be a settling pond upstream on the Inlet and said he thinks if that pond were cleaned out every few years the annual deposit into the Lake could be stopped. He asked if contact has been made with the National Soil and Conservation Service that provided funding several years ago for the Town of Dryden Dam.

Ms. Supron offered resources for additional data and can make contact with representatives in Albany and provide information to the Council.

Ms. Weiser asked for clarification as to what TCCOG is being asked to do beyond what is already being done by the Water Resources Council and the Stormwater Coalition. Ms. Thomas suggested holding a summit where groups could come together to talk about the problems, prioritize them, and come up with a plan to move forward.

Ms. Hunter said Tompkins County is only one of the six involved counties but it is time to come up with a plan to start doing some work and this will require intermunicipal cooperation between Tompkins County municipalities. She said a flow chart needs to be developed showing what everyone is doing and stressed that in order to access funds there needs to be a plan developed that identifies doable projects that are ready by May 2018. She said she would like to have representatives from Tompkins County municipalities, the Soil and Water Conservation District, City of Ithaca, and the Tompkins County Planning Department part of this.

Ms. Thomas suggested TCCOG make a request to various entities to actively participate in the Intermunicipal Organization over the next six months. Mr. Dietrich said he is asking to replicate what the Town of Danby has done and would like to see a group formed that would report back on a regular basis to TCCOG.

Mr. Goodman said because of the issues around sedimentation and ditching involved, TCCOG may need to think about a way to get highway and public works personnel involved.

Ms. Weiser suggested those who want to work on this to contact Ms. Randall at cjrandall@townofdanby.org and asked that those municipalities that are an MS4 and have representation on the Stormwater Resource Council to work with their representatives and to also bring in those municipalities that are no an MS4. Mr. Mareane will reach out to the Tompkins County Planning Department to engage them in this.

Resolution No. - Cayuga Lake Watershed RestorationCayuga Lake Watershed Restoration (ID #7313)

RESULT:	PRESENTED
----------------	------------------

* * * * *

County Administration

Shared Services Update

Mr. Mareane reported the Tompkins County Legislature accepted the recommendations of the Shared Services Panel and added the inclusion of the Town of Newfield in the Health Consortium as the Town will save \$34,000 by joining. It was suggested to include other municipalities, even if outside of Tompkins County, that will be joining the Consortium next year and including reference to the Law Enforcement Shared Services study being undertaken. The Shared Services Panel will meet and hold one final public hearing and the final report will be submitted to the State in time to meet the deadline of September 15th.

EMS Task Force - Resolution deferred at July Meeting

Resolution to Budget for Professional Services to Assist with Emergency Medical Service Planning in 2018 (ID #7253)

Ms. Weiser said this topic was discussed at the last meeting and is part of a request to ask municipalities to plan for and ask for funding to address a need that has been identified to address challenges and the collapsing of volunteer services in the area of emergency medical services. She said at last month's meeting she brought forward a resolution and proposed individual municipalities consider setting aside funds to allow for a proposal next year to be funded that will take preliminary recommendations that are identified and move them forward. Ms. Weiser reported the Town of Caroline took action recognizing that an expenditure may come up and the Town will have funds available to allocate if at such time a proposal is brought forward that has support of municipalities and service providers. She hopes recommendations can be developed to provide for a standard level of service for expected response ability and capacity to be provided regardless of location within the County. She also spoke of the varying levels of service that exists throughout the County and said she would like to see a basic level of service that residents can expect throughout the County.

Mr. Dietrich said he raised this issue with the Town of Danby Fire Department and they were not receptive in participating in an effort at the County level. He said being able to implement something is important and not having the cooperation at the town level creates a problem. Mr. Dietrich said they are having the same issues other municipalities are having with volunteers; he commented that one of the biggest problems relates to training.

Mr. Mareane said Tompkins County will be placing \$25,000 into next year's budget that would cover a portion of the costs of study. This will be considered in September as part of the County budget and noted the County would likely want to see support from municipalities as well. Ms. Weiser said it would not be a requirement that municipalities adopt a formal resolution but would like some acknowledgement that as recommendations are brought forward that there would be support of the Task Force's recommendations and be prepared to contribute to the effort. By presenting this now she hopes to avoid a situation whereby municipalities do not have funds set aside in 2018 budgets and need to wait until 2020 to provide funding as this is a very important and essential service.

Ms. Weiser questioned if the Town of Danby would be able to allocate these funds next year if a recommendation was brought forward. Mr. Dietrich said funding could be provided but it would be difficult without the support of the Fire Department. Ms. Weiser said the Task Force will be looking at models that exist in other places and ways to reduce call volume. It is the hope that as information is brought forward that local departments will support this.

RESULT:	COMPLETED
----------------	------------------

* * * * *

Sharing of Information on Cayuga Lake Blue Algae Bloom

This item was covered under discussion of the Cayuga Lake Watershed.

Discussion of Structure of TCCOG Meetings

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

Report from Subcommittees

Emergency Services Task Force

This item was covered under the previous discussion.

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

Ms. Weiser said the subcommittee continues to explore whether Community Choice Aggregation is a viable option. A list of hurdles and impediments have been identified and work will continue to evaluate this.

Energy Task Force

Ms. Thomas reported the LED streetlight conversion is moving along and almost all municipalities have contacted NYSEG to gather information about what the proposal would be for buying the lights. There is still a lot of work to be done but progress is being made, including working on a contract with the City for changing out the lights and managing them. It was noted this is part of the County's Shared Services Plan. Ms. Weiser said there may be funding available to municipalities for the changing out of lights which can be costly through the New York Power Authority. Ms. Thomas will look into this as a potential resource. Ms. Woodard said NYSEG will be coming up with a proposal to maintain these lights and she would like to know about that cost before contracting with the City.

Ms. Thomas said the Committee also discussed the Green Building Policy with the Clean Energy Communities and there are many municipalities that have applied or are close to being able to apply for grant funding.

The Energy Task Force will now be meeting bi-monthly.

Transit Services Committee

Ms. Fleming said she attended the August meeting and heard a report about a service that was added to the Health Department in which it was stated service is extremely low. She said TCAT drivers will now be accepting transfers from Schuyler County. There will be Fall route changes and software is being developed to allow people to access information on the arrival of a bus on their mobile devices.

Cable Committee

There was no report; this item will be removed from the agenda outline.

Minutes Approval

June 22, 2017

RESULT:	DEFERRED
----------------	-----------------

July 27, 2017

RESULT:	DEFERRED
----------------	-----------------

Announcement

Minutes
Tompkins County Council of Governments
Thursday, August 24, 2017

Ms. Supron announced an Engage Cornell event that will be held on September 27th and a Town Gown event to be held on October 28th; information will be sent to the TCCOG membership.

Ms. Supron said Candice Maxian, Assistant Director for Public Engagement at Cornell, was present earlier in the meeting and is interested in local partnerships. It was suggested Ms. Maxian be invited to the next meeting to speak to members.

Next Meeting Agenda Items

The following items will be included on the next agenda:

Discussion of Structure of TCCOG Meetings;
Report from the County Planning Department on Article 239 Guidelines;
Introduction of Candice Maxian, Assistant Director for Public Engagement at Cornell

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:31 p.m.