

Government Operations Committee
 Regular Meeting Notes – FINAL
 Wednesday, May 3, 2017 3:30 PM
 Legislature Chambers

Attendance

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived	Departed
Daniel Klein	Chair	Late	3:32 PM	4:45 PM
Carol Chock	Vice Chair	Present		
Dooley Kiefer	Member	Present		
Rich John	Member	Late	3:35 PM	
Will Burbank	Member	Present		
Joe Mareane	County Administrator	Present		
Jay Franklin	Director of Assessment	Present		
Jonathan Wood	Tompkins County Attorney	Present		
Catherine Covert	Clerk of the Legislature	Present		
Paula Younger	Deputy County Administrator	Present		
Greg Potter	Director of ITS	Present		
Loren Cottrell	Deputy Director of ITS	Present		
Deana Bodnar	Program Development Specialist, DSS	Present		
Scott Doyle	Planner, Planning and Sustainability Department	Present		
Ed Marx	Planning and Sustainability Commissioner	Present		
Marcia Lynch	Public Info. Officer, County Administration	Present		
Amie Hendrix	Director of Youth Services	Present		
Dave Sanders	Youth Services Department	Present		
Megan McDonald	Senior Planner, Planning and Sustainability Department	Present		
Martha Robertson	Legislator	Present		

Guests: Paul Rossi, Board of Realtors; Matt Steecker, Ithaca Journal Reporter; Todd Fox, Developer; Suki Tabor, Deputy Director of the Ithaca Youth Bureau; Bill Goodman, Town of Ithaca Supervisor

Call to Order

Ms. Chock, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m.

Changes to Agenda

The Committee agreed to add to the agenda an appointment to the Tompkins County Public Library Board of Trustees.

Mr. Klein arrived at this time.

Comments from the Public

There was no member of the public who wished to speak.

Minutes Approval

April 5, 2017

RESULT:	ACCEPTED [3 TO 1]
MOVER:	Will Burbank, Member
SECONDER:	Carol Chock, Vice Chair
AYES:	Klein, Chock, Burbank
NAYS:	Kiefer
ABSENT:	John

Information Technology Services

Resolution No. - Appropriation from Contingent Fund to Authorize Public WiFi Internet Service and Contract (ID #7011)

Mr. Potter said a formalized quote has been received based on the approach to have a contracted service for public WiFi deployment in four County buildings including Legislature Chambers, Old Jail Conference, Rice Conference Room (Public Health), and first floor lobby at the Mental Health building.

Mr. John arrived at this time.

Mr. Potter said the contract is a three-year term. Also in response to Mr. John's question about the cost, Mr. Potter said this project is less expensive per site than the Airport because there is less volume. He further commented that with this approach the Department does not need to be involved or manage the security side of it. There will be information shared with County Departments and signs posted about the usage of the public WiFi.

A brief discussion followed concerning policy and if language about usage was necessary to be included, Ms. Younger believes the current policy would apply and covers any area of concern. Mr. Cottrell said there may need to be a need in the future to have policy language that addresses employees bringing their own equipment and using it for County business.

Mr. Mareane informed the Committee that the Department has stated in the resolution that an over-target request will be made for the 2018 budget to continue the funding for this project and the Department's fiscal target be increased. He said the Committee could consider changing the resolution and authorize the fiscal target be adjusted accordingly for 2018 to cover this cost.

Ms. Kiefer offered several changes to the resolution that were accepted as friendly and have been incorporated into the resolution.

RESULT:	RECOMMENDED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Will Burbank, Member
SECONDER:	Carol Chock, Vice Chair
AYES:	Klein, Chock, Kiefer, John, Burbank

WHEREAS, general public access to WiFi networks and the Internet is an increasingly common expectation of people, and

WHEREAS, the general public is welcomed and encouraged to participate in Tompkins County government, and

WHEREAS, participating in Tompkins County government often involves attending meetings in Tompkins County buildings and accessing services and data via the Internet, and

WHEREAS, while the County has recently made important investments in major information technology systems, which require use of the Internet to access publicly available information, data, and services, and

WHEREAS, the Department of Information Technology Services (ITS) has undertaken a review of ways the County can achieve greater efficiency, responsiveness, inter-connectedness, and security through changes in its office automation, public services, and the implementation WiFi network, and

WHEREAS, this review has determined that the functionality of the County's current WiFi network does not provide an adequate solution to best meet the public Internet access preferences while maintaining Tompkins County IT security mandates, and

WHEREAS, the initial on-going net costs of the vendor-supplied system are expected to be approximately \$10,254 annually, with likely offsetting of ITS costs over time as the ITS Department may no longer need to respond to public WiFi network connectivity requirements, and

WHEREAS, it is expected that access to these improved technological tools will also contribute to higher levels of public access to County data and services, and

WHEREAS, funds were not budgeted to provide for the proposed solution in the 2017 ITS operating budget and \$5,200 is required to implement this service for the balance of 2017, and

WHEREAS, the target budget for ITS in 2018 shall be increased by \$10,254, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Government Operations and the Budget, Capital, and Personnel Committees, That Tompkins County will provide public WiFi Internet access in the Legislature Chambers, the Old Jail Conference Room, the Rice Conference Room at the Public Health Department, and in the first floor waiting room of the Mental Health Building,

RESOLVED, further, That the request for contingency funding be granted to support the transition and installation of the public WiFi network system,

RESOLVED, further, That the Finance Director be and hereby is authorized to make the following adjustments to his books:

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FROM: A1990.54440	Contingent Fund	\$ 5,200
TO: A1680.54425	Service Contracts	\$ 5,200

RESOLVED, further, That the target budget for ITS in 2018 shall be increased by \$10,254.
SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Planning and Sustainability Department

2017 Foreclosure Report (ID #7021)

Mr. Doyle distributed an updated list of 2017 Tompkins County Foreclosure Report Summary and reviewed the updated changes. The updated information provides the parcels that are owner-occupied, zoning detail information, and the shading of parcels that correlate with the Department's recommendations. He said the auction is scheduled for June 19th.

Mr. Doyle said there were 26 parcels total subject to foreclosure proceedings. At this time, the Department is recommending the removal of one parcel, Level Green Road parcel, from the foreclosure auction. The Finance Department believes the property will be redeemed as it is hoped that many of these parcels will be. Based on the location of this parcel in a key conservation corridor, the Department is recommending withholding it from auction to pursue conservation options through the development of a forest conservation easement that includes requirements that timber harvest must be done according to a Forest Stewardship Plan. The property would then be sold subject to the easement.

Mr. Doyle reviewed the following list of parcels the Department is recommending to go forward in the foreclosure auction subject to deed restrictions:

Town of Caroline

Slaterville Road 1, tax parcel 8.-1-4.2
Slaterville Road 2, tax parcel 8.-1-68

Town of Danby

1675 Danby Road, tax parcel 7.-1-48.122

Town of Dryden

Southworth Road, tax parcel 48.-1-77.33
1920 Slaterville Road, tax parcel 73.-2-4.2

Discussion followed concerning the Town of Danby parcel known as Danby Motors and what liability concerns there was for the County if it were to assume ownership by default. Mr. Wood believes there is a potential for risk. Mr. Wood also stated there could be a similar issue with the Old Crispell Garage, tax parcel 73.-2-4.2. Mr. John spoke of his experience in foreclosure proceedings with a junkyard and said the end result was that there was very little environmental issues following a survey being conducted by an environmental engineer.

Mr. Wood said if the Committee was interested in an environmental survey, it would have to occur prior to auction or the property would have to be removed from the auction. He believes both junkyard parcels are worth investigating further. Mr. Doyle also reminded the Committee that these properties could still be redeemed. Mr. John said he would support the County asking if access to the properties could be granted with an environmental engineer to do an assessment. Mr. Doyle said he

would follow up on this request.

Ms. Kiefer said in the past Legislators have been contacted about the properties that are owner-occupied and asked if that has happened. It was noted that that is handled through the Finance Department's office and Mr. Doyle agreed to follow-up with Mr. Snyder.

It was the consensus of the Committee to accept the Department's recommendation as presented and have a special meeting if needed prior to the auction to consider any further direction needed by staff.

RESULT:	COMMITTEE APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Rich John, Member
SECONDER:	Daniel Klein, Chair
AYES:	Klein, Chock, Kiefer, John, Burbank

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Assessment

Resolution No. - Appropriation from Contingent - Terminal Pay - Assessment Department (ID #6996)

RESULT:	RECOMMENDED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Carol Chock, Vice Chair
SECONDER:	Rich John, Member
AYES:	Klein, Chock, Kiefer, John, Burbank

WHEREAS, the Department of Assessment had requested terminal-pay reimbursement to the Department from the Contingent Fund on December 20, 2016, and

WHEREAS, upon balancing the 2016 budget, it was discovered the funds requested were not enough to cover the terminal pay, and

WHEREAS, based on the Fiscal Policy of Tompkins County the Department of Assessment is requesting the additional terminal-pay reimbursement to the Department from the Contingent Fund, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Government Operations and the Budget, Capital, and Personnel Committee, That the Finance Director be and hereby is directed to make the following appropriation on the 2016 books:

From: A1990.54400	Contingent Fund	\$11,076.37
To: A1355.51000796	Senior Valuation Specialist	\$ 7,601.66
A1355.58800	Fringes	\$ 3,474.71

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Resolution No. - Authorizing a Public Hearing on Proposed Local Law No. c of 2017 – A Local Law Enacting the New York State Real Property Tax Law Section 485-g, Infrastructure Exemption (ID #6997)

Mr. Franklin began by stating he is not advocating for or against this exemption as it is not his position and is only present to provide information. One of the most significant costs to a developer to do a new residential subdivision is the holding costs especially when installation of roads, gas utilities, water, and sewer lines are necessary. This exemption allows a three-year abatement for the added costs to adding in infrastructure as long as the developer retains ownership or a certificate of completion is granted.

Mr. Burbank asked if this exemption could be used to direct development in certain areas to avoid suburbanization. Mr. Franklin said with this section of law there is not a focus area that can be specified. Mr. Marx said he does not see any downside to adopting this exemption.

Mr. John said he would support having a hearing as he would like to hear from the public and developers. His concern is that it does not allow the County to focus on affordable housing; it gives the greatest benefit to developers that are developing in sprawled areas. In terms of policy, he believes the County wants more density as outlined in the Energy Roadmap.

Ms. Cosentini commented that this exemption would have a significant impact on the project she is pursuing on Five Mile Drive.

Ms. Robertson said there have been very little new neighborhood housing developments. She understands it is up to municipalities to have zoning that supports cluster development, transit oriented development, etc. and appreciates the Town of Ithaca is looking at this. If the County were to approve this exemption, it could show some leadership and other municipalities may consider adopting the exemption.

In response to Ms. Chock, Mr. Franklin said there are not a lot of incentives currently under the Real Property Tax Law relating to housing developments.

Ms. Chock said that she would also like to support this, but would like to know what other tools might be available to achieve the County's goals for housing. Mr. Klein reminded the Committee there was a comprehensive report given on this at the last meeting.

Ms. Chock requested this not be on the consent agenda when presented to the Legislature.

RESULT:	RECOMMENDED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Dooley Kiefer, Member
SECONDER:	Will Burbank, Member
AYES:	Klein, Chock, Kiefer, John, Burbank

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Legislature wishes to encourage more housing units within the County, and

WHEREAS, one of the many impediments to building for-sale housing is the holding costs of the land after expending money on upgrading the infrastructure, and

WHEREAS, the New York State Legislature has authorized an exemption that would provide a three-year abatement on the increase in value due to the improvements made to the public infrastructure (utilities and road) so long as the developer retains ownership of the newly subdivided lots, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Government Operations Committees, That a public hearing be held before the Tompkins County Legislature in the Legislative Chambers of the Governor Daniel D Tompkins Buildings, 121 E Court St, Ithaca, New York on June 6, 2017, at 5:31 o'clock in the evening thereof concerning proposed Local Law No. c of 2017 - A Local Law Enacting the New York State Real Property Tax Law Section 485-g, Infrastructure Exemption. At such time and place all persons interested in the subject matter will be heard concerning the same,

RESOLVED, further, That the Clerk of the Legislature is hereby authorized and directed to place proper notice of such public hearing in the official newspaper of the County.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Resolution No. - Adoption of Local Law No. c of 2017 - A Local Law Enacting the New York State Real Property Tax Law Section 485-g, Infrastructure Exemption (ID #6998)

In response to questions raised about process, Mr. Wood believes it is appropriate for the Committee to adopt both resolutions and allow the Legislature to take the final action.

Ms. Kiefer said she would like to see more comprehensive language added to the law that describes what it does.

Mr. Klein was excused following the vote.

RESULT:	RECOMMENDED [3 TO 2]
MOVER:	Will Burbank, Member
SECONDER:	Daniel Klein, Chair
AYES:	Klein, Kiefer, Burbank
NAYS:	Chock, John

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Legislature wishes to encourage more housing units within the County, and

WHEREAS, one of the many impediments to building housing is the holding costs of the land after expending money on upgrading the infrastructure, and

WHEREAS, the New York State Legislature has authorized an exemption that would provide a three-year abatement on the increase in value due to the improvements made to the public infrastructure (utilities and road) so long as the developer retains ownership of the newly subdivided lots, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Government Operations Committee, That proposed Local Law No. c of 2017 - A Local Law Enacting the New York State Real Property Tax Law Section 485-g, Infrastructure Exemption, be and hereby is adopted,

RESOLVED, further, That the Clerk of the Legislature shall publish in the official newspaper of the County a notice of adoption containing a synopsis of said local law and shall within twenty days file one certified copy in the Office of the County Clerk, and one copy with the Secretary of State.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Resolution No. - Resolution in Support of Providing Affordable Housing, Urging New York State to Amend the Real Property Tax Law to Allow Tompkins County the Option to Provide a Partial Exemption to Multi-Unit Residential Properties Converted to Owner-Occupied Residences (ID #7003)

Ms. Robertson spoke of the last Government Operations Committee meeting and the list of exemptions Mr. Franklin reviewed and said this particular exemption she believes would be beneficial. She said Todd Fox, a developer, was present and could speak to the resolution if the Committee wished. She believes if this exemption is granted, it could create family housing.

Mr. John believes the resolution seems to do what the County wants with investing in housing stock. The benefit would only improve the increase in value so that existing taxpayers are not losing anything other than growth in the property.

At this time, Ms. Kiefer offered several changes that were accepted as friendly.

Mr. Fox believes this is a good program and for him personally would benefit from this exemption. He spoke of some of the projects he has done with turning houses back to being owner-occupied and selling them. He thinks this would provide incentives for developers to take advantage of and converting older houses for student housing to owner-occupied residences.

RESULT:	RECOMMENDED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Rich John, Member
SECONDER:	Will Burbank, Member
AYES:	Chock, Kiefer, John, Burbank
EXCUSED:	Klein

WHEREAS, there is a demonstrable and critical shortage of affordable housing within Tompkins County, and

WHEREAS, this Legislature has attempted to address that shortage through a number of measures, including participation with the City of Ithaca and Cornell University in the development of the Community Housing Fund, and

WHEREAS, the New York State Legislature has authorized many cities to offer an exemption for multi-family housing that was converted to single-family houses under Real Property Tax Law Section 421-‘X’, and

WHEREAS, planned development within Tompkins County will add a significant number of bedrooms over the next year that will result in a higher vacancy rate within the County, and

WHEREAS, the higher vacancy rate would allow for older subdivided and poorly maintained housing to return to an owner-occupied single-family residence with one or two units, and

WHEREAS, it is in the interest of Tompkins County to allow for this transition to happen to encourage owner-occupied homes, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Government Operations Committee, That the Tompkins County Legislature urges the New York State Legislature to amend the Real Property Tax Law by creating a new section of law that would allow Tompkins County, by local law, to grant a partial exemption equal to the increase in assessment due to the conversion of a multi-unit rental property to an owner-occupied one- or two-unit residence by foregoing any increase in assessment in year one and thereafter increasing the assessment rate by 12.5% per year,

RESOLVED, further, That the Clerk of the Legislature send copies of the resolution to Governor Andrew Cuomo, Senators James Seward, Pamela Helming, and Tom O'Mara, and Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton, and NYSAC (New York State Association of Counties).

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Departmental Update

Mr. Franklin announced New York State revised their STAR exemptions and said Tompkins County is now a high-appreciation County. The County's average selling price is higher than the State average. For the basic STAR, the County is now \$30,200, up from \$30,000 and the Enhanced STAR is \$65,930. However, the State did not increase their 2% cap on STAR savings from the previous year so the Enhanced STAR exemption amount continues to increase, but they don't increase the savings amount. Seniors keep getting less of what their full STAR exemption is.

Administration

Resolution No. - Authorization to Execute a Contract with Clear Impact, LLC for Performance Measurement Software and Related Consulting Services (ID #6947)

Mr. Mareane reminded the Committee that performance measurement has been a priority of his for a long time. Funding was approved through the 2017 budget process to begin this. An RFP was issued and four proposals were received and an internal group of employees was created to review and evaluate them; this proposal was the most cost-effective and met the criteria established.

He believes that if you can't measure it, you can't manage it. A lot of data by departments is already collected. The goal is to take the data and turn it into useful information to measure how well the County is doing with its programs. He suggested if there are concerns that the first year could be done on a volunteer basis by departments. The Human Services departments are supportive of this and want to do it. He also offered to give periodic reports before this was made permanent and any budget decisions need to be made in the future. He strongly believes departments and the Legislature will find this system to be a valuable tool. Mr. Mareane said staff with experience with the system was present if the Committee wished to hear further testimony.

Mr. Burbank spoke of his confidence in Mr. Mareane and believes it is appropriate to bring it forward to the Legislature.

Ms. Chock commented on the term of the contract being five years and that it's more than a full term on the Legislature. Mr. Mareane said the term as outlined in the resolution is a three-year term with two one-year renewal options; the Committee may change that to remove the renewal options.

Mr. John believes this is what the County should be doing as well as Legislators. It is important for Legislators to focus on new programs and whether something should be put into target during the budget process. This would provide a view of what programs exist and this system would provide that tool.

Ms. Taber provided an overview of her experience and the Ithaca Youth Bureau's experience in using this system and said the employees support it. There are four different programs in the Department using the Results Based Accountability system.

As Ms. Kiefer had several changes she wanted to offer including comments made by Mr. Mareane made earlier, the Committee agreed to recommend the resolution as submitted with the understanding Ms. Kiefer would work with the County Administrator and submit revisions to be considered at the Legislature meeting in a substitute resolution.

RESULT:	RECOMMENDED [3 TO 1]
MOVER:	Will Burbank, Member
SECONDER:	Rich John, Member
AYES:	Chock, John, Burbank
NAYS:	Kiefer
EXCUSED:	Klein

WHEREAS, as a means to further improve its management of public resources and the quality delivery of essential programs, Tompkins County desires to establish a countywide performance measurement system, and

WHEREAS, such a system is intended to enable departments to measure their success in attaining intended program outcomes and to make and assess programmatic changes aimed at improving performance, and

WHEREAS, a performance measurement system is expected to become an important addition to the process of decision-making at every level of the County organization, and

WHEREAS, a single countywide performance measurement system that is adaptable to the wide variety of programs offered by the County will allow all of its users, including this Legislature, to more easily comprehend and utilize the information it produces than would a collection of ad hoc or department-specific systems, and

WHEREAS, as a part of the 2017 County Budget, this Legislature authorized multi-year funding to support a three-year project to acquire a performance measurement system and to implement that system in all County departments, and

WHEREAS, the County issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a performance measurement system on February 10, 2017, in accordance with established Tompkins County and New York State purchasing procedures, and received four proposals by the March 10th due date for responses, and

WHEREAS, the proposals were evaluated by a team of County department heads and staff based on the criteria established by the RFP, and

WHEREAS, the review team, including the County Administrator whose department will manage and maintain the performance measurement system, has recommended that a contract resulting from the RFP process be awarded Clear Impact, LLC of Rockville, Maryland, for a multi-year agreement, with an initial term of three years, with two one-year renewal options, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Government Operations Committee, That the County Administrator or his designee be and hereby is granted authority to enter into all final contract(s) resulting from this RFP process,

RESOLVED, further, That the County Administrator or his designee be and hereby is authorized to execute a contract with Clear Impact, LLC for software and related consulting services to implement a countywide performance measurement system for a three-year contract amount not to exceed \$53,600.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Proposed Retiree Health Plan Option (ID #7000)

Due to the lack of time, Mr. Mareane did not report. Although, he stated he has given reports in the past on this. A resolution has been prepared and the Budget, Capital, and Personnel Committee will be considering it at their next meeting.

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Appointment

Advisory Board Appointment(s) (ID #7018)

Library Board of Trustees

Jason Moore; term expires December 31, 2019

RESULT:	RECOMMENDED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Dooley Kiefer, Member
SECONDER:	Will Burbank, Member
AYES:	Chock, Kiefer, John, Burbank
EXCUSED:	Klein

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Reports

Committee Chair

Ms. Chock, Vice Chair, had no report.

County Administrator

Mr. Mareane reported the resolution pertaining to the purchase of the Tompkins Trust building has been prepared and will be going through the appropriate Committees of the Legislature.

Notes
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County Attorney

Mr. Wood was not present.

Director of Finance

Mr. Snyder was not present.

Public Information Officer

Ms. Lynch had no report.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

Budget Adjustments & Transfers (Info. Only)

Information Item - Budget Adjustment (ID #6999)

Information Item - New Office Computers (ID #7006)

Information Item - New server (ID #7020)