

**Tompkins County Council of Governments Bylaws**  
**Adopted 05/25/2023**

**I. Name**

The name of the organization shall be the Tompkins County Council of Governments (TCCOG).

**II. Purpose**

TCCOG is an association of governments within Tompkins County, organized to provide a forum for discussion and negotiation leading to agreements for more efficient and fiscally responsible delivery of government services.

The goals include: expanding cooperation among taxing entities and resolving duplication of services, improving communication among governments in Tompkins County and improving involvement with School Districts.

TCCOG may seek, allocate and administer appropriate funding from local, state, federal and private sources, including various grants, to support the accomplishment of the goals.

Agenda items should reflect actionable items for Tompkins County governments, or topics applicable to the health, safety and welfare of residents within Tompkins County.

**III. Membership**

**Representatives:** The membership of TCCOG shall consist of each of the Towns and Villages within Tompkins County, the City of Ithaca, and Tompkins County, each with one acting Representative (either Designated or Alternate) at meetings.

**A. Designated Representatives:** The legislature of each government shall select an elected official to be its Designated Representative. Other elected officials are welcome to attend and participate in the discussions.

**B. Alternate Representatives:** The legislature of each government shall select an Alternate Representative to attend if the Designated Representative is unavailable. The Alternate Representative may, or may not, be an elected official.

The Clerk of each member government shall provide TCCOG with a certified copy of a resolution appointing the Designated and Alternate Representatives, and the term for which the individual(s) are being appointed.

**IV. Officers**

The officers of the TCCOG will be two Co-Chairs—one being the Primary Chair and the other the Secondary Chair—and a Vice Chair.

**A. Nomination and Election of Officers**

Officers will be nominated by TCCOG from among its Designated and Alternate Representatives and approved by a majority vote of those present.

**B. Term**

The term of office shall be for three years total. Officers will be elected to serve in year one as Vice Chair, in year two as Secondary Chair, and in year three as Primary Chair, based on the calendar year, beginning on January 1 after the term of the Primary Chair expires. As the term for Primary Chair expires, the Secondary Chair shall become the Primary Chair, the Vice Chair shall become the Secondary-Chair, and a newly elected Vice Chair shall be seated.

**C. Vacancies**

Should a vacancy occur in any office of TCCOG, the Council will elect a replacement from among its representatives to fill out the remainder of the term of the Co-Chair or Vice Chair by a majority vote of those present. An officer vacancy occurs whenever an individual resigns or reaches the limit of her/his term.

**D. Duties**

The officers of TCCOG shall undertake the duties commonly associated with their positions. The Co-Chairs shall set agendas and preside over Council meetings, with the Primary Chair having the ultimate responsibility for both. In the absence of both Co-Chairs, the Vice Chair shall preside.

**E. Support to the Council**

The County Administrator will provide staff support and assistance to the Council. The staff support shall include minutes and agendas as well as special projects as needed. The County Administrator must approve special project support.

**V. Meetings**

Meetings will be held at established dates and times. Meetings may be in person in a County building that is centrally located. Electronic attendance is acceptable if all the Representatives can hear each other in real time. The first meeting of the year shall be an organizational meeting. Meetings shall be open to the public.

**A. Quorum**

A quorum shall consist of a majority of the acting Representatives from those governments who have selected at least one Representative. Electronic attendance counts towards a quorum.

**B. Voting**

Each member government shall have one (1) vote, cast by their acting Representative. Decisions are based on a majority vote of acting Representatives at the meeting, if a quorum is present.

**C. Participation by TCCOG Representatives**

The person chairing the TCCOG meeting shall call the meeting to order and preside. A Representative should raise their hand when they would like to speak and wait until acknowledged by the Chair. The Chair may allow more informal discussion.

**D. Participation by Individuals Outside TCCOG**

Participation by the public will be at the discretion of the Chair.

#### **E. Calling a meeting of the Council**

The Co-Chairs can call a meeting of TCCOG. Additionally, a petition signed by Representatives from any five member governments can call a meeting of TCCOG.

#### **F. Committees**

The Council can form committees as needed. Committees shall be chaired by a TCCOG Representative. Committee members can include people who are not serving on the Council.

### **VI. Funding Reserve**

Resolution No. 3 adopted on November 18, 2010 created a funding reserve to provide a modest source of one-time funding for projects that are of mutual benefit to the majority of governments within TCCOG, and that serve the broadest interests of all members. Funds are held by Tompkins County.

**A. Voluntary Contribution:** A voluntary contribution should be annually set by the end of July, with a periodic evaluation of the need for additional funds.

**B. Requests for use of Funds:** Proposals to appropriate funds must be received by the Council at least one week prior to a TCCOG meeting.

**C. Approval of Funds:** A quorum being present, appropriation of TCCOG reserve funds shall be made based by a 2/3 vote of those attending the TCCOG meeting where the proposal is being presented and discussed.

### **VII. Bylaws**

A quorum being present, bylaws may be adopted or amended at a meeting by a two thirds (2/3) vote of attending acting Representatives. There must be at least 30-days advance notification of changes given before a vote.