

**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
JULY 14, 2009 – 3:30 P.M.  
SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM**

APPROVED 8-11-09
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Present: F. Proto, Chairman; M. Robertson; T. Randall; G. Stevenson  
Excused: W. Burbank  
Staff: P. Carey, Deana Bodnar, Department of Social Services; N. Zahler, J. Johnson, Youth Services; L. Holmes, Office for the Aging; S. Allinger, T. Schiele, T. Lysko, Health Department; R. DeLuca, J. Mareane, County Administrator; K. Schlather, Human Services Coalition; M. Lynch, Public Information Officer; A. Cole, B. Crosby, Health Department; C. Covert, Clerk of the Legislature  
Guests: J. Turcotte, Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit; M. Bianconi, Recreation Partnership; Stacey Shackford, *The Ithaca Journal*

**Call to Order**

Chairman Proto called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

**Changes to the Agenda**

The following items were withdrawn from the agenda:

- Tompkins County SPCA – Report of Contracted Services
- Mental Health Department – Budget Challenges

**Report from the County Administrator**

Mr. Mareane provided the Committee with the July 2009 Quarterly Indicators Report and highlighted the following areas:

**Areas of concern:**

- While still well below the state and national rates, the County's *unemployment rate* stood at 5.4% in May—the County's highest May jobless rate since at least 1990.
- *Welfare cases* rose rapidly between December and April, with overall caseloads in April 15% higher than the year before.
- *Food stamp* caseloads in April were up by 18% from the year before and by 26% from April 2007.
- Countywide *sales tax collections* through May were down 9% from the same period last year.
- The number of children in *Foster Care* in June was up 14% over a year ago.
- *Interest rates* on County deposits averaged 0.9% in May compared to 2.2% in May 2008.
- *Fuel costs* are again on the rise, with the price of regular gasoline up 81% since the beginning of the year, and diesel up 43%.

**Positive areas:**

- *Overtime* costs through June were down 24% from the year before.
- *Airline activity* remains very strong, with year-to date enplanements through June up 21% over 2008.

Mr. Mareane said departments are being very cautious about filling vacant positions in light of the budget constraints. Presently there are 736 positions filled, which is fewer than the 778 authorized in the 2009 budget. He noted overtime costs are down from previous years, the County Clerk's revenue shows an increase of revenue from fees over last year, and the Department of Motor Vehicle revenue is holding steady. Mr. Mareane spoke of the importance of reviewing hotel/motel occupancy rates as an indicator of the County's economic activity and noted there is the 4% sales tax and a 5% room occupancy tax the County receives from the lodging industry. He reported the Convention and Visitors Bureau has tracked occupancy rates, which shows a 9% reduction in May 2009 versus the previous year.

**Approval of Minutes of June 9, 2009**

The minutes of June 9, 2009, were deferred to August 11, 2009.

**Youth Services**

**RESOLUTION NO. - EXEMPTING INTERMUNICIPAL RECREATION PARTNERSHIP  
FROM TARGET CUTS**

Ms. Zahler spoke about the agreement of the Recreation Partnership, stating she brought forth the resolution as a starting point for discussion of how the across-the-board reduction would affect all the partners. As a result of conversations at the last Recreation Partnership Board meeting a request is being made to exempt the Recreation Partnership from the 6.25 percent target reduction and allow the agreement to continue with the Partnership board making a budget recommendation to all municipalities. Ms. Bianconi stated she was present to hear the County's viewpoints on what the process would be if the County did not follow through on the current funding agreement.

Mr. Proto said a key item is that the agreement is a multi-year contract; and that a ripple effect would occur if the agreement were modified. In addition, other municipal partners are in the process of planning their 2010 budgets which could also create a ripple affect if any member of the Partnership decided not to continue with the agreement if the County funding were reduced.

Ms. Robertson asked if the County members on the Recreation Partnership agree with the request to exempt, saying it is important to look at what the impact would be on the other partners. Mr. Randall said while new on the Recreation Partnership Board and is supportive of the organization, he has concerns with exempting anything from budget reductions. Although it is not a large budget, and the Recreation Partnership does a great deal for the municipalities, to exempt the Partnership is premature.

Ms. Zahler said she and Ms. Johnson are responsible to report to the staff of the Recreation Partnership Board. The resolution is asking the Legislature to start with zero percent and allow the Partnership Board to develop a budget that balances the municipalities' fiscal needs with the program goals. Within a month they would have calculated what type of services should be offered, what is affected by fees and/or grant-raising, and then develop a net cost for the cost-sharing formula listed in the agreement.

Mr. Proto noted one of the reports from the Recreation Partnership showed 4,000 to 8,000 participants took advantage of Recreation Partnership programs (with every town having participation). He believes it is necessary to provide direction to the Partnership and suggested the preliminary budget be prepared and brought back to the Committee to react to at its August meeting.

Ms. Zahler said she is required to submit a budget to the County Administrator by August 1, which includes the portion the County contributes to the Partnership. The County's contribution is approximately \$57,000; the 6.25 percent reduction is \$3,612.

Ms. Robertson spoke of having similar relationships with Tompkins County Area Transit, Tompkins Cortland Community College, and others. The County relies on representatives of these organizations to share budget information that needs to be taken into consideration by the other partners including the County's level of commitment. Mr. Proto agreed with Ms. Robertson sharing of information and the level of commitment.

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Proto, to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature. Ms. Robertson noted her support of the resolution does not suggest that the

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County is willing to support an increase in the budget. A voice vote on the resolution resulted as follows: Ayes – 3 (Legislators Proto, Robertson, and Stevenson); Noes – 1 (Legislator Randall); Excused – 1 (Legislator Burbank). RESOLUTION CARRIED.

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Legislature voted in 2007 to continue its commitment as a key partner in Intermunicipal Recreation Partnership by approving the 2008-2012 Intermunicipal Recreation Partnership Agreement, and

WHEREAS ...”the Partners agree to the ... cost sharing formula [which] allocates the annual net operating costs of programs into four equal shares. The City of Ithaca agrees to pay one quarter of the net operating cost, the Town of Ithaca agrees to pay one quarter, and the County agrees to pay one quarter. The smaller municipalities agree to share the remaining quarter.”, and

WHEREAS, all eleven municipalities agreed that the “Recreation Partnership Board shall review preliminary budget projections in June and July and decide on the acceptable net program cost for the upcoming year by the end of July. During the budget development process, each Recreation Partnership Board member shall discuss the municipal payments needed with its municipality to determine if the preliminary budget adopted by the Recreation Partnership Board is feasible.”, and

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Legislature 2010 budget target that requires a 6.25% reduction in the County’s contribution to the Intermunicipal Recreation Partnership represents a unilateral reduction that affects all other partners, and

WHEREAS, the members of the Intermunicipal Recreation Partnership Board have asked that the County exempt this Agreement from across the board budget targets, like it has done with other intermunicipal agreements, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Health and Human Services Committee, That the Intermunicipal Recreation Partnership be exempt from across the board County target setting for the life of the Agreement (2008-2012),

RESOLVED, further, That Tompkins County agrees to adhere to the budgeting process in the approved Agreement.

**SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20**

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Overview of 2010 Resource Allocation Recommendations – Youth Services Board

Ms. Zahler provided a report of the recommendations adopted by the Youth Services Board and the impacts of the cuts the Board is proposing. She believes it is important to know how the Board struggled to make approximately \$145,000 in cuts. It is anticipated that 400 youth would be affected by the cuts. She noted the loss of funding would be the equivalent of 5 FTE staff. She spoke of Youth Services Board’s commitment to prevention programs and that the current economic crisis would increase the number of youth requiring assistance. The final outcome of programming would not be completed until after votes on over-target requests during the budget process.

**Health Department**

**RESOLUTION NO. - AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE A THREE-YEAR CONTRACT - ADMINISTRATION AND PROVISION OF TRANSPORTATION FOR EARLY INTERVENTION AND PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION CHILDREN RESIDING IN TOMPKINS COUNTY –HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Randall, to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature. Mr. Proto asked what the cost of the contract would be. The contract amount is for \$75.79 per day per child, versus the current rate of \$81 per day, per child, providing a cost savings of approximately \$55,000 per year based on budget projections. In response to Ms. Robertson’s questions, Ms.

Allinger noted the other proposal had a daily rate more than \$20 higher than Birnie Bus Service. Ms. Allinger also said an annual consumer price cost-of-living increase (normally 3% to 4%) is included in the contract. A voice vote on the resolution resulted as follows: Ayes – 4; Noes – 0; Excused – 1 (Legislator Burbank).  
**RESOLUTION CARRIED.**

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Finance Department, in cooperation with the Tompkins County Health Department, has duly advertised for proposals for administration and provision of transportation services to children ages 0-5 who are enrolled in Preschool Special Education and Early Intervention programs as authorized by Tompkins County and who reside in Tompkins County, and

WHEREAS, two proposals were received by the June 16, 2009, deadline, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Health and Human Services and Budget, Capital and Finance Committees, That the contract be awarded to Birnie Bus Service, Inc., of Syracuse, New York,

RESOLVED, further, That the contract be awarded for a period of three (3) years commencing September 1, 2009, and terminating August 31, 2012, with the option to renew for an additional five-one year periods,

RESOLVED, further, That the Health Department is authorized to implement this proposal on behalf of the County, funds are provided for in Account A2960.54305 and A4054.54305.

**SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20**

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**RESOLUTION NO. - AUTHORIZATION TO ACCEPT FUNDS, EXECUTE MULTI-YEAR CONTRACTS, CREATION OF POSITION AND BUDGET ADJUSTMENT – TOBACCO CONTROL PROGRAM COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP – HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Ms. Lyczko said the Health Department applied for multi-year grant funding for the new Community Partnership Program. Mr. Schiele explained the grant would provide funding to work with the community to affect changes that would lower the incidence of tobacco use and the initiation of youth tobacco use. This work has been done for the past five years through previous Community Partnership grants, which end July 31, 2009. He also noted the County Health Department has been subcontracted for the past two years by Cortland County to oversee this grant, however, Tompkins County is now its own catchment area. The plan is to increase the number of smoke-free outdoor areas, public spaces, and work spaces, as well as reduce the amount of on-site retail advertising for smoking products through education and voluntary reduction.

Mr. Randall noted there is no component shown regarding smokeless tobacco; he is concerned due to an increase in usage over the last three years. Mr. Schiele said the increase has been noticed at local, County, and State levels. The grant's focus over the past years has been strictly smoking since it is an evidence-based program with a great deal of documentation on this aspect of tobacco.

It was **MOVED** by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Stevenson to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature.. Mr. Proto asked about the funding for the fringe benefits provided for the position and was informed the fringe cost is incorporated into the grant budget. Mr. Mareane explained the only "stranded" expense would be if the individual left the County's employ and continued health coverage under the County's plan. Mr. Proto said he would continue to express concern about the County having to fund benefits for grant-funded positions upon retirement.

In response to Mr. Proto's question concerning the City of Ithaca's proposal for a smoking ban in children's play areas in parks and to limit smoking on the Commons, Mr. Schiele said the City believes any space that someone can not easily move away from smoker should be restricted. The idea is that the non-smoker's rights for clean air take precedent. He also spoke of the need to curb exposure to youth that smoking is acceptable, providing a smoke-free environment rather than an adult right-of-passage.

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A voice vote on the resolution resulted as follows: Ayes – 3 (Legislators Randall, Robertson, and Stevenson); Noes – 1 (Legislator Proto); Excused – 1 (Legislator Burbank). RESOLUTION ADOPTED.

WHEREAS, the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) has awarded the Tompkins County Health Department five-year grant funding for \$160,000 per year, for a Tobacco Control Program Community Partnership for the period August 1, 2009, through June 30, 2014, and

WHEREAS, the purpose of this community partnership funding will be to engage local stakeholders, educate community leaders and the public, mobilize community members and organizations, strengthen tobacco-related policies, prevent and reduce tobacco use, and limit opportunities for exposure to secondhand smoke, and

WHEREAS, to accomplish the goals of this grant the Department requests the creation of one full-time position of Health Educator to fulfill strategies and activities in the work-plan, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Health and Human Services and Budget, Capital and Finance Committees, That the Health Department is authorized to accept said funds,

RESOLVED, further, That the Department is authorized to execute any and all agreements necessary to complete the requirements of the grant,

RESOLVED, further, That one position of Public Health Educator (13/763), labor grade M (13), competitive class, 35 hours per week be created effective August 1, 2009,

RESOLVED, further, That said position would only continue so long as one-hundred percent grant funding is available,

RESOLVED, further, That the Finance Director is authorized to make the following budget adjustment on his books for the Tobacco Control grant:

REVENUE:	4016.43489	Other State Grants	\$56,264
APPROPRIATION:	4016.51763	Public Health Educator	\$18,209
	.52206	Computer Equipment	\$ 2,400
	.54330	Printing	\$ 5,000
	.54333	Education & Promotion	\$ 4,000
	.54412	Travel and Training	\$ 1,500
	.54414	Local Mileage	\$ 400
	.54442	Professional Service Fees	\$16,000
	.54452	Postage	\$ 2,200
	.58800	Fringes	\$ 6,555

**SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20**

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Explanation:

The Tompkins County Health Department has received New York State Department of Health tobacco funding for more than ten years. The goals of the Tobacco Control Program are to reduce tobacco advertising to discourage initiation of tobacco use by children in our community and to encourage policies that limit exposure to secondhand smoke in order to reduce the health consequences of tobacco. The New York State Department of Health recently awarded a ‘Public Health Excellence Award’ to the Tompkins County Health Department, the City of Ithaca, and Tobacco Free Tompkins for collaborative efforts to create a tobacco free New York.

**Department of Social Services**

**Report on Temporary Assistance and Food Stamps**

This item was postponed.

**RESOLUTION NO. - AWARD OF RURAL FEEDER PROPOSAL TO ITHACA DISPATCH, INC., AND AUTHORIZE MULTI-YEAR CONTRACT**

Ms. Bodner said the rural feeder service was developed approximately one year ago in response to requests from individuals receiving public assistance having difficulty reaching regular bus stops. The original request for proposals only resulted in two proposals; neither were complete and were rejected. Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit (TCAT) had considered a proposal but their costs would be too high to make a proposal worthwhile. Since the startup of the program is already delayed due to the rejection of the proposals, it is imperative to be started as soon as possible to retain the grant funds. Ms. Bodnar said the lack of transportation is making it difficult for clients in Enfield and Newfield to seek and maintain employment.

Ms. Bodnar said information was provided to TCAT to indicate areas of concentration for individuals receiving food stamps (less than 200 percent of poverty) in addition to information on the need to enable clients to utilize public transportation. She noted it is hoped to be able to work in partnership with other business to enable use of public transportation. Mr. Proto noted he does not know what the ramification to TCAT could be if the rural feeder pilot were to significantly increase ridership to the point of requiring another bus. The Committee was informed that during the initial time period of the pilot program, a review of the needs of clientele, as well as the impact it would have on TCAT would be examined and adjustments made accordingly. Mr. Proto said he would like to see some preliminary data indicating the number of individuals requiring service. Ms. Bodnar said only 30 percent of the residents have access to TCAT. Mr. Proto expressed concern that he had not heard of the program prior to this time. Ms. Bodnar explained that until now, no Committee action was required.

Ms. Robertson wanted to support the resolution, but expressed confusion on the budget figures. Ms. Bodnar explained there are many JARC grants, with specific funding from other areas. There is \$111,000 from JARC, with \$185,000 reserve funding, and also several other JARC streams providing funding. Mr. Proto spoke of concern regarding the STOA funding, which is being cut by the State. Ms. Bodnar said Mr. Mengel is still working on the funding issue and will send a letter of support for Ithaca Dispatch, Inc., to become STOA approved. The STOA funding is based upon estimated mileage. Ms. Bodnar explained this model was chosen to reduce total costs as well as assist in increasing ridership for TCAT. She also noted that Ithaca Dispatch, Inc., is aware of insurance requirements for the rural feeder pilot. It was also noted there are FTA requirements that would have to be met, however, it is not a requirement for drivers to be members of a union.

It was MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Stevenson to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature meeting on August 4<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Robertson said she would like to allow time for Mr. Mengel and Ms. Bodnar to review and finalize the budget. It was noted Mr. Mengel would be available after July 27<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Robertson suggested a marketing plan be developed for the pilot.

A meeting with Ms. Bodnar, Ms. Carey, Mr. Proto, TCAT, Mr. Mengel, and Ithaca Dispatch, Inc., will take place to answer some remaining questions.

A voice vote on the resolution resulted as follows: Ayes – 4; Noes – 0; Excused – 1 (Legislator Burbank). RESOLUTION ADOPTED.

WHEREAS, Tompkins County Department of Social Services, in cooperation with Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council, Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, GADABOUT Transportation Services, and other transportation providers, identified a need to develop rural feeder service to provide rural residents with improved access to TCAT bus service, and

WHEREAS, the County Rural Feeder service is initially a pilot project in the Towns of Enfield and Newfield, which will be evaluated to advise the County of lessons learned for expanding service to other rural towns, and

WHEREAS, County Department of Social Services staff met with the town boards of Newfield and Enfield to solicit their input for service and incorporated local ideas in the project scope, and

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WHEREAS, Tompkins County duly advertised and solicited request for proposals (RFP 09-04) for an operator to operate the demand responsive Rural Feeder service, to convey people to and from TCAT bus routes at central bus stops, and, concurrently, to provide access for rural residents to the hamlets of Newfield and Enfield, and

WHEREAS, on June 17, 2009, the County received one proposal from Ithaca Dispatch, Inc., to operate Rural Feeder service in the Towns of Newfield and Enfield under contract with the County at the following prices for the first year with subsequent years to be negotiated:

Contract Price: \$60 per revenue hour  
Fuel escalation Clause Increase \$1.00 per hour for each \$.25 increase in fuel price above a baseline of \$2.25 per gallon, as determined by the Energy Information Administration average for Upstate New York

, and

WHEREAS, the prices were reviewed, found acceptable and determined to be within the budget estimate by Department staff, and

WHEREAS, Rural Feeder service will be funded with Federal Transit Administration Section 5316 Job Access and Reverse Commute grants NY-37-X053 and NY-90-X606, Section 5317 New Freedom grant NY-90-X608 and NYSDOT Community Solutions for Transportation Grants Years 7 and 8 up to \$275,000 for one year, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Health and Human Services and the Budget and Capital Committees, That the Tompkins County Legislature awards the Rural Feeder Service proposal to Ithaca Dispatch, Inc., with the term of the contract to be two years with an opportunity for three subsequent one year renewals, subject to annual approval of funding by the County,

RESOLVED, further, That the Contracts Coordinator is authorized to execute an agreement with Ithaca Dispatch, Inc. on behalf of the County,

RESOLVED, further, That the Finance Director is authorized to make payments from the Transportation Grant account 5631.54425 Service Contracts for this contract,

RESOLVED, further, That the County Department of Social Services staff is authorized to provide technical assistance to Ithaca Dispatch, Inc. to assist the operator to comply with Federal and State regulations, to coordinate Rural Feeder operations with TCAT and to qualify for New York State Transit Operating Assistance, in order to successfully implement the scope of services in the Rural Feeder proposal.

**SEQR ACTION: TYPE 11-20**

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Ms. Robertson was excused at this time (5:00 p.m.).

**Office for the Aging**

**RESOLUTION NO. – AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE A SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT WITH NUTRITION FOR THE ELDERLY IN TOMPKINS COUNTY, INC d/b/a FOODNET MEALS ON WHEELS**

MOVED by Mr. Randall, seconded by Mr. Stevenson, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature. the following resolution to the full Legislature. RESOLUTION ADOPTED.

WHEREAS, Governor David Paterson has authorized the use of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Federal funding whereby Federal sources will allay the cost of providing nutrition services to seniors in Tompkins County, and

WHEREAS, Foodnet Meals on Wheels is duly qualified to provide these services that include the provision of both congregate and home delivered meals, and

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Office for the Aging currently subcontracts with Foodnet Meals on Wheels in order to provide congregate and home delivered meals, and

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WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Office for the Aging recommends Foodnet Meals on Wheels be enabled to carry out these services, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Health and Human Services Committee, That the County authorizes a supplemental agreement with Foodnet Meals on Wheels,

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

REVENUE	A6776.44772	Federal Revenue	\$17,661
APPROPRIATION	A.6776.54491	Subcontracts	\$17,661

**SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20**

#### Foodnet Award Announcement

Ms. Holmes thanked Ms. Lynch, Public Information Officer, for the press release regarding Foodnet Meals on Wheels having won a \$1,000 Silver Award from the Meals on Wheels Association of America (MOWAA) for their 2009 March Mayors for Meals campaign.

#### Update on Legislative Member-Item Grant from Assemblywoman Lifton

Ms. Holmes reported the Office for the Aging received a \$10,000 member-item grant from Assemblywoman Lifton's office for home repair funding. This item will come forward when finalized by the State.

#### Update on New York State Office for the Aging Community Living Program Grant

Ms. Holmes reported she will be applying for a grant from the New York State Office for the Aging, who will be partnering with selected counties across the state. The grant is \$25,000 per year for two years and provides funding designed for nursing home diversion activities. She will know by September, with funding starting by October 1.

#### Evaluation Summary – Northside/Southside Program

Ms. Holmes provided a written report on the Northside/Southside Program, addressing social isolation and the offering of social programming among the predominately African/American seniors in the Northside/Southside locations of Ithaca. The evaluation indicated the program is positive, with participants satisfied with the program. Some suggestions were offered in the evaluation process.

#### Adjournment

On motion the meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by Karen Fuller, Deputy Clerk*