

Minutes

Planning, Development & Environmental Quality Committee Tompkins County Legislature

Regular Meeting

July 9, 2007 3:30 PM Courthouse Conference Room

Members Present: Martha Robertson (Chair), Jim Dennis, Pam Mackesey, Frank Proto, Tyke Randall

Staff: Diane Bradac, Tompkins Workforce New York
Fernando De Aragon, ITCTC
Kate Hackett, TCPD
Joan Jurkowich, TCPD
Jackie Kippola, T C Administration
Ed Marx, Commissioner of Planning & PW
Julia Mattick, Tompkins Workforce New York
Paula Younger, T C Administration
Kathy Wilsea, TCPD

Visitors: Fred Bonn, Convention & Visitors Bureau
Dick Charsky, Community Arts Partnership
Jean McPheeters, Chamber of Commerce
Michael Stamm, Tompkins County Area Development
Stu Stein, Strategic Tourism Planning Board
Steve Wampler, Central New York Radio Group
Scott Wiggins, STPB

1) Call to Order & Agenda Changes -- The meeting was called to order at 3:30 PM by the Chair, Martha Robertson, with all members present. Frank Proto asked to add an item regarding the Water Resources Council. He reviewed a memo he sent to committee members on 6/18 asking for their questions and comments on the proposed monitoring plan for the southern end of Cayuga Lake that is being developed by Cornell University and the Water Resources Council. He asked that questions be submitted to Kate Hackett this week. Martha requested that WRC report to PDEQ, also.

2) 2008 Budget Requests

a) Soil & Water Conservation District – Craig Schutt reported that the SWCD board of directors just met earlier today, and had a report from their accountant. 2007 County budget target was \$104,000, and they also received one-time funding of \$5,000. SWCD still seeks \$109,000 plus at least one dollar, as criteria for Environmental Protection Fund grants are that the applicant needs to receive an increase in County support. This increase could lead to \$20,000 in EPF grants. Craig provided information from their audit, which showed that the County contribution can leverage a lot of funds from other sources. The audit information was in pie charts that showed percentages of their budget, and Martha Robertson requested that dollar amounts be added for the Legislature review.

b) Tompkins Workforce New York – Julia Mattick provided a sheet of key accomplishments and 2008 goals. In 2007, the Workforce Investment Board received \$86,000 in funds from IDA and none from Tompkins County. Recently, on their attorney's advice, IDA has notified WIB that they cannot provide any future funding due to changes in NYS law. Julia said WIB has received some unexpected funding that included administration money, so her request for 2008 may be around \$70,000.

c) Workforce Development One Stop Center – Diane Bradac provided a handout that illustrated 95% of One Stop funding comes from state and federal grants, and showed some differences between WIB and NYS restrictions. Her department needs County funding for flexibility, because they typically have several grants going on with different ending cycles. This is a department that makes a difference every day for County

residents. They seek \$30,000 in County funds. This can leverage \$600,000 to \$700,000 in grant money. Martha asked that information for the Legislature provide the total of grants, and what is being leveraged by the County contribution. Jim thought that would be useful information from all departments/agencies in the budget process.

3) Workforce Development One Stop Center

a) Budget Adjustment – Moved by Pam Mackesey, seconded by Frank. This moves the remainder of a grant into position for spending. Passed unanimously.

2) 2008 Budget Requests (Continued)

d) Planning Department – A memo was included with the agenda package. Ed Marx said the County Administrator's goal seeks a \$20,000 reduction in the TCPD budget. The department proposes use of unallocated rollover and having their target reinstated to the current level. This would leave a small amount of rollover that would be discussed in the budget process, possibly for computer equipment. He acknowledged this gets the department closer to a difficult situation in the future. Ed said the Flood Hazard Mitigation Program will be an over target request for 2008, to re-establish the target program. 2007 FHMP was funded as a one-time item.

e) Tompkins County Area Development – Michael Stamm said the County has provided \$10,000 for each of the last few years, with the County encouraging the Industrial Development Agency to make up the difference. TCAD's current budget is \$495,000, with five employees. They had thought IDA couldn't afford to support TCAD, but now it looks like fee-based revenue will be available to support TCAD. The request for County money remains around \$10,000.

4) Tompkins County Area Development

a) **Resolution:** Recommending that the Tompkins County Legislature, as the Elected Legislative Body of Tompkins County, New York, Approving a Certain Project to be Undertaken by the Tompkins County Industrial Development Agency for the Benefit of Cayuga Medical Center at Ithaca – Michael Stamm explained that the ability of IDA to issue bonds sunset 6/30/2007 (for tax exempt bonds to a tax exempt agency). There is disagreement in the NYS Senate and Assembly on bills that would provide the authority to issue bonds in the future. Passing this resolution only sets it up so IDA is ready to establish a closing date when legislation is in place. Cayuga Medical Center would approach the Dormitory Authority if needed. Frank suggested drafting a resolution to NYS in support of new legislation, and including the economic impact of job creation by the bond deals. Michael will draft a resolution for a special PDEQ meeting prior to the Legislature meeting on 7/17. For the Cayuga Medical Center bond resolution under consideration, amendments were suggested, which Michael Stamm had discussed with bond counsel. The amended version passed unanimously in roll call.

b) TCAD Update – Michael provided some background, reminding PDEQ members that TCAD is not part of the County government. Their goal is to draw their income 1/3 from fees, 1/3 from government, and 1/3 from membership. Their mission is job creation. They collect and analyze a lot of data on jobs, and are trying to track entry-level jobs that can train and move up the career ladder. They work with businesses that export outside of the County. They don't want to work with companies that compete with other businesses in Tompkins County. In the future, they hope to develop an early stage equity fund, develop a workforce development strategy with WIB, and make recommendations on state legislation. They recognize the importance of infrastructure in the housing component of their Economic Development Strategy, which also has goals concerning workforce skills and community revitalization.

5) Strategic Tourism Planning Board

a) Budget Request -- This was previewed last month, and Jackie Kippola provided details to committee members in a separate mailing. Pam said she would like to see information on the changes in the room inventory over the years and the corresponding changes in room tax income. Scott Wiggins said STPB requested information from their program committees on 2007 budget, plus cost of living increases, plus human resources increases. They also asked for supplemental "wish lists" so they could examine ideas. Since the Convention & Visitors Bureau fills hotel rooms, they gave them the biggest budget increase as a

new base (not one-time funding). Room tax income continues to exceed expectations. Jim Dennis inquired about a newspaper article he saw concerning theft by an employee of the Finger Lakes Tourism Alliance. Scott Wiggins, as the STPB representative on FLTA, said an audit has been conducted and civil and criminal charges are being pressed against an employee. Basically, FLTA will cut back on expenditures until everything is caught up, and this will not affect STPB. Approval of the proposed budget was moved by Jim, seconded by Tyke Randall and passed unanimously. Jean McPheeters said some municipalities are using their Beautification budget for signage, and additional signage money is available. One specific item in the STPB budget is for an intern to interact with the municipalities. Stu Stein said this is American Bloom Week, and judges will be here this week in order to review Ithaca for the competition.

c) **Resolution:** Funding of Tourism Marketing Web-Site – Moved by Tyke, seconded by Jim. This money would go to updating and advertising/marketing the ticket center website. The website has only had one update in seven years. It will go out to bid, and Jackie Kippola has authority to review applications and select a contractor. Passed 4:0 (Pam excused at this point).

b) Celebrations – Jackie Kippola briefly reported on this County budget line. It hasn't changed in years, and provides approximately \$615 for Veterans Day, \$615 for Flag Day, and \$1,500 for Memorial Day grave flags. Towns match the amount for grave flags.

6) ITCTC

a) **Resolution:** Appropriation of 2007-2008 Statewide Planning and Research Budget for the ITCTC – Fernando de Aragon explained that MPOs in New York State chip in to do some joint projects, and this is a joint project that our MPO will lead. This resolution moves the money into the County budget for spending. Moved by Pam, seconded by Jim, passed 4:0 (Frank excused at this point). [Pam was excused at 5:25 PM.]

b) ITCTC – 2008 Budget Request – Fernando said they only expect to need some funds to pay for interns.

7) Tompkins County Planning Department

a) Flood Hazard Mitigation Projects – Approval for allocation of \$25,000 for projects was moved by Jim, seconded by Tyke. Frank asked about the salt storage facility, and Kate Hackett explained the property owner has been filling in the flood plain, and DEC and the municipality are trying to negotiate a resolution. According to Town of Caroline officials, \$15,000 may be available for a funding match. There has been no specific outreach to property owners yet, but Kate Hackett would begin that outreach if this funding is approved.

Frank moved to remove Whitham from the list until such time as we can confirm whether the owner will contribute. Motion to amend seconded by Tyke. Kate said the watershed assessment showed that we were lucky the landowner hasn't installed riprap, and the 2006 flooding has set the area up as a good riparian buffer. Ed Marx said the new emphasis, following the watershed assessment, is to address the situation and provide benefits upstream and downstream, too. This is not about helping a landowner. Frank said this property has had County and municipal help in the past and it's time for the owner to contribute. Tyke said he has similar reservations about the Salmon Creek project, as he is familiar with the property and they had stream restoration work done in the past. Martha Robertson reminded members FHMP is supposed to be going to a holistic approach since the Milone and MacBroom studies were completed. Ed said the properties will not be cleared and used for something else – the owners give up the property, basically. Tyke questioned working on the same property again if previous work did not help the situation. He feels these projects benefit the landowners the most. Martha asked if municipal support is required, and Kate Hackett said that is only required if the property is owned by the municipality, and FHMP would seek municipal approval if the new project changes prior work by the municipality. Kate said formal agreements of property owner responsibilities can be developed. Kate had a phone call from Dooley Kiefer about the abandoned railroad bridges being removed, and Dooley suggested that debris be removed rather than bridges. By vote of 2 (Proto, Randall): 2 (Robertson, Dennis), motion to amend failed.

Dooley's suggestion to change to removal of woody debris was moved by Jim, seconded by Frank and passed 4:0.

Kate Hackett pointed out the stream permits will expire 9/15/2007. If projects are not approved this month, many can't occur this year. Design work will be provided pro bono. Frank called the question. Motion failed by 2 (Robertson, Dennis): 2 (Proto, Randall) vote.

Questions and concerns should be sent to staff and this will be addressed at the special meeting on 7/17. Frank said there is a need for respect of the opinions of those who have seen the history of these properties, too, as well as professionals.

Subsequent agenda items will be addressed at the special meeting on 7/17.

9) Adjournment -- The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Wilsea, Secretary
Tompkins County Planning Dept.