

Minutes
Tompkins County Council of Governments
Thursday, August 25, 2011
Scott Heyman Conference Room

Approved 9-22-2011

Members Present: (11 municipalities)

T/Ithaca – H. Engman	V/Groton – B. Conger (excused at 4:00 p.m.)
T/Newfield – R. Driscoll	T/Danby – R. Dietrich, L. Shawley
T/Ulysses – E. Thomas	Co./Tompkins – W. Burbank
C/Ithaca – C. Peterson	V/Lansing – D. Hartill (excused at 3:35 p.m.)
V/Cayuga Heights – K. Supron	T/Enfield – R. Barriere
T/Lansing – K. Miller	

Municipalities Not in Attendance: (6 municipalities) V/Dryden, V/Freeville, T/Groton, T/Dryden, V/Trumansburg, T/Caroline

County Staff: J. Mareane, M. Lynch, Administration; D. Kiley, Tompkins County Planning Department

Call to Order

Mr. Engman called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

Changes to the Agenda

The discussion of school board representation was withdrawn from the agenda. Two announcements were added to the agenda.

Water Resources Council

Mr. Engman announced there is a vacancy on the Water Resources Council for a municipal government representative; anyone interested should contact Frank Proto, Chair of the Water Resources Council.

Update on Cell Towers

Mr. Engman reported he tried to get in touch with Dan Hoffman, City of Ithaca Attorney, to get an update on the current status but has not heard back. They are waiting to hear information on municipalities sending ordinances to the consultant for review.

Approval of Minutes of July 28, 2011

It was MOVED by Mr. Hartill, seconded by Ms. Conger, to approve the minutes of July 28, 2011. A voice vote resulted as follows: Ayes – 10, Noes – 0, Abstentions – 1 (Burbank). MINUTES APPROVED.

Resolution No. 002-2011: - Appropriation from TCCOG Reserve Fund - Land Use Analysis and Impact Assessment Project

Mr. Pearce reported the Steering Committee has met twice including once with the Consultant. They hope to be able to have a negotiated scope and contract by next week. Ms. Pottorff reported the balance in the Reserve Fund is presently \$2,750 with an additional \$250 expected shortly. Mr. Pearce confirmed that this is contingent upon receiving the rest of the funding and language referring to this is

included in the proposal.

Moved by Ms. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Dietrich, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present.

Whereas, the Tompkins County Council of Governments has commissioned a study on the potential impact of hydrofracking and has established a Steering Committee to oversee the Consultant's work, now therefore be it

Resolved, That TCCOG commits \$2,000 from its 2011 Funding Reserve to help pay for that Study.

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Report-Cable Negotiations

Mr. Engman said many of the contracts municipalities have with Time Warner Cable expire at the end of 2013. There has been discussion of what advantages may exist by local governments collaborating on strategies for joint negotiations or sharing information. He said considerable interest was shown after the first meeting. Pat Pryor, Chair of the County's Broadband Committee, attended the meeting and there it was suggested there may be interrelationships that both could benefit from. The following municipalities expressed interest in serving on the Cable Steering Committee:

- Town of Lansing – Kathy Miller
- Village of Groton – Chuck Rankin
- Town of Enfield – Roy Barriere or Chris Hern
- Village of Freeville – Stepahane Milinos
- Town of Danby – Ric Dietrich
- Town of Caroline – Don Barber
- Tompkins County – Michael Lane
- Town of Ithaca – Herb Engman or Rich DePaulo
- Town of Dryden – Jason Liefer
- Town of Ulysses – Elizabeth Thomas
- Town of Newfield – Richard Driscoll
- Village of Lansing – Don Hartill or another board member
- Village of Cayuga Heights – Kate Supron

Mr. Dietrich said he would be interested in getting a presentation on where the County's Broadband Committee work has gone, where its going, and what it would like to do. He believes the Time Warner franchise agreement could be an integral part of that. A meeting of this Steering Committee will be set up.

Emergency Preparedness Announcement

Ms. Lynch reported the Emergency Public Information Officer Team is engaged in undertaking a major public information campaign in conjunction with the Federal Emergency Management Agency for National Preparedness Month in September. They are trying to reach out to tie in with existing programs and events and would like municipalities to help circulate information she provided. She also asked that municipalities to circulate a two-page flyer from Ready.gov and also on the [TCCOG website](#). On September 11th they will be staffing a table at the Shops at Ithaca Mall and will be handing out information and speaking with people about emergency preparedness.

Announcement on Stormwater Management Steering Committee Meeting

Mr. Engman reported that Scott Doyle of the County's Planning Department will be sending out a formal letter and draft agenda within the next week to each supervisor and mayor regarding the initial Steering Committee meeting for the Hazard Mitigation Plan update. The meeting will be held on September 20th at 10 a.m.

Report from the Gas Drilling Task Force

Ms. Thomas reported some members met prior to this meeting to discuss how they are going to aggregate comments for municipalities to use as they respond to the draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (dSGIES) that is expected by the end of August. One of the members has created a Google document that can be shared. They are trying to make the comments clear so that municipalities can choose which things are of the most concern to them. They will provide information for members on how to access a Google document being created by one of the members once it is ready.

She reported on road preservation and said it appears all municipalities have different regulations and each town is working on individual laws to meet their needs and adjustments will be made as needed. Mr. Engman said the main goal is to get everyone to pass a law authorizing a road use permit. Once everyone has the authorization for a road use permit the ability will be there to identify when activity is going to take place and municipalities can work together to identify haul routes. The County is also working on an RPF (Request for Proposals) for assessing potential damage to roads before and after an activity takes place.

Mr. Driscoll said some municipalities have begun to draft legislation and when all of the drafts are in place there can be discussion to see where they can be brought together as much as possible so that there is a common approach across all municipalities. Mr. Driscoll said it would be best if everyone has the same enforcement.

Ms. Supon asked if the Village of Cayuga Heights would be included within the Town of Ithaca's road use law. Mr. Engman said he did not think so because the Village has its own public works department; the two agreed to get together to discuss having both public works departments work together to develop a similar ordinance.

Ms. Kiley reported several mapping presentations are being given to municipal boards throughout the County.

Ms. Thomas reported on several municipalities in and surrounding Tompkins County that have adopted land use regulations and laws banning drilling. She also reported the Task Force has requested a comment period on the dSGEIS of 180-days; a letter will be mailed soon with this request to the DEC (Department of Environmental Conservation).

Ms. Thomas will distribute the notes from the Gas Drilling Task Force to all TCCOG members. The next meeting will be September 15th.

Mr. Engman asked if members would be agreeable to having the Chair send a letter of appreciation to Senator Nozzolio. The Senator has communicated with the DEC saying since there has been bans on gas drilling near the New York City Watershed and Syracuse watershed that there should be similar protection for all of the Finger Lakes area. Mr. Engman reported the Cayuga Lake Intermunicipal Organization said they would also be sending a letter. Members supported a letter coming from TCCOG with all towns being copied.

Next Agenda Items

The following items were suggested as topics for the next agenda.

Property Tax Cap – Members were reminded of the NYCOM Property Tax Cap workshop being held on September 8th. Some municipalities reported they have begun the process of drafting legislation that would allow them to exceed the cap. If additional information is needed this will be included as an agenda topic for September. Mr. Mareane said he will report on the Smart Work Program at the September meeting.

Report on Grant Award from DEC

Ms. Pottorff reported TCCOG has been awarded a training grant through the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Division of Land and Forests through the “Reduce the Threat of Forest Pests through Community Outreach and Training” program. The grant is specifically to train those individuals who are in direct contract with trees and will learn how to prepare for the EAB. (Emerald Ash Borer). The Planning Department will be taking the lead and will coordinate this training.

Presentation by Dr. Adam Law on the Health Affects of Gas Drilling

Dr. Law, a local Endocrinologist, said he has received an enthusiastic reception from local medical staff and noted the Tompkins County Medical Society has adopted a resolution supporting a moratorium on gas drilling until the Environmental Protection Agency completes its study. The New York State Medical Society has also passed a similar resolution. He said he has been working on this with Bob Howarth, Tony Ingraffea, and Stan Scobie and they have formed the organization “Physicians, Scientists, and Engineers for Healthy Energy”. They now have a website and are trying to promote new research: <http://psehealthyenergy.com>.

Ms. Conger was excused at this time.

Dr. Law made a presentation on the health effects of unconventional gas extraction from shale. A copy of the [presentation](#) can be found on the TCCOG website.

Dr. Law spoke of the length of time it takes to develop studies on the health affects of hydraulic fracturing and believes there should be a ban on drilling until it can be fully studied. Mr. Driscoll asked to what extent medical professionals are aware of this. Dr. Law explained that more emphasis needs to be placed on this and he continues to provide more information to people at the State Medical Society. Mr. Engman believes more attention could be gained at the State level by emphasizing the impacts on public health. Mr. Burbank asked what can be done at the local level to help. Dr. Law said engaging the local hospital and medical providers in the community will be very important.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Pottorff, TC Legislature Office