

**Tompkins County Council of Governments  
August 27, 2009  
Old Jail Conference Room**

Members Present:

T/Caroline – D. Barber	V/Cayuga Heights – J Gilmore
T/Danby – L. Shawley	V/Groton – E. Conger
T/Dryden – M. Sumner	V/Trumansburg – D. Nottke
T/Enfield – R. Barriere	C/Ithaca – C. Peterson
T/Ithaca – H. Engman	Co./Tompkins – M. Robertson
T/Groton – G. Morey	

Municipalities Not in Attendance: T/Lansing, V/Freeville, T/Newfield, V/Dryden, V/Lansing, T/Ulysses

Guests: C. Chock, County Legislature; J. Mareane, J. Kippola, M. Lynch, County Administration; S. Locey, SMSI Health Insurance Project; P. Dougherty, Town of Enfield; S. Shackelford, Ithaca Journal; K. Stoner, Climate Protection Initiative; C. Nelson, K. McCarthy, Emergency Preferred Procurement Consortium (Tompkins County)

Staff: M. Pottorff, Legislature Office

**Call to Order**

Mr. Barber, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

**Review of Agenda**

No changes were made to the agenda.

**Review of Meeting Minutes: July 23, 2009**

It was MOVED by Ms. Conger (V/Groton), seconded by Ms. Nottke (V/Trumansburg), and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present, to approve the minutes of the July 23, 2009 as amended. MINUTES APPROVED.

**SMSI Health Insurance Project**

Mr. Locey provided an update on the number of municipalities that have joined the Consortium to date and said out of 17 municipalities, 14 have adopted resolutions. The Town of Newfield adopted a resolution to not join; the villages of Freeville and Lansing are still under consideration. The Village of Cayuga Heights has committed to put all of their Blue Cross contracts into the Consortium (15) and the contracts with the Teamsters (19) are still under consideration. Mr. Locey said he is hopeful that by January 1<sup>st</sup> they will be included and have included them in the figures at this point. He said the total number of contracts covered in the Consortium is slightly over 2,100.

Mr. Locey spoke of the Teamsters and said he attended a meeting last week with the individual who is in charge of running the health and benefit welfare fund and discussed the ancillary benefits that are offered, including the life insurance, dental provisions, and medical plan. He said they are very interested in working with the Consortium and allowing the Consortium to take on the medical plans for the Teamsters and still providing the ancillary benefits through the Teamsters. He noted this is different information than what has been communicated in the past. A letter has been sent to the Teamsters outlining conversations that have taken place and he is waiting for a response back from them.

Mr. Locey distributed a copy of the proposed agenda for the first Board of Directors meeting that will be held on August 31<sup>st</sup>. The agenda included an overview of the Consortium, election of officers, authorization of health plans that have been developed, a vote on the recommendation for the Third Party Administrator, discussion on the Board's relationship to the Health Benefits Steering Committee, and scheduling of future meetings.

Ms. Robertson spoke of recommendations for a Third Party Administrator and asked how a selection would be made. Mr. Locey said the Health Benefits Steering Committee reviewed all of the proposals over a course of several meetings. Final interviews were held and the Committee is recommending Blue Cross Blue Shield. They were very close; however, the consensus of the Committee was that BC/BS had a slight financial advantage, particularly on the reimbursements side; they were slightly more expensive on the administrative side but overall they came out 1.4 to 2% better on the overall budget. He said one thing there was concern about was collective bargaining agreements of the various entities. Several of the agreements have written into them that benefits cannot be changed and there were feelings expressed that using an Administrator other than BC/BS would represent a significant change. Mr. Locey said the consensus of the Steering Committee was to recommend BC/BS for a one-year contract with stipulations that it would be referred out to bid during the first year of operation. The purpose of going out to bid again after one year is to allow time to collect information and data and to gain further input by all parties.

Mr. Locey said he will get Ms. Sumner some information on the Administrator proposals. She asked how the timing of the agreement will work. Mr. Locey said they will operate under the current agreement with the resolutions until such time when the NYS Insurance Department approves the agreement. This will take place before municipalities sign the final agreement.

Mr. Barber circulated an analysis of responses from the third party administrators.

**RESOLUTION NO.                    - RECOMMENDING AGREEMENT FOR THIRD PARTY  
ADMINISTRATOR FOR HEALTH INSURANCE – TOMPKINS  
COUNTY HEALTH INSURANCE CONSORTIUM**

MOVED by Mr. Barber, seconded by Mr. Morey. Ms. Robertson said she would have like to have the information circulated prior to this meeting and requested action be deferred to later in the meeting. Mr. Barber said the Steering Committee just made the recommendation yesterday. The resolution was approved later in the meeting.

**RESOLUTION NO.    002-09   - SUPPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS'  
APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM CHAIR FOR GREATER  
TOMPKINS COUNTY HEALTH INSURANCE  
CONSORTIUM**

MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Ms. Sumner, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present.

WHEREAS, in 2007, the County, on behalf of TCCOG, accepted an incentive grant award under the New York State Share Municipal Services Program, and

WHEREAS, the grant's purpose is to assist the municipalities in Tompkins County to create a local municipal health insurance consortium, and

WHEREAS, the Health Insurance Consortium has developed health benefits coverage for all participating municipalities with the intent to provide a net savings to the taxpayers of Tompkins County, and

WHEREAS, TCCOG agreed that the agreement for creating the Greater Tompkins County Health Insurance Consortium is ready for municipalities to review, and

WHEREAS, TCCOG members understand that the Consortium needs a chair to provide guidance during the early stages of the Consortium's formation, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That as of August 27, 2009, TCCOG appoints Don Barber as chair of the Consortium, on an interim basis, until such time that the Consortium Board of Directors convenes and formally appoints a chair, vice-chair, chief fiscal officer, and secretary.

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Mr. Barber thanked Ms. Kippola for all of the work she has done on this.

### **Natural Gas Update**

Mr. Barber said they have been working with Ed Marx, Tompkins County Commissioner of Planning and Public Works. on the development of a local law to maintain our roads and doing road preservation. He is still in the process of working on that and he hopes to see something in a draft form in the next week. Mr. Barber said it would not be a law municipalities will have to adopt but will be available as a template. He said Tompkins County will see a lot of drilling with a significant number of trucks traveling on roads. The purpose of the law is to prevent taxpayers from subsidizing this new venture. Ms. Shawley said the Town of Danby is planning a meeting to bring all highway superintendents together to discuss this once the law is available.

Ms. Robertson reported she had contact with Senator Malcolm Smith's staff and asked about gas drilling and was given a contact name. Ms. Robertson is following up with that individual and working to make sure Albany is fully aware of this issue. Mr. Engman said there was a radio report that there will be a 90-day period to respond to the SDGEIS when it comes out.

### **Broadband**

Ms. Chock said she had contact with Mr. Bartosch of Clarity Connect who spoke at the last meeting. He said he submitted an application and received support from three counties and 16 towns.

### **Cell Tower Committee**

Ms. Robertson said the Committee met on July 29. The Committee discussed sending out an RFP for legal services to: provide a template to see what kinds of ordinances could be developed, advise on intermunicipal cooperation, review of existing ordinances and make recommendations, and to come up with a model of how to address this. Ms. Robertson said existing ordinances are being collected and Mr. Shurtleff is collecting updates on the tall sites map and inventory list. She said they will also be looking at a technical consultant to help deal with the geography in the County and producing technical criteria for sites.

### **Dog Control**

Mr. Barber said the Town of Ithaca, City of Ithaca, Towns of Enfield, Newfield, Caroline, Ulysses, and Danby have put together a Memorandum of Understanding. The SPCA will be moving away from providing dog control services and will be creating a not-for-profit called "Tompkins County Animal Control". The amount of fees for 2010 will be the same as 2009. He said the MOU deals with organizational issues and there are two things that need to be resolved: dog census in 2010 and what the relationship between the animal control and municipalities over licensing. He said he would like to

schedule a meeting in September with all of the participating municipalities and their clerks to discuss licensing. Mr. Barber will continue to keep TCCOG informed as this moves forward.

### **Tompkins County Climate Protection Initiative (TCCPI)**

Katie Stoner, Assistant Coordinator for the Initiative, said they have been working for a little over a year trying to bring together different sectors of the community to mobilize around climate protection through energy efficiency initiatives as well as greenhouse gas reductions. This work began by meeting with key leaders around the community and over a three-month period significant interest was expressed. They now meet monthly and have a group of representatives from the business sector, education, non-profit, and government. They have been working towards four main goals with the overarching goal to create a model that can be applied through other communities across the United States. She said they believe this is feasible because Ithaca is already in a leadership role nationally when it comes to sustainability and many communities are already moving in this direction.

Ms. Stoner outlined the following goals of the TCCPI:

1. Development of a strategy, a target, and a timeline for achieving significant reductions. She said this goal was easily accomplished when the County stated the strategy for greenhouse gas emission reductions.
2. Establish a peer-to-peer mentoring network. They want to have a forum for support and to work through challenges and successes. This has been taking place on a monthly basis.
3. Create a Consortium that will allow them to create financing mechanisms to purchase some of the bids and services that are necessary to meet their goals of reduced greenhouse gas emissions.
4. Development of a data collection process and a benchmarking tool that will enable them to carry out energy audits, track and monitor energy consumption in buildings, and to fully understand what the base return on the investments will need for the types of programs they hope to implement.

Ms. Stoner spoke of the “Big Belly”, which is a solar trash compactor, an alternative to a typical trash compactor that has the capacity to hold four times as much as a regular trash receptacle. This results in less frequent trash pickups. In addition, they are solar powered.

Ms. Stoner extended an invitation to TCCOG members to attend a meeting; they are held on the last Friday of each month at 9 a.m. at the Chamber of Commerce or view the website: [www.tccpi.org](http://www.tccpi.org). Mr. Barber said Katie Borgella of the Tompkins County Planning Department has offered to be TCCOG’s representative to the Steering Committee.

### **Finger Lakes Environmentally Preferred Procurement Consortium**

Mr. Morey explained the background of the Preferred Procurement Consortium, stating members are local municipalities, educational institutions, and businesses across Tompkins County. The purpose of the Consortium is to strengthen the market with environmentally friendly products, diversion from the solid waste system, and to promote environmental health. They believe that if they can aggregate usage through purchasing leverages they can save a significant amount of funds. Mr. Morey asked that TCCOG approve the following resolution and become a member of the Consortium. Ms. McCarthy recommended members view the website: [fingerlakesbuygreen.org](http://fingerlakesbuygreen.org).

**RESOLUTION NO. 003-09 - APPROVAL OF BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE FINGER LAKES ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERRED PROCUREMENT CONSORTIUM (FLEPPC)**

MOVED by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Gilmore, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present.

Whereas, the Finger Lakes Environmentally Preferred Procurement Consortium (FLEPPC) is a consortium comprised of members from municipalities, educational institutions, and business across Tompkins County who have come together with the mission of encouraging and increasing the use of and procurement by individuals and entities within its boundaries of recycled, recycled-content, and environmentally preferable products and services, and

Whereas, FLEPPC seeks to strengthen the markets for such products, maximize diversion of materials from the solid waste/disposal stream, and promote both human and environmental health, and

Whereas, FLEPPC's aggregate purchasing leverage has the potential to be an enormously effective tool which can save tax dollars, set the standard for private industries, expand the marketplace for "green" technologies, and consequently make these technologies and environmentally preferable products more available to all consumers, and

Whereas, FLEPPC's vision is to protect the environment and the health of the citizens of Tompkins County through market-based strategies, and encourage members to collaborate and use its collective purchasing power to promote the use of safe, cost-effective, energy-efficient, and environmentally sound products, now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Tompkins County Council of Governments does hereby approve becoming a member of FLEPPC.

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It was MOVED by Ms. Peterson, seconded by Mr. Gilmore, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to appoint Glen Morey as the TCCOG representative to the Environmentally Preferred Procurement Consortium.

**Emergency Services**

Ms. Shawley said the Town of Danby is undertaking many efforts with regard to emergency services. She spoke of the possibility of a pandemic flu and said someone has assisted the Town in producing several different plans for committees. The Town of Danby is moving ahead in getting committees together and planning workshops. Beth Harrington of the Tompkins County Department of Emergency Response is working on this with them. Ms. Shawley distributed copies of an invitation for individuals to become a participant in pre-event planning groups for all-hazard and pandemic flu response. Ms. Nelson said Ms. Harrington is working with the information collected by the Town of Danby and is preparing a model that will be available for other municipalities to use.

**Health Insurance Consortium (continued)**

Ms. Kippola circulated a list of appointments that have been made to the Board of Directors.

**RESOLUTION NO. 004-09 - RECOMMENDING AGREEMENT FOR THIRD PARTY ADMINISTRATOR FOR HEALTH INSURANCE – TOMPKINS COUNTY HEALTH INSURANCE CONSORTIUM**

MOVED by Mr. Barber, seconded by Mr. Morey, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present.

WHEREAS, the County, on behalf of the Tompkins County Council of Governments (TCCOG) has been awarded a Shared Municipal Services Incentive (SMSI) Grant from the New York State Department of State, and

WHEREAS, the total grant amount to Tompkins County is \$266,030 to design and establish a Health Insurance Consortium for the employees of all municipalities within Tompkins County, and

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Council of Governments (TCCOG) appointed a Health Benefits Steering Committee to review and recommend specific elements necessary to establish the Consortium, and

WHEREAS, the County, on behalf of the TCCOG and the Steering Committee issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for third party administrator to administer the health insurance of the Consortium, and

WHEREAS the Steering Committee reviewed several proposals, and interviewed three firms, and

WHEREAS, the Steering Committee determined that the best fit for such services is Excellus BlueCross BlueShield, Central New York Region, and recommends to TCCOG that Excellus serve as the health insurance third party administrator for the period of January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Health Benefits Steering Committee, that TCCOG recommends that the Consortium enter into an agreement with Excellus BlueCross BlueShield, Central New York Region to provide health insurance third party administrator services for the Consortium for a period of January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010.

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### **Next Agenda**

The following items were suggested for inclusion on the next agenda:

H1N1 Flu – update from the Health Department  
Update on dog control  
Update on Emergency Services efforts  
Update on the Health Insurance Consortium  
Discussion of deer management

### **Announcement**

Ms. Conger announced the State adopted a law to designate a portion of Route 38 as the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Highway of Valor. It runs from Sterling, New York to Owego. There will be a dedication ride on October 17 starting in Owego at 10 a.m. They will make a stop in Groton at 11:30 a.m. where there is a memorial to a Lieutenant Terrence Graves who is a Medal of Honor recipient posthumously from his service in Vietnam.

Information will be circulated to all members.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Pottorff, TC Legislature Office