

their review. As they move forward they have to make sure all of the entities (City, County, towns and villages) review the document and eventually adopt it. He is in the process of scheduling an initial meeting with all municipalities to discuss what it means to joining a consortium and what the impact will be from both a control and financial perspective. They will also hold centralized meetings to address common, across-the-board issues that arise. They will also be meeting with unions and retirees. He noted that financial savings is expected to be much greater for the smaller entities. At the present time they are issuing proposals for administrator of both the medical plan and the prescription drug program. Once received, the financial information and plan design can be finalized and distributed to all entities. The agreement is still draft and additional comments are still being accepted. The attorneys for the Town of Ithaca and the County have both reviewed the draft agreement.

Mr. Locey said he is looking for adoption by the involved entities between March and July, 2009.

Mr. Engman spoke of a review of the agreement by Susan Brock, the Town of Ithaca Attorney. He outlined the following concerns the Town of Ithaca continues to have with the agreement:

- 1) The Town of Ithaca Attorney (Susan Brock) does not find the definition of "Pro Rata Share" to be clear. Mr. Locey addressed this and stated part of the reason that it is left to the discretion of the Board is because different situations may require different formulas to be developed in terms of distribution of pro rata. Some of the items that are in the agreement are left up to the discretion of the Board of Directors because if they put a specific formula in the agreement it would be difficult to change at a later time. The attorney believes and Mr. Locey concurs, that there needs to be some level of flexibility to the Board of Directors to define what some of the terms and conditions are going to be based on the specific circumstances of the situation before them.

Mr. Dietrich said he thinks thresholds need to be developed. For instance, if two towns were to drop out and costs increase that situation could be dealt with; however, if several towns were to drop out there may need to be thresholds to protect entities from incurring the costs that may arise due to that. Mr. Locey said the Board of Directors, who would be the governing body of the Consortium, would have the ability to run the program and they could deal with those situations without having to amend the agreement. He explained the time-consuming process involved with amending the agreement.

- 2) Mr. Engman said he found the section on weighted voting confusing. He said as the Town of Ithaca Supervisor, he will not sign anything he finds confusing. He said he was told previously he would receive an example that would assist him in understanding how calculations are made. Mr. Locey said he will provide that example to him but it would not be a part of the agreement.
- 3) Mr. Engman said there was previously an issue raised with regard to a five-year agreement and whether it would automatically renew. He said his understanding of Town Law is that they can only sign five-year agreements and then must re-approve that agreement; therefore, he doesn't think an automatic renewal would comply with Town Law.
- 4) Mr. Engman questioned who would approve amendments to the agreement. He does not believe it is appropriate for the governing board to be permitted to make decisions that would be binding to a municipal board.
- 5) Lastly, Mr. Engman said he sees nothing in the timeline that says municipalities will be able to resolve issues amongst themselves following the agreement being sent to the State. Mr. Locey said changes to the agreement can only be made by 2/3 of all of the participants so changes must be taken back to their legislative body for approval. *It was discovered that*

there is a misunderstanding of this with Hancock and Estabrook that Mr. Locey will work on resolving.

Ms. Robertson suggested that municipal boards be provided with a summary sheet that would explain how weighted voting would work. Mr. Locey agreed this would be helpful.

Mr. Engman raised a concern with the timing of the annual meeting because the schedule looks like if a municipality had a serious concern with the process it would take approximately a 15-month delay to withdraw. Mr. Locey said this was discussed at length yesterday, as well as the timing of withdrawing from the Consortium and the timing of when the formal decision has to be made to approve the premium equivalent rates for the next year. He said the decision on the premiums comes after the municipality is required to make it known whether it wants to withdraw. The timing is set up this way is because in order to set up the budget and premium equivalent rates they need to know who will be participating in the Consortium the next year. However, he assured municipalities that the information they would need to have to make a decision on whether they believe it is in their best interest to continue on as a member of the Consortium would be provided long before the deadline to have the final premium equivalent rates approved. Mr. Locey said this is something he can provide additional information on.

Mr. Engman said he does not see how the TCCOG can see if it is in agreement with all of the factors.

Mr. Barber, Member of the Steering Committee, said the Committee meets every two weeks. He extended an invitation for all municipal representatives to attend meetings to discuss these issues in depth.

Shared Safety Training

Ms. Cole, Director of the Health Department, said they are looking for opportunities where safety training can be coordinated and shared throughout the County. Mr. Croteau reviewed the following County-coordinated opportunities for training that municipalities could take advantage of:

Defensive Driving Course – Every 3 years – 6 hour

- \$18 person
- 10 % reduction Insurance
- Point reduction license

PESH Safety Training Seminar Spring – 4 hour

- Right to know Training (Annual)
- Hazardous Awareness Training (Annual)
- Heat Injuries
- Excavation Training
- Flagging Operations
- Confined Space Training

PESH Safety Training Seminar Fall – 4 hour (Contact Mark Spar at 721-8211)

- Hearing Conservation Test (Cost) (Annual)
- Hearing Training (Annual)
- Cold Weather Injuries
- Winter Driving Safety
- Lockout/Tagout Energy
- Respirator Fittest (Cost) (Annual)

Ergonomic Training and Evaluations

Mr. Croteau said due to a grant being received, ergonomic training is now being offered free of charge. The contact person for this is Greg Shaw at 277-7290. Mr. Croteau's phone number is 274-6704 (fcroteau@tompkins-co.org).

Impact of State Budget Cuts

Ms. Robertson said the NYSAC Conference is coming up in a couple of weeks and this may be a chance to communicate concerns over budget cuts. She said she is interested in hearing from municipalities about what concerns there are. There is also a need to do some cooperative planning for the federal stimulus package to prepare for monies that may come through.

Mr. Dietrich spoke of the need for clear directives and being organized in submitting projects as there is a clear procedure for submitting projects. He spoke of telecommunications, broadband, highway endeavors.

He spoke of the way the Governor is now allocating funds to youth services, youth development, and detention and said he believes it is a bad idea for this money to be placed into a block grant form. Mr. Engman agreed, stating placing youth funding into a block grant would be "disastrous". He also said cuts to the County's youth services would really hurt the Town of Ithaca because they partner a great deal with the County for services.

Mr. Dietrich said municipalities need to know how to package items together so that they are user friendly and also clarification on the procedure for municipalities for submitting items.

Mr. Mareane spoke of the confusion that exists amongst municipalities with regard to the federal stimulus package and offered that the County would host an information sharing session for the purpose of coordinating projects and supplying information to everyone about what the rules are for submitting projects.

Mr. Mareane said he would send out the 18-page summary of the stimulus package (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act).

Recreation Partnership

Mr. Dietrich said 2010 will be a difficult year and said it is critical that all of the municipalities attend meetings to represent their communities. He said at the present time there are several municipalities not being represented at these meetings.

Next Agenda

- SMSI Health Insurance Project
- Planning Board training (Ms. Sumner)
- Legislation relating to gas drilling trucks (Mr. Dietrich)
- Next steps – federal stimulus package (Ms. Robertson)
- Gas drilling – information sharing (Mr. Engman)

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned a 4:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Pottorff, TC Legislature Office