

## MINUTES

APPROVED

### BUDGET AND CAPITAL COMMITTEE

MARCH 24, 2008 3:30 P.M. SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM

Present: N. Shinagawa, Chair; J. Dennis; M. Hattery; P. Mackesey; K. Herrera

Staff: C. Covert, Clerk of the Legislature; P. Meskill, Sheriff; D. Squires, Finance Director; S. Whicher, County Administrator; N. Jayne, Administration; P. Carey, Social Services Commissioner; M. Lynch, Public Information Officer; J. Kippola, Contracts Coordinator; S. Stein, Strategic Tourism Planning Board representative; A. Fitzpatrick, Personnel Commissioner; N. Burston, Human Services Coalition; J. Wood, County Attorney

Guests: C. Chock, Legislator

#### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

It was MOVED by Ms. Herrera, seconded by Ms. Mackesey, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve the minutes of the March 10<sup>th</sup> meeting as submitted.

#### **Chair's Report**

Mr. Shinagawa made reference to the budget calendar and asked if there were any changes or updates that need to be made. Mr. Hattery spoke about the timeframe for receiving the multi-year summary. *Ms. Jayne said that information is done in preparation of the retreat and will have it available for review at the next meeting. The agenda for the retreat will also be presented at that meeting for discussion. Mr. Hattery requested the multi-year summary be included in the calendar.*

#### **Report from the Finance Director**

Mr. Squires reported the auditors will be here next week to begin their work. He also reported on the status of the 2007 contingent fund and said there is a balance of \$193,000 at this point in time. The 2007 balance sheet is almost exactly near last year's balance sheet at year end. He believes the County's financial status is relatively stable.

Last week, Mr. Squires and others visited and inspected the properties on the foreclosure list and said since that time, two properties were redeemed including the one owned by a County employee.

#### **Report from the County Administrator**

Mr. Whicher provided an update on the proposed Governor's budget and said it is unclear what the impacts on the County are or the position of the new Governor is at this time. If the proposal for the State to take over the Pre-K program that gives counties a cap is eliminated, it will have a direct impact on Tompkins County. The assessment program is another area that is unknown.

Ms. Jayne believes the salary increases for White Collar, Management, and Confidential employees and is on target with the amount in the budget for 2008.

#### **Public Information Officer Report**

Ms. Lynch briefly reported on two meetings she has this week: one with the Public Information Officers Team and the other with the Public Information Advisory Board. At the Public Information Officers Team meeting the first of six modules of internal training. The first session is on principles of risk communication.

### **Strategic Tourism Planning Board**

Mr. Shinagawa reminded the Committee of the discussions held in reference to one of the goals to look at room tax and a possible proposal to change the reallocation of funds towards economic development. The Committee requested feedback from the Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) on this issue and what the impact would be. Ms. Herrera also stated that it was important to invite the partners to participate and assist the Committee with their discussions.

Mr. Stein said the STPB has been discussing how the program can be expanded and is very interested in working with the County. There have been discussions with Mike Stamm, Tompkins County Area Development (TCAD) President, and their executive committee of the Board of Directors concerning a proposal to direct some of the room tax money toward TCAD to assist with working on tourism projects. However, the executive committee said it was not able to fit this into their program at this time.

Mr. Stein reported on discussions with Julia Mattick, Workforce Investment Board Director, concerning how STPB can work with them. Tourism workforce is important and fits well into the STPB's program including training and improving salaries. Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3) has been brought in to the discussions as well and will be submitting a specific proposal this week for STPB to consider. The funding details and management of the program will need to be worked out but that cannot be done until a proposal is received and accepted.

Another area related to tourism that has been a problem is the taxi service in town. This is a difficult situation and the County Attorney is involved and looking into it. The only municipality that controls the taxicabs is the City of Ithaca. Once the cabs are outside the City, there is no control. The State Legislature forbids counties to control taxicabs, but municipalities can. He hopes that a suggestion will be made and a recommendation brought forth to the County for discussion.

Mr. Stein continued the discussion with explaining staffing for the STPB and the existing relationship with TCAD. In addition, to Jackie Kippola providing staff support, there are three others that work part time managing certain sectors of the program. One of the areas is the capital program which is handled by TCAD. TCAD is paid approximately \$10,000 for running the capital program that is managed by Martha Armstrong, Vice President of TCAD.

Mr. Shinagawa asked if STPB could discuss some of the collaborative and creative efforts being done at a Legislature meeting.

Mr. Stein said he is available to discuss this further if desired. Mr. Hattery said he would work with STPB to discuss bringing forward a proposal, but right now he is in the fact finding stage.

### **Reimbursement Policy – 207c**

Mr. Whicher reminded the Committee of the concern raised at the last meeting with the overspending in the jail budget and believes the primary reason is employees receiving pay immediately who are out for long-term disability. However, he has not met with the Sheriff yet to discuss the budget issues and does not believe it is appropriate to bring forward a proposal until that meeting takes place.

Mr. Squires suggested another option to consider is to remove the cost from the budget rather than reimburse.

It was stated that further discussions were necessary before a proposal was brought forward.

**Resolution – Oppose the Proposed Changes that Affect Agencies that Provide Vital Services to Tompkins County**

It was MOVED by Ms. Herrera, seconded by Mr. Hattery, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature for approval. The Committee requested that the detailed information included with the agenda be attached to the resolution for the Legislature.

**RESOLUTION NO. – URGING THE STATE LEGISLATURE TO OPPOSE THE PROPOSED CHANGES THAT AFFECT AGENCIES THAT PROVIDE VITAL SERVICES TO TOMPKINS COUNTY**

WHEREAS, Tompkins County believes that the 2008-09 Executive Budget changes the fundamental state/local partnership by proposing to cut funding to the local not-for-profit agencies that provide needed assistance to the taxpayers of Tompkins County, and

WHEREAS, the Governor’s proposed budget includes changes that affect several agencies in Tompkins County, and

WHEREAS, the agencies impacted are:

- Human Service Coalition 2-1-1 Program - the Executive budget includes a \$100,000 reduction in funding
- Rural Preservation - The Executive budget includes a \$42,000 reduction this funds two programs: 1.) Better Housing for Tompkins County -\$22,000 and 2.) Ithaca Neighborhood Housing -\$20,000
- Catholic Charities of Tompkins - Tioga - will experience a reduction if the Governor’s budget includes the proposed shift, which will increase the county share of public assistance by two percent, while simultaneously decreasing the state share by two percent
- The Tompkins Learning Partners - will experience up to a \$15,000 reduction. The State’s Executive budget for Adult Literacy Education funding proposal is \$1M less than last year and the distribution is being changed so that the upstate agencies will not be able to complete for the funds that were previously available
- The Women’s Opportunity Center - the Governor’s proposed budget eliminates funding for Displaced Homemakers Program and reduces \$3M from the SUNY Bridge Program. If this funding is not restored it will eliminate thirty percent of their programs, and

WHEREAS, these funding reductions cannot be supported by the Tompkins County tax levy, thus causing the programs to be seriously reduced or eliminated, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Budget and Capital Committee, That Tompkins County opposes any policy or fiscal initiative that changes the support for agencies that changes the historic state and local partnerships,

RESOLVED, further, That the County shall forward copies of this resolution to Governor Paterson, the New York State Legislature, and all others deemed necessary and proper.

**SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20**

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Ms. Jayne asked if a resolution should be prepared concerning the pre-school program for Legislative approval on April 1<sup>st</sup>. The Committee agreed that more information is needed both from the Health Department and what the Governor's position is on this issue before taking any action. A special Committee meeting could be held prior to the Legislature meeting if more information becomes available.

### **Motor Fuel Tax**

Mr. Whicher reviewed the information from NYSAC (New York State Association of Counties) concerning the Motor Fuel Tax. The State is proposing to substitute the sales tax with a State excise tax. In year one it is estimated that the collection and distribution will be approximately equal to the current amount. However, beginning in year two and forward the five percent cap on the excise tax will not bring in the same amount realized if the sales tax continued.

### **Other Business**

Ms. Jayne asked if Committee members had specific information they would like to see for the next meeting in relation to the budget retreat, to let her know.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:34 p.m.