

**Budget and Capital Committee
May 14, 2007
3:30 p.m.
Scott Heyman Conference Room**

Present: M. Koplinka-Loehr, R. Booth, K. Herrera, N. Shinagawa, M. Hattery (arrived at 3:36 p.m.)
Staff: D. Squires, Finance; S. Whicher, M. Lynch, J. Kippola, N. Jayne, P. Younger, County Administration; P. Carey, DSS; K. Hackett, Planning Department; D. Bradac, Workforce Development; R. Slocum, Office for the Aging; M. Pottorff, Legislature Office; B. Grinnell-Crosby, Health Department
Guests: C. Haynes, R. Ross, Tompkins Cortland Community College; F. Bonn, Convention and Visitors' Bureau; J. McPheeters, Chamber of Commerce; S. Wiggins, D. Sparrow, Strategic Tourism Planning Board; K. Schlather, Human Services Coalition, Chris Sanchirico, Catholic Charities; WHCU

Called to Order

Mr. Koplinka-Loehr called the meeting to order at 3:36 p.m.

Changes to the Agenda

The following resolution(s) were added to the agenda:

- Endorsing State Legislation S1714 and A7938 – Extending Existing Sales and Use Tax Authority of the County of Tompkins
- Contingent Fund Request for One-Time Funding for Catholic Charities' Security Deposit Assistance Program to Prevent Homelessness

Approval of Minutes of April 23, 2007

It was MOVED by Mr. Booth, seconded by Mr. Shinagawa, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of April 23, 2007 as submitted. MINUTES APPROVED.

Comments from the Public

No member of the public wished to speak.

Chair's Report

Mr. Koplinka-Loehr reported the Community Advisory Panel met on April 25th and highlights from that meeting are included in agenda packets. He said he will not be in attendance at the Legislature meeting tomorrow evening and asked Mr. Booth to provide the a Committee report in his absence.

Finance Director's Report

Mr. Squires distributed a schedule of the fund balance that is contained in the County's annual report. He said the County ended up better than he had expected in all accounts at the end of 2006. He had anticipated a \$2 million decline in the General Fund Balance and now expects the drop to be in the range of \$1 million. This is because at the urging of the auditors, he claimed \$500,000 in revenues from one of the County's mandated accounts that he didn't think could be claimed.

Mr. Hattery arrived at 3:36 p.m.

Mr. Squires distributed a copy of the Contingent Fund report dated May 14, 2007 showing a balance of \$805,027.

**RESOLUTION NO. - ENDORSING STATE LEGISLATION S1714 AND A7938
EXTENDING EXISTING SALES AND USE TAX AUTHORITY OF
THE COUNTY OF TOMPKINS**

It was MOVED by Mr. Booth, seconded by Mr. Hattery, to add the resolution entitled Endorsing State Legislation S1714n and A7938 – Extending Existing Sales and Use Tax Authority of the County of Tompkins, to the agenda.

MOVED by Mr. Booth, seconded by Mr. Hattery. Ms. Herrera said she has a history of not supporting this resolution. Mr. Squires said NYSAC is working to eliminate the requirement for counties to adopt this resolution every two years. A voice vote resulted as follows: Ayes – 4, Noes – 1 (Herrera). MOTION CARRIED.

WHEREAS, the County of Tompkins has had the authority to enact an additional one cent of sales and use taxation since December 1, 1992, and has enacted such taxation, and

WHEREAS, this authority has been exercised since that date and expires November 30, 2007, and

WHEREAS, this Legislature by Resolution No. 206 of 2006 requested the members of the New York State Senate and Assembly who represent Tompkins County to sponsor and support legislation extending this authority beyond November 30, 2007, and they have done so and have introduced S1714/A7938 “AN ACT to amend the tax law, in relation to authorizing the county of Tompkins to continue imposing an additional one percent sales tax” that extends this authority to November 30, 2009, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of Budget and Capital Committee, That this Legislature endorses and requests State approval of legislation known as S1714 and A7938, and urges its elected representatives in the Senate and the Assembly to support this legislation.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

County Administrator’s Report

Mr. Whicher reminded members that the Tompkins Cortland Community College budget meeting will be held on May 16th.

The College is requesting a six percent sponsorship contribution for 2008.

Mr. Whicher spoke of the goal to increase the Target Fund Balance and stated that preliminary information shows that an increase in the Target Fund Balance of \$2 million (from \$6 million to \$8 million) will be possible if there are very tight controls in place.

Room Occupancy Tax Use Discussion

Ms. Kippola reviewed information contained in the agenda packet. She explained that the County collects a Room Tax whenever someone stays in a hotel or bed and breakfast. To increase the Room Tax a local law would need to be adopted by the County and then approved by the State.

In 2001, action was taken to increase the Tax from 3% to 5% gradually and applied only to inns with more than ten rooms. The County is authorized within that local law to keep ten percent of the total collections. Although this has always been authorized, it was not until 2005 that a decision was made to keep that. Of the 10% that the County is authorized to keep, part of Ms. Kippola's time and staff-time from the Finance Department is paid for. The remainder goes to the General Fund and is not allocated or earmarked for anything.

Mr. Booth referred to the County Attorney's memo included in the agenda packet and the statement that "all revenues from the tax shall be allocated for tourist and convention development. The County can retain up to ten percent of the revenue for the cost of administering the program". He said the costs being claimed for administration of the program are substantially less than what the County is deriving from the tax. Mr. Koplinka-Loehr said when this came up during the 2005 budget process Mr. Wood provided the Legislature with an opinion on this. Mr. Booth asked Ms. Kippola to check with Mr. Wood to see if he continues to agree with the opinion he gave at that time. Mr. Whicher said there may be a request forthcoming for additional administrative support.

Mr. Booth referred to the statistics pertaining to estimated total spending by visitors and noted there was a substantial decrease from 2001 to 2002. Mr. Bonn said this information is provided by the New York State Tourism Promotion Agency Council and said the information is based on sales tax receipts for each of the 62 counties in the State and then assigned percentages of that sales tax to generate overall estimates spending by tourists. It is not a scientific way to produce this figure and could contained very big variables. Ms. Herrera suggested the large variance across the State could relate to the decrease in tourism resulting from the events of September 11, 2001.

Mr. Hattery said in our efforts to maintain a low property tax rate and at the same time alleviate what he considers to be a one-time funding relationship with the Workforce Investment Board and TCAT, he would like to consider allocating 5-10% of these funds to support other economic development activities as an alternative to raising property tax in the future. Mr. Koplinka-Loehr suggested Mr. Hattery speak to Mr. Wood to obtain a legal opinion before this could be pursued.

Mr. Herrera urged caution in changing this given the information that has been provided. She hopes that any changes being proposed will be carefully considered and presented to the Strategic Tourism Planning Board for review.

No action was taken. This item will come back at future date for continued discussion.

RESOLUTION NO. - APPROVAL OF TOMPKINS CORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE CAMPUS MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT

MOVED by Mr. Shinagawa, seconded by Mr. Booth. Mr. Haynes, TC3 President, explained chargeback revenues and the increase in these revenues the College has experienced. He stated this is the result of an increased number of students from other counties and the rate that goes along with that. He said the College receives funds from other counties to support both the operating and capital budgets. As a result of that the cash flow has been increasing significantly. The \$1.2 million that the College is requesting can accommodate the need for increased costs without having to ask sponsors for additional taxpayer resources. He said the sponsors have to approve the request to use those funds.

Mr. Haynes explained the need for the funds and stated they have been doing fairly well managing the capital projects although there have been cost overruns. The said bids for the last component of the master plan came in at \$2.8 million but were only budgeted for \$2 million. This was because the architects who developed estimates for that plan based figures on a similar facility they had built at Geneseo Community College with modest increases. He said construction costs and site work

was under-estimated. The TC3 Board of Trustees rejected those bids and have made some changes to the Plan and will be putting the project out to bid again with the hope of receiving lower bids. Mr. Haynes other changes have been made and are detailed in the resolution.

Mr. Haynes said there is a rate established by formula that determines what amount is charged to other counties; it ranges between \$2,000 and \$2,5000 per full-time student. He projects \$1,200 fte's next year, which will be an increase from 1,140. He said \$300 is charged per each full-time student on the Capital side of the budget. Mr. Koplinka-Loehr said this action proposes to capitalize that revenue stream back into the debt service while trying to be conservative with the Master Plan.

Ms. Herrera asked if any of the project bidders were local; Mr. Ross said a significant number of the bidders were from the local area.

An extensive presentation on the proposed Tompkins Cortland Community College will take place at the College on May 16th.

A voice vote resulted as follows: Ayes – 5, Noes – 0. MOTION CARRIED.

WHEREAS, via Resolution No. 234 adopted on December 7, 2005, the Tompkins County Legislature approved Tompkins Cortland Community College's campus master plan in the amount of \$33,053,262, and

WHEREAS, the costs for construction of a student center are being significantly impacted by the higher cost of materials, and

WHEREAS, equipment and alternates on other master plan projects have been deferred and should be completed with capital funds rather than future operating dollars, and

WHEREAS, these changes have resulted in a revised master plan as outlined below totaling \$34,253,262, and

State Share	\$16,526,631
Local Share	
Fundraising	\$ 3,000,000
Capital Chargebacks	\$ 9,826,631
Sponsor Contribution	<u>\$ 4,900,000</u>
Total Local Share	<u>\$17,726,631</u>
 Total Campus Master Plan	 <u>\$34,253,262</u>

, and

WHEREAS, State funds available to support the campus master plan project will remain at \$16,526,631 and the County sponsor contribution will remain at \$4,900,000, and

WHEREAS, capital chargeback revenues have increased in part due to additional on-campus housing that attracts out-of-county students and growth in international programs with associated capital chargebacks, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Budget and Capital Committee, That the Tompkins County Legislature approves the allocation of an additional \$1,200,000 of capital chargeback funds to the campus master plan project bringing the total capital chargeback funds used to \$9,826,631,

RESOLVED, further, That this resolution shall become effective upon adoption of a concurrent resolution by the Cortland County Legislature.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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RESOLUTION NO. – APPROPRIATION FROM CONTINGENT FUND -- INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES (ICLEI) LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOR SUSTAINABILITY MEMBERSHIP

MOVED by Ms. Herrera, seconded by Mr. Shinagawa. Ms. Hackett said this will provide the County with access to resources and also software. Ms. Herrera said she went to a conference recently and heard positive comments about how if there is a desire to measure carbon emissions this is a very good way to do that. It was stated that this amount was originally \$2,100 and was lowered to \$1,200. A voice vote on the resolution resulted as follows: Ayes – 5, Noes – 0. MOTION CARRIED.

WHEREAS, Tompkins County joined International Council on Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) in 2001, which is a program for municipal governments to identify sources of greenhouse gas emissions within their jurisdictions and take actions to reduce such emissions, and

WHEREAS, Tompkins County completed an inventory of the greenhouse gas emissions from County government operations in 2001 and a Local Action Plan to Reduce Carbon Emissions for County Government Operations in 2003, and

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County’s Local Action Plan to Reduce Carbon Emissions for County Government Operations established a goal to reduce the amount of carbon emissions from the operation of County government by twenty percent by 2008, and

WHEREAS, the County now wishes to update its carbon emission inventory and assess its progress towards reaching this goal, and

WHEREAS, the International Council on Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) will provide the software and technical assistance needed to complete the carbon emission inventory update, and

WHEREAS, a goal of the Tompkins County Sustainability Program is the “[R]eduction of greenhouse gases and environmental toxins through energy reduction and conservation in County facilities and fleets...” by, in part, “[D]evelop(ing) a report that measures eCO2 emissions from 1998 to the present”, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Planning, Development, and Environmental Quality Committee and the Budget and Capital Committee, That Tompkins County to become a member of the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives,

RESOLVED, further, That the Director of Finance is authorized and directed to make the following appropriation:

From:	Contingent Fund	1990.54400	\$1,200
To:	Dues and Memberships	1920.54400	\$1,200

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-18

RESOLUTION NO. – APPROPRIATION FROM CONTINGENT FUND –RE-ENTRY INITIATIVE PROGRAM – OFFENDER AID AND RESTORATION

MOVED by Mr. Booth, seconded by Mr. Shinagawa. Ms. Herrera asked if consideration had been given to a repayment process and what portion of the amount requested would be projected to be used towards security deposits. Ms. Carey said there is a need to have a system in place to monitor who will be receiving security deposits, who is able to repay them and who is not, to avoid having people go from agency to agency to obtain these funds. Ms. Herrera said she would like to see something like this which uses tax dollars as being sustainable with parameters in place.

It was MOVED by Ms. Herrera, seconded by Mr. Hattery, to remove \$2,000 that is the portion to be used for security deposits pending the study and coordination of efforts. She would also like to see what is developed as being fair and measurable. Mr. Whicher spoke against removing these funds because

the programs are being coordinated and the pilot program has identified this need. Mr. Shinagawa said this is somewhat contained in that there are no other agencies who provide security deposits other than Catholic Charities, DSS, and OAR. He said there are also people who may be in dire need of these funds who do not meet the criteria to receive funds from Catholic Charities. Ms. Carey said they could explore revolving funds and offered to lead a focus group. She also explained that DSS has a landlord letter that guarantees security deposits in the event there is a need to pay expenses at the end of a rental agreement. This letter provides the guarantee to the landlord that the funds will be there if needed without an actual exchange of cash taking place at the time of rental. Ms. Herrera said this is a worthy goal but wants to explore making it sustainable.

A voice vote on the amendment resulted as follows: Ayes – 4, Noes – 1 (Shinagawa). MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Hattery said he is uncomfortable with this request because it comes from an agency and not a County department. He asked who would oversee performance of this contract. He also stated at an earlier Public Safety Committee meeting it was stated that OAR did not need funds and is concerned that the Legislature is considering a request only a month later.

Mr. Whicher said there is generally not 0200performance measures in administrative contracts. Mr. Koplinka-Loehr said one reason this came forward was because the CJA/ATI team was looking for re-entry initiative programs or proposals. Ms. Carey said OAR has been part of the pilot program and is working with the Criminal Justice Cabinet. Mr. Koplinka-Loehr said this proposal has received an incredible amount of scrutiny and will continue to be reviewed at the Public Safety Committee meeting on May 18th.

Mr. Booth asked Ms. Carey how many requests are foreseen to be coming out of this program during the remainder of the year. Ms. Carey said she does not expect any additional requests coming forward during the remainder of this year.

A voice vote on the resolution as amended as follows: Ayes – 4, Noes – 1 (Hattery). MOTION CARRIED.

WHEREAS, Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR), in conjunction with the Department of Social Services and the Sheriff's Office, as part of the "Criminal Justice/Alternatives to Incarceration 2007 Strategic Action Plan", has developed a pilot program known as the Re-Entry Initiative, where OAR staff will work in conjunction with the Jail Coordinator and individual inmates at the Tompkins County Jail to develop an "action plan" comprised of pre-release planning modules and enrollment in post-release, community-based programs, and

WHEREAS, inmate participation, which is voluntary, has exceeded initial projections, and

WHEREAS, we expect this program to grow over the next year and result in both successful reentry and reduced recidivism, thus saving the county tax dollars, and

WHEREAS, an additional \$28,715 would result in the following:

- Hiring a Client Service Worker with more case coordination experience to support this initiative.
- Provide necessary training to meet this initiative's needs.
- Develop an Emergency Client Flex Fund, which in our past experience, OAR has found that relatively small expenditures on vital necessities have profound impacts on a successful transition back to the community. Expenditures such as security deposits, recognized forms of identification

(birth certificates, Sheriff's Ids), bedding and clothing, and emergency transportation can optimize a client's chance to successfully reenter the community.

WHEREAS, OAR expects this to result in both successful reentry and reduced recidivism, thus saving the county tax dollars, and will provide a thorough evaluation tied to initial performance measures of this initial stage of the re-entry initiative prior to the 2008 county budget cycle.

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Public Safety and the Budget and Capital Committees, That the Director of Finance be authorized to make the following budget appropriation:

FROM: A1990.54400 Contingent Fund (targeted for Jail Overcrowding)	\$28,715
TO: A6316.54400 Program Expense	\$28,715

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Fringe Rate Proposal

The Committee discussed shifting fringe from decentralized fringe accounts (about 100 accounts) to centralized fringe accounts (about 7) separated by fund. At the present time the Finance Director manually reduces each of these accounts on a quarterly basis by 39% of payroll regardless of actual costs. If fringe were centralized by fund, then the budget and the corresponding expenditures would be in the same account without additional administrative work.

Mr. Koplinka-Loehr asked if this would have an impact on Rollover and was told it would.

Ms. Carey said department heads have serious concerns about implementation and strongly encouraged exploration of funding streams at the State and Federal levels before taking any action on this.

Mr. Booth said there is value in having all fringe money in one place instead of being spread across departmental budgets.

Ms. Grinnell-Crosby said she agreed with Ms. Carey's statement.

The Committee directed staff to continue exploring this and to look at the impact this action would have on departments

RESOLUTION NO. - CREATION OF PROJECT ASSISTANT POSITIONS IN THE OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING - TOMPKINS WORKFORCE NEW YORK

MOVED by Mr. Hattery, seconded by Mr. Shinagawa, and unanimously adopted by voice vote. Mr. Booth requested an explanation be added to this prior to action by the Legislature on May 15th.

WHEREAS, Tompkins Workforce New York is in possession of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Family (TANF) Youth Program grant monies to promote and operate an employment, academic enrichment and training program for youth, and

WHEREAS, in order to hire a sufficient number of staff to carry out the mission of the grant, it is necessary to create six additional positions in the Office of Employment and Training, Tompkins Workforce New York, and

WHEREAS, due to the recurring nature of this grant funding, these six 40 hour per week positions need to carry over from year-to-year, and

WHEREAS, the appointments are typically under 90 days but in any case will only be filled as long as grant money exists to fill them, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Planning, Development and Environmental Quality and the Budget and Capital Committees, That six positions of Project Assistant (76-049) are hereby created effective immediately,

RESOLVED, further, That sufficient grant monies exist in account number A6292.42797 to fund these positions for 2007 and will only be filled if there is sufficient grant money,

RESOLVED, further, That no further funding is required.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

**RESOLUTION NO. – CONTINGENT FUND REQUEST FOR ONE-TIME FUNDING FOR
CATHOLIC CHARITIES’ SECURITY DEPOSIT ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS**

MOVED by Mr. Shinagawa, seconded by Mr. Koplinka-Loehr. Mr. Shinagawa said he originally brought this to the Health and Human Services Committee and it was a discussion topic that became an action item. It was felt by some members that this was being rushed there was not a consensus by the Committee to bring in to the full Legislature. Since that time, there has been a meeting between the Human Services Coalition, Catholic Charities, DSS, and County Administration and were able to answer many of the questions that had been raised. He said these funds will help support the security deposit program operated by Catholic Charities. Last year Catholic Charities received a Community Development Block Grant in the amount of \$25,000 for this program. This program provides approximately \$500 to individuals and families who meet the criteria. These funds will help Catholic Charities will be able to operate the program from April thru October by assisting eight individuals per month.

Mr. Whicher said there is no money in this program at Catholic Charities and if this program does not exist there will be a problem with individuals ending up at the Emergency Shelter which will end up costing the County more.

Ms. Sanchivico spoke of research she had performed on who had been assisted with this program. Preliminary data showed that in 2006, there were 39 recipients of security deposits; 23 of those were single-parent households with children; therefore, data shows a lot of funding went to families and not to single persons or students. The program requires the applicant’s household to be at 60% below median income. She noted 27 of the 29 recipients were below 30% of the median income. Other requirements are proof of income and housing inspection, and rent must be reasonable and affordable to the applicant.

Mr. Koplinka-Loehr asked if consideration had been given to a revolving loan fund. Ms. Sanchivico said there are cases of situational poverty and cases of generational poverty. In situational poverty there are circumstances that have resulted in poverty and there are possibilities to move out of the circumstances. In generational poverty, there isn’t as much hope or opportunities to move out of poverty. These are people who for generations have lived in poverty. She said many people live paycheck to paycheck and a requirement to pay the loan back could place the individual further into poverty. Although she likes the idea of a loan, she would not want to see the funds come from what would used to pay for food, heat, or clothing. There are some situations, however, where there possibilities exist to repay a loan.

Mr. Hattery asked if the policy was changed from allocating so a particular amount each month and spreading the funds throughout the year. Ms. Sanchivico said Catholic Charities felt it was unreasonable to turn away those who came were in crisis after the number set for the monthly allotment had been exhausted. She stated turning people away would result in them having to stay in the Emergency Shelter. She said she predicts it will stay at present level of assisting eight families per month on average.

Mr. Koplinka-Loehr said he would prefer to move towards a revolving loan fund and is not convinced that this appropriation will save the equivalent in emergency shelter bed nights.

It was MOVED by Mr. Shinagawa, seconded by Mr. Booth, to add an additional Resolved: “Resolved, further, That Catholic Charities in conjunction with the Human Services Coalition and the Department of Social Services, will explore options for revolving loan options for the use of these funds and will report back to the Human Health and Human Services Committee.

Ms. Herrera said she is concerned with the emergency nature of this resolution and the rush by which it is being presented. She said the issue she has with sustainability relates to the taxpayers because the issue homelessness is not going to go away and in a community where the County tries to support livable wage this is some ways, supports employers who pay less than a livable wage.

A voice vote on the amendment resulted as follows: Ayes – 4, Noes – 1 (Hattery). MOTION CARRIED.

A voice vote resulted as follows: Ayes – 2 (Booth and Shinagawa); Noes – 3 (Hattery, Herrera, and Koplinka-Loehr). MOTION FAILED. This resolution will come before the Legislature as a member-filed resolution.

WHEREAS, Catholic Charities of Tompkins/Tioga County has operated a Security Deposit Assistance Program in Tompkins County since October 2004, funded by Community Development Block Grant (CDGB) funds, and

WHEREAS, this program fills a critical gap by helping the working poor who earn too much to qualify for Department of Social Services assistance programs, but who earn too little to pay a security deposit in addition to monthly rent for an apartment in Tompkins County, and

WHEREAS, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds of \$25,000 allocated in October 2006, were completely granted to the landlords of income-qualified clients by April 2007, and

WHEREAS, CDBG funds (\$40,000) have been committed in the next round but the money will not be available until October 2007, and

WHEREAS, most of the clients in this program are families and if they do not receive aid for security deposits they often end up in the homeless shelter, and these are the most difficult people to “re-house” once they enter the shelter, and

WHEREAS, Tompkins County pays an average cost, over the year, of \$36.44 per person per night in the emergency homeless shelter, costing a total of almost \$590,000 in 2006, and

WHEREAS, there are additional long-term costs of homelessness to the clients’ health and mental health, and to children’s development and success in school, and

WHEREAS, the Catholic Charities Security Deposit Assistance Program prevents people from becoming homeless, and there is no other program in Tompkins County that provides this assistance, and

WHEREAS, this program has been audited by Housing and Urban Development and has been found to be in compliance with federal guidelines, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Catholic Charities shall receive a one-time allocation of \$20,000 from the Contingent Fund to enable the agency to continue the program until CDBG funds become available in October 2007.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

Revenue Options/Savings

Time did not permit discussion of the item entitled “Proposal To Develop a Process for Routinely Identifying Cost-Efficiency Measures That Promote Long-Term Fiscal Stability for Tompkins County”.

Budget and Capital Committee
May 14, 2007

County Administration was directed to move to the next step and propose membership for the work team and present that at the next meeting for discussion.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Pottorff, TC Legislature