

MINUTES

Approved 12/12/08

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

OCTOBER 10, 2006 2:00 P.M. SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM

Present: M. Hattery, Chair; D. Kiefer; G. Stevenson; P. Mackesey

Excused: M. Sigler

Staff: C. Covert, Clerk of the Legislature; N. Zahler, Youth Services Director; B. DeLuca, Mental Health Commissioner; M. Lynch, Public Information Officer; G. Potter, Information Technology Services Director; J. Wood, County Attorney; A. Cole, Public Health Director; A. Valenti, County Clerk, A. Fitzpatrick, Personnel Commissioner; P. Younger, Deputy County Administrator

Guests: High School Student; Legislator Dennis

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m.

Changes to Agenda

A transfer from the Board of Elections was distributed to the Committee for information only. Ms. Kiefer asked for an update on the Dedication of Bench request from Elaine Joseph, Family Court. *Mr. Hattery said he has not yet followed up on this, but will request this topic be on the next Committee agenda.*

Public Comment

No one from the public wished to speak.

Report from the Committee Chair

Mr. Hattery said he did not have a report.

Report from the County Administrator

Mr. Whicher was not present.

Report from the County Attorney

Mr. Wood was not present at this time.

Report from the Finance Director

Mr. Squires was not present.

Report from the Public Information Officer

Ms. Lynch announced that the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the County's new Public Safety Communications System is scheduled for Friday, October 24, at 11 a.m. at the system's Ithaca College transmitter site. Formal invitations will be sent out soon.

Board of Elections

Resolution

It was MOVED by Ms. Kiefer, seconded by Ms. Mackesey, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve and submit the following resolution to the Legislature for approval:

RESOLUTION NO. - APPOINTMENT OF ELECTION COMMISSIONER FOR 2009-2010

WHEREAS, Election Commissioner Stephen DeWitt's term is due to expire December 31, 2008, and

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Democratic Committee, at its September 25, 2008, meeting recommended Stephen M. DeWitt for reappointment to a two-year term, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Tompkins County Democratic Committee and the Government Operations Committee, That Stephen M. DeWitt be and hereby is appointed Democratic Party Elections Commissioner for the two-year term commencing January 1, 2009, and ending December 31, 2010.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

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Core Performance Subcommittee

Resolution

It was MOVED by Ms. Mackesey, seconded by Mr. Stevenson, to approve and submit the resolution below to the full Legislature for approval. At this time, Ms. Kiefer reminded the Committee that according to the minutes two versions of this resolution were to have been part of the agenda. She reviewed the following proposed changes she presented at the last Committee meeting and would like to recommend adding to the draft resolution distributed with the agenda:

- Change the first Whereas to read: “WHEREAS, the Mission of Tompkins County Government has long made a clear commitment to meet the needs of our residents and carefully steward resources in serving the County’s citizens, and”
- Add a new second Whereas as follows: “WHEREAS, in an age of increasing complexity it was recognized as desirable to formalize our traditional approaches to service delivery, making explicit what has been implicitly intended, so that all members of our County Government organization will have a common framework and language to use in developing and assessing programs and projects, and”

Mr. Hattery reviewed the history of this proposal and explained the reasons for bringing forth a resolution of commitment to continue the initiative. A joint presentation by the Core Performance subcommittee was held with the Government Operations and the Budget and Capital Committees and following that Ms. Kiefer suggested a resolution be considered to ensure continuing movement towards improving performance.

Mr. DeLuca said this subject was raised at the last Department Head meeting and concerns were expressed that if the County is adapting to a framework, there needs to be an understanding of the implications and impacts of it. It appears that the resolution is signing on to a specific methodology without knowing what that entails.

Mr. Hattery said the intent of the resolution was to recognize the work that has been done and not limit any future efforts and to keep it moving forward.

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Ms. Cole said she agrees with Mr. DeLuca's comments and said Ms. Carey had commented at the Department Head meeting that this resolution could be perceived by employees as similar to TQM and a way to downsize County government. Bringing this up at budget time is not good. Ms. Cole urged the Committee to slow down this process.

Mr. Hattery asked Committee members and staff present what direction the Committee should take or if there was specific language changes that could be suggested.

Ms. Cole said the resolution states "it shall be..." and to her that is a mandate. She commented that a new County Administrator will soon begin employment with the County and believes he should be brought up to speed on this effort.

Ms. Zahler stated that Department Heads also spoke about process and said they would like an opportunity to review a specific proposal and action steps in terms of feasibility, timing, and what it means for departments to implement.

Mr. Wood said he understood that County Administrator Whicher was going to ask that the Committee postpone acting on the draft resolution.

Ms. Fitzpatrick believes the comments from Department Heads were articulated well. She spoke of one of the core competencies namely communication. She believes there will be less resistance if this is communicated and understood at every layer of the organization. The new County Administrator's view on this to Department Heads would be key to building understanding and consensus. In the past there has been some interest expressed to have quarterly meetings with the Legislature, County Administrator, and Department Heads and suggested this could be a topic for one of those meetings. There is great potential for polarization. She said that how this effort is rolled out and the ripple effect it has on the organization will impact employees.

Ms. Valenti agreed with Ms. Fitzpatrick's comments.

Mr. Hattery understands from the Department Heads perspective that timing is an issue. He reiterated his comments that the draft resolution was a follow-up from the presentation and to support continuing the initiative. He stated there is no linkage with the budget process.

Ms. Younger spoke about the subcommittee's year-long work and the process that followed. The same presentation as referenced above in Mr. Hattery's comments was given to the Department Heads in September along with other communications pertaining to the subcommittee's work. The second comment Ms. Younger made is there was an opportunity for Department Heads to have a greater discussion on the Core Performance framework at the meeting of October 8th. The final remark she made was the comment about the incoming County Administrator having certain opinions or knowledge of this and Ms. Younger did state that the County Administrator was aware of the Core Performance framework and that there was more discussion to be held.

Ms. Mackesey expressed surprise at some of these comments since there were Department Heads on the subcommittee. She is concerned with the lack of communication being expressed by Department Heads present and believes it needs to be presented better. She agreed to withdraw her motion to consider the resolution. MOTION WITHDRAWN.

Mr. Hattery said attendees should tell others that the resolution has been tabled. Mr. DeLuca suggested putting it off for three months. Ms. Zahler noted the subcommittee can continue to meet.

Ms. Kiefer spoke further about the draft resolution and other proposed changes she would recommend.

RESOLUTION NO. — COMMITMENT TO CONTINUING THE INITIATIVE TO DEVELOP A PERFORMANCE IMPROVING APPROACH FOR GOVERNANCE AND SERVICE PROVISION IN TOMPKINS COUNTY

WHEREAS, the Mission of Tompkins County Government makes a clear commitment to improve performance and carefully steward resources in serving the County's citizens.

WHEREAS, on May 29, 2007 the Tompkins County Government Operations and Budget and Capital Standing Committees issued a formal Charge to establish the Subcommittee on Core Performance responsible for developing an approach that identifies core values and standards to use in supporting and promoting quality and performance throughout the organization,

WHEREAS, the subcommittee's efforts produced a Core Performance Framework, consisting of five performance dimensions and corresponding performance standards and indicators. This framework provides an important starting point for a broader effort to guide and monitoring performance and for engaging all areas of the County organization in quality assurance practices, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Subcommittee on Core Performance and the Government Operations and Budget and Capital Standing Committees, That the Tompkins County Legislature endorse the *Core Performance Framework* as a quality assurance structure, subject to further refinement, for managing, promoting and monitoring effective performance in Tompkins County government,

RESOLVED, further, that County Administration, working with the Government Operations Committee shall be responsible for (1) developing a plan and identifying the necessary funding to facilitate implementation and further adaptation of the *Core Performance Framework* across all County departments, and (2) clarifying the respective roles and responsibilities of County Leadership, which includes the Legislature, County Administration, and Department Heads, in developing and sustaining the implementation plan. This effort will respect and build upon the many significant management systems and performance efforts currently used by county departments and their leaders.

RESOLVED, further, that this *Framework*, with direct guidance from County Leadership, shall be used by the County organization as the standard for routinely identifying and exploring cost-saving strategies and revenue options that promote long-term stability for Tompkins County, and in sharing knowledge across County departments in a way that builds the capacity of the entire County organization.

Information Technology Services

Communications Policy

Mr. Potter provided an overview of the memorandum to the Committee concerning Information Technology (IT) policy updates. There are two policies contained in the Administrative Manual: 01-38 Software (1993) and 01-18 Use of Communications Systems (2001). He would recommend the Software policy be abolished at the appropriate time. Over the last few years, revisions to the other policy (01-18) were proposed; however, no action was taken. One of the primary difficulties with discussing an IT policy is where does policy begin and where do general standards and guidelines that are enforced and recommended by ITS start.

At this time, Mr. Potter reviewed the following categories and specific topics identified by ITS that should be addressed in a comprehensive policy:

Define County IT policy and interpretation of standards and guidelines set by ITS

Digital public records and data

- Management of records and retention requirements in a digital format
- Departmental data ownership and access authority
- E-mail as public record – archiving
- Required use of County e-mail system to conduct all County business
- FOIL requests – defining what is available and reasonable

IT Security:

- Network Security – wireless, non-county devices, passwords, etc.
- Network access by non-county employees/organizations
- HIPPA regulations
- Remote network access and work from alternate locations (home)
- Physical security
- Laptop encryption and off-site use
- External data storage devices

Backup standards and ITS responsibilities (servers backed up; local drives are not)

PC Management

- Downloads, audits, unsupported software and external devices
- Laptops – deployment and justification
- Purchasing procedures for IT related hardware and software

Employee/Personnel

- Process and authorization of access to Internet sites
- Level of personal use of e-mail, Internet, and phones
- Level of monitoring and documentation
- Enforcement procedures and responsibility
- Acknowledgment and Consent Agreement
- Education and orientation

Cell phones and PDA's

- Support and connectivity to network and e-mail
- County account vs. personal account

Software

- Authorization and support
- ITS inclusion in new departmental applications and projects with impacts on ITS

Elected Officials

- Computing needs
- Inclusion as user group in policy discussion

Discussion followed concerning the monitoring of Internet sites and other usage of communications equipment by employees. At this time, Mr. Potter explained how the monitoring is handled as well as any alleged misuse of communications equipment. Ms. Mackesey believes there needs to be clear communication about policy and procedures to all employees. Mr. Potter said orientation and education is an important component of this.

Mr. Potter said he had just returned from an IT conference and requested from the Directors present copies of their existing policies and upon receipt will organize them and provide some samples

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for the Committee in the next two weeks. The City of Rochester is going through the same process as the County and is very interested in sharing ideas.

Ms. Kiefer spoke briefly about some businesses allowing employees to use equipment for personal use.

At this time, the Committee discussed the direction it wished to proceed in and agreed to have a task force of 6-8 members representing various program areas such as organized labor, emergency services, personnel, legal, administration, etc. Mr. Potter suggested that monthly report outs at Department Head meetings could be done as well as having this as a standing Committee agenda item. *The Committee also agreed to Mr. Potter's suggestion that he prepare a working draft document with input from the Personnel Commissioner and County Attorney to bring back to the Committee in December along with a list of interested members to serve on a task force. Mr. Hattery agreed to officially appoint a task force at that time.*

Approval of Minutes

September 12, 2008

It was MOVED by Ms. Mackesey, seconded by Mr. Stevenson, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2008, meeting as corrected.

Other Business

Mr. Hattery referenced the discussion held at the last meeting concerning the Freedom of Information policy and clarified that the policy is adequate and that no immediate action is necessary but that it will be updated in the future; the Committee agreed.

Ms. Younger spoke about Mr. Potter's presentation and said it represented well the Core Performance's framework developed by the subcommittee. The presentation was put in a frame that clearly identified the issues, service delivery, quality, staffing needs, and communicated effective performance.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:48 p.m.