

MINUTES

APPROVED 8-8-08

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

JUNE 13, 2008 2:00 P.M. SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM

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

Excused: P. Mackesey

Staff: C. Covert, Clerk of the Legislature; P. Younger, Deputy County Administrator; M. Lynch, Public Information Officer; J. Kippola, Contracts Coordinator; S. Dewitt, Elections Commissioner; E. Cree, Elections Commissioner; D. Squires, Finance Director; S. Whicher, County Administrator; J. Wood, County Attorney; J. Steiner, Public Library; M. Reynolds, Deputy County Clerk; G. Reinbolt, The History Center's Executive Director; E. Bixler, President of the History's Board of Trustees

Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

Changes to Agenda

The following changes were made to the agenda:

- The History Center – revised resolution
- Amendment to Code of Ethics – addition
- Resolution – Authorization to Execute Quitclaims Deed – Sale of Foreclosure Properties at Public Auction - addition
- Resolution – Authorization to Execute Quitclaim Deed – Properties Redeemed before County Auction – addition

Chair's Report

Mr. Hattery updated the Committee on the status of a letter he will be sending out to Department Heads concerning policy changes to the Administrative Manual. A draft copy of the letter has been prepared and he anticipates sending it out in the near future. He also provided an update on the Core Performance group and said they will be ready to report out in July or August. The Government Operations Committee and the Budget and Capital Committee will receive a presentation.

Report from the Finance Director

Mr. Squires reported the public auction on foreclosed properties was held last evening and all properties were sold. He distributed information highlighting what each property sold for and said the property adjacent to a golf course sold for \$145,000. The property with the easement sold for \$8,000. There were 60 people bidding and gross sales were approximately \$320,000.

Resolutions

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

RESOLUTION NO. - AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE QUITCLAIM DEED –PROPERTIES REDEEMED BEFORE COUNTY AUCTION

WHEREAS, Tompkins County works with property owners to allow them to redeem their property prior to auction, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the County Administrator is authorized to execute a Quitclaim Deed conveying property acquired by the County through 2007 tax foreclosures, back to the previous owners upon payment of all back taxes, penalties, interest and fees as follows:

Town of Newfield 28-1-6.41 Robert & Tammy Spencer
City of Ithaca 55-1-1-9 William & Teresa Sullivan

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

* * * * *

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

RESOLUTION NO. – AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE QUITCLAIM DEEDS – SALE OF FORECLOSURE PROPERTIES AT PUBLIC AUCTION

WHEREAS, by tax foreclosure proceedings, the County acquired certain parcels in the County, and

WHEREAS, said properties were sold, contingent upon Legislature approval, at public auction on June 12, 2008, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Government Operations Committee, That upon payment in full of the bid price, plus current taxes and filing fees, that the County Administrator be and hereby is authorized to execute quitclaim deeds for all parcels sold at the public auction.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

* * * * *

Finance Director’s Report (continued)

Mr. Squires reported on the \$25,000 grant received for a feasibility study to provide for a property-tax payment centralized database. He attended a meeting yesterday with the real property services and learned that the grant is actually \$50,000 (\$25,000 to do a study and \$25,000 for an implementation plan including a signed contract). Proposals will be solicited for the study shortly.

Report from the County Attorney

Mr. Wood said he would like to request an executive session later in the meeting concerning a legal issue.

Board of Elections

Lease Agreement – Voting Machines

Mr. Whicher informed the Committee that he has learned that the cost for building a new building as recommended at a previous meeting is much higher than originally thought. He is now proposing that the Board of Elections lease a facility. A building has been located and an offer submitted. Following an agreement, a resolution will be presented for consideration.

Rollover

It was MOVED by Ms. Kiefer, seconded by Mr. Stevenson, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve and submit the following rollover request to the Budget and Capital Committee:

Voting Machine Technicians: Need additional funds to pay techs to setup, acceptance test and train on new voting equipment.	Acct. No. 1450.51000075	\$8,200
---	-------------------------	---------

Sen Votg Machine Technicians: Need additional funds to pay Senior Voting Techs to perform duties for new voting machines. Replace pay spent on Special Election.	Acct. No. 1450.51000793	\$8,600
Program Expense: Additional funds needed to pay election inspectors to train and operate new voting machines.	Acct. No. 1450.54400	\$28,050

Report from the Public Information Officer

Ms. Lynch reported on the status of the June 30 Legislative Gazette publication featuring Tompkins County. To date 3 ¼ pages of advertisements have been sold and will likely be able to have a full-page supplement for Tompkins County articles. She commented the deadline was extended from June 11th to June 18th.

Report from the County Administrator

Mr. Whicher distributed a list of core functioning teams that should be reporting to various committees.

County Administration

History Center

Revised copies of the resolution executing a multi-year contract were distributed to Committee members. Ms. Kippola said the resolution is a continuation of the relationship the County has historically had with the History Center [Dewitt Historical Society].

It was MOVED by Mr. Stevenson, seconded by Mr. Sigler, to approve and submit the following resolution to the Budget and Capital Committee for consideration. Discussion followed and Ms. Kiefer spoke about her suggestion made at the previous meeting and agreed to by the Committee to include the following paragraph from the resolution approved by the Committee last Fall:

“RESOLVED, further, That the County and the History Center shall develop a Memorandum of Understanding detailing the Center’s obligation(s) to the County with respect to the County’s historical records and artifacts in return for the County’s contribution to the cost of maintaining space for The History Center in Tompkins County.”

Ms. Kiefer also believes there should be some County official, e.g., County Historian or Records Manager person. to have an opportunity for reviewing records pertinent to County history before de-accession of any such materials and have similar language added to the MOU. Mr. Reinbolt spoke briefly about their current policy and that there is a collections committee and said that the County Historian upon approval could become a standing member of that group and represent the County’s interest. Ms. Kiefer said being on that Committee would be fine but the County needs separate authority, too.

Discussion followed and Ms. Kiefer spoke of her belief that the County should pay for the insurance and security. Mr. Hattery does not believe the dollar amounts should be renegotiated at this time. Mr. Whicher clarified that the base package includes rent and parking and encouraged the Committee to continue moving forward and develop a MOU.

Following further discussion, Ms. Kiefer believes it is important to define the cost of occupancy in the resolution. The Committee agreed to include the cost of insurance and security. Mr. Hattery requested that action be postponed on the resolution to allow the changes recommended by the Committee to be incorporated into the resolution.

It was MOVED by Mr. Sigler, seconded by Ms. Kiefer, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to Table the resolution to July 1 and the Committee will further consider the resolution as revised.

**RESOLUTION NO. - AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE MULTI-YEAR AGREEMENT -
THE HISTORY CENTER**

WHEREAS, the County wishes to enter into an agreement with The History Center, formally known as the Dewitt Historical Society, to maintain a public museum and procure, store, and preserve the records and artifacts that document the history of the County and the municipalities thereof, and

WHEREAS, the County has maintained a relationship with The History Center, for over fifty years related to the cost of maintaining space for the aforementioned services, and

WHEREAS, the County first provided space for the agency for the operation of a County Historical Museum in 1939 in the Old Tompkins County Courthouse (County Board Resolution of December 20, 1939), and

WHEREAS, the County continued its commitment to The History Center and its services by compensating the agency for its occupancy costs at the Historic Clinton House in 1973 (County Board Resolution 138 of May 29, 1973), and

WHEREAS the agency's move to the Historic Clinton House was prompted by the COUNTY as a result of the COUNTY'S initiative for the adaptive restoration of the Old Court House, and

WHEREAS, the County further continued its commitment to The History Center and its services by compensating the agency for its occupancy costs following the agency's latest move to the Dean Building in 1993,

WHEREAS, the County wishes to continue its commitment to the agency and enter into a five-year agreement, now therefore be it

RESOLVED that beginning January 1, 2009 and expiring December 31, 2013, the County shall compensate The History Center as follows:

2009 -	\$84,106	\$88,228
2010 -	\$86,591	\$90,840
2011 -	\$89,154	\$93,401
2012 -	\$91,793	\$96,171
2013 -	\$94,514	\$99,026

RESOLVED further, that the County shall also compensate The History Center a one-time payment in 2008 for a sum not to exceed \$10,000 as reimbursement for prior years' occupancy cost shortfalls,

RESOLVED further, that the Comptroller is authorized to make the following adjustment:

1990.54400	Contingency Fund	\$10,000
7510.54400	The History Center	\$10,000

RESOLVED, further, that the County Administrator or his designee is authorized to sign all documents related to this agreement,

RESOLVED, further, That the County and the The History Center shall develop a Memorandum of Understanding detailing the Center's obligation(s) to the County with respect to the County's historical records and artifacts in return for the County's contribution to the cost of maintaining space for The History Center in Tompkins County. The County will have access to the Center's collection when deemed necessary.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

* * * * *

Resolution – Health Benefits Consortium Consultant for Phases 2 and 3

Following a brief explanation by Ms. Kippola, it was MOVED by Mr. Sigler, seconded by Ms. Kiefer, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature for approval:

RESOLUTION NO. - AUTHORIZING AGREEMENT FOR PHASES 2 AND 3 FOR HEALTH BENEFITS CONSORTIUM CONSULTANT

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 Benefits Consortium for the employees of all municipalities within Tompkins County, and

WHEREAS, once the Health Benefits Plan is designed, each participating municipality will be expected to sign an inter-municipal health benefits consortium agreement that defines the consortium structure, and

WHEREAS, the details concerning an inter-municipal health benefits consortium are complex and require expert consulting from a firm experienced with municipal health benefits consortiums, and

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Council of Governments (TCCOG) recognized the due diligence performed by the Health Benefits Steering Committee in recommending Locey & Cahill, LLC as the Phase I consultant for the Shared Municipal Services Incentive (SMSI) Health Benefits grant project, and

WHEREAS, it makes sense to have one expert consulting firm to represent the interests of the future consortium rather than each municipality retaining a consultant, and

WHEREAS, the County, on behalf of the Steering Committee, issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a consultant for Phases 2 (plan design) and 3 (implementation), and

WHEREAS the Steering Committee reviewed seven proposals, and interviewed four firms, and

WHEREAS, the Steering Committee determined that the best qualified firm is Locey & Cahill, LLC, and recommended to TCCOG that Locey & Cahill, LLC serve as the Phases 2 and 3 consultant for TCCOG, and

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Council of Governments (TCCOG) requests that the County select Locey & Cahill, LLC as the Phases 2 and 3 consultant, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Government Operations Committee and the Tompkins County Council of Governments (TCCOG), That the County enter into an agreement with Locey & Cahill, LLC, of Syracuse, New York, to provide consulting services to guide TCCOG's future health benefits consortium for Phases 2 and 3 at a rate not to exceed \$61,400 total,

RESOLVED, further, That the agreement will provide an option of renewal of the agreement at the end of Phase 3 to continue consulting for five years at a rate not to exceed \$48,000 annually,

RESOLVED, further, That the County will pay an additional amount up to \$3,000 per month through Phase 2 for support services,

RESOLVED, further, That 100 percent of the funds to pay for services in phases 2 and 3 are paid from the SMSI Grant as approved by the State, with any outstanding balance charged back to the consortium.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

* * * * *

Tompkins County Public Library

Sunday Library Services

Ms. Steiner informed the Committee that the Town of Ithaca and City of Ithaca were approached with three cost-sharing proposals for funding Sunday Library services. The two municipalities have not

taken action yet, but Ms. Steiner believes they understand the numbers provided them. She hopes to have a response prior to submitting the Library's budget to the County in August.

Ms. Kiefer commented that she was grateful the Library approached the two municipalities and said she would like to see an even split. Mr. Hattery and Mr. Sigler both stated they felt the proposals were a good approach.

Ms. Steiner said she was unclear about how to handle the cost for utilities for Sunday hours; *Mr. Whicher said he would work with the Library.*

Executive Session

It was MOVED by Ms. Kiefer, seconded by Mr. Sigler, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to hold an executive session to discuss litigation. An executive session was held at 2:50 p.m. and returned to open session at 3:12 p.m.

Finance Department

Resolution – Ithaca Wastewater Treatment Plant

Following a brief explanation by Mr. Squires, it was MOVED by Ms. Kiefer, seconded by Mr. Stevenson, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature for approval:

RESOLUTION NO - REQUESTING THE JOINT SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE ITHACA AREA WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY TO TAKE OVER FINANCIAL BILLING OF THE SEPTAGE DISPOSAL AT THE ITHACA AREA WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT FROM TOMPKINS COUNTY

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 377 of 1988 authorized an agreement with the Ithaca Area Wastewater Treatment Facility (IAWWTF) for a capital investment to ensure a more environmentally acceptable method of septage treatment and disposal, and

WHEREAS, under the agreement Tompkins County is responsible for reimbursing the IAWWTF for operating and maintenance costs associated with septage receiving activity, and for the debt service on the improvements added to accommodate septage waste, and

WHEREAS, the debt for the aforementioned capital improvement has now been retired, and

WHEREAS, the continuing involvement of the County for billing and collecting for septage disposal now that the debt on the improvements have been retired is no longer warranted, and

WHEREAS, a more efficient method of financial billing at the point of service is practical and desirable and is acceptable to the IAWWTF, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Health and Human Services, the Government Operations, and the Budget and Capital Committees, That Tompkins County is supportive of the transfer of the financial billing operations of septage disposal from the County Finance Department to the IAWWTF effective January 1, 2009, and

RESOLVED, further, That the County Finance Director is charged with coordinating with the IAWWTF to ensure a smooth transition of the financial billing function.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II- 2

* * * * *

Fiscal Impact- Finance Department charges \$1 per truck discharge in billing. This varies between \$6,000-\$8,000 per year. Budget Acct 8161.54400 – Septage Disposal \$160,000 with corresponding revenue of \$160,000. Currently 14 companies use the facility and they are billed each month for actual usage.

Rollover Requests

County Clerk

Ms. Kiefer spoke briefly about the anticipated decrease in revenues and the approximately \$66,000 remaining rollover balance with no specified use. Mr. Whicher said during discussions with the Department, there was agreement that their revenue will be adjusted by \$100,000 in 2009.

It was MOVED by Mr. Stevenson, seconded by Ms. Kiefer, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present (Mr. Sigler was temporarily out of the room), to approve and submit the following rollover request to the Budget and Capital Committee for approval:

Archives grant completion – indexing backfiled land records into EDMS (Challenge Industries is vendor)	Acct. No. 1410.54442	\$37,450
Microfilming of civil papers - \$4,000 (Challenge), conversion of microfilm to digital images - \$15,000 (Challenge), and microfilm duplication - \$10,000 (Challenge)	Acct. No. 1410.54442	\$29,000
Inventoring and scanning County Clerk archival records in Records Center	Acct. No. 1410.54442	\$12,000
Installing shelving and map cabinets for off-site records in Records Center	Acct. No. 1410.52210	\$13,000
Additional public access computer terminals and printer in Clerk's Office	Acct. No. 1410.52206	\$12,000

Assessment

It was MOVED by Mr. Stevenson, seconded by Ms. Kiefer, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve and submit the following rollover request to the Budget and Capital Committee for approval:

AES Cayuga Appraisal (Resolution #138 Appropriation from Contingent Fund for Appraisal Report - Assessment Department)	Acct. No. 1690.	\$50,000
Cost for printing preliminary hearing informational publications	Acct. No. 1355.54425	\$4,433
Grievance Day Location Rental – Women's Community Building	Acct. No. 1355.54442	\$1,500

County Administration

It was MOVED by Mr. Stevenson, seconded by Mr. Sigler, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve and submit the following rollover request to the Budget and Capital Committee for approval:

Laptop Computer Replacement for Budget Preparation	Acct. No. 1230.52206	\$2,000
Additional Printing Expenses for Budget Books & Special Projects	Acct. No. 1230.54330	\$1,717
Office Equipment - Micro cassette Transcriber	Acct. No. 1230.52210	\$ 200

Projector for the Legislative Chamber	Acct. No. 1988.52222	\$2,000
---------------------------------------	----------------------	---------

County Attorney

The Department did not submit a request to use rollover in 2008. Mr. Whicher commented that the Department's target will be adjusted during the budget process.

Finance Department

The Department did not submit a request to use rollover in 2008. Mr. Whicher said the Department's target will be reduced by \$15,000.

Legislature

A brief discussion followed concerning the budget line for workforce diversity and inclusion initiatives. It was noted that this money was transferred from the Personnel Department's budget to the Legislature's budget. Mr. Whicher explained the reason for the transfer of funds and said it provides an improved system for monitoring and accountability in following guidelines and processes.

It was MOVED by Mr. Stevenson, seconded by Ms. Kiefer, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve and submit the following rollover request to the Budget and Capital Committee for approval:

County Administrator Search Process	Acct. No. 1010.54442	\$7,000
-------------------------------------	----------------------	---------

Approval of Minutes

April 11, 2008

It was MOVED by Mr. Sigler, seconded by Ms. Kiefer, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the April 11th minutes as amended.

May 9, 2008

It was MOVED by Ms. Kiefer, seconded by Mr. Sigler, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the May 9th minutes as corrected.

June 3, 2008

It was MOVED by Ms. Kiefer, seconded by Mr. Stevenson, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the June 3rd minutes as submitted.

Legislature

Courthouse Building Security during Meeting

Mr. Hattery said he would like to postpone discussion on this issue until Legislator Dennis is available to attend the meeting as he requested this topic be discussed.

Code of Ethics

It was MOVED by Ms. Kiefer, to approve the following proposed amendment to the Code of Ethics and submit to the full Legislature for approval. MOTION FAILED FOR LACK OF A SECOND.

Section 1. Chapter 32 of the Tompkins County Code is hereby amended as follows:

The first Paragraph of Section 32-4 is amended to read as follows:

Newly elected officials and newly appointed key employees shall file an annual disclosure statement prior to taking office or beginning employment with the County. This shall be submitted to the Clerk of the Tompkins County Legislature in the form prescribed by resolution of the Tompkins County Legislature upon recommendation of the Ethics Advisory Board. The Clerk shall retain the forms on behalf of the Ethics Advisory Board and make them available for inspection as detailed below.

Section 2. This local law shall take effect upon filing with the Secretary of State.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:52 p.m.