

## MINUTES

APPROVED 8-8-08

### GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

**JULY 15, 2008 4:30 P.M. SCOTT HEYMAN CONFERENCE ROOM**

Present: M. Hattery, Chair; M. Sigler; D. Kiefer; G. Stevenson; P. Mackesey (arrived at 4:39 p.m.)  
Staff: C. Covert, Clerk of the Legislature; G. Potter, Information Technology Services Director; S. Martel Moore, Deputy County Administrator; D. Squires, Finance Director; P. Younger, Deputy County Administrator; J. Wood, County Attorney; M. Lynch, Public Information Officer; S. Whicher, County Administrator; E. Cree, Elections Commissioner; S. Dewitt, Elections Commissioner  
Guests: Ithaca Journal Reporter

#### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m.

#### Changes to Agenda

The resolution entitled Authorization to Conduct a Public Hearing – Proposed Acquisition of Property for Emergency Communications (Tower) Facility was added to the agenda.

#### Communications Policy

Mr. Hattery asked Mr. Potter to attend this meeting to discuss the Communications Policy and get some direction from the Committee as to how to move forward. At this time, Mr. Potter provided a brief overview of the policy and the changes that have occurred over the years in the information technology world including telephone and e-mail systems. The original policy was adopted in 2001. In 2005, the policy was reviewed and revised; however, the proposal was not approved by the Committee at that point. One of the issues raised was in regard to the level of authority and responsibility the Information Technology Services Department would have had in reviewing information within a records program. It is the opinion of Mr. Potter that the policy needs to be reevaluated not just as a communications systems policy but a communications and overarching information technology systems policy. For example, telephone systems are becoming data systems and e-mail is being used in a much different manner now. Also included in the whole program should be a level of education for staff in the County. Another area that needs to be addressed is the use of e-mail by elected officials. Mr. Potter said he discussed this policy at a department head meeting last year and some interest was expressed by a few to participate in the process for reviewing and revising the policy.

Although Mr. Potter reports to the Facilities and Infrastructure Committee, he believes this is the appropriate committee to oversee the review of this policy. He then asked the Committee what direction and/or level it wished to participate.

In response to Ms. Kiefer's question concerning e-mail and retention of information by Legislators, Mr. Potter believes the issues and rationale would be the same as for any employee. Ms. Kiefer said she would like status update reports before a final proposal is presented. As Chair of the Committee, Mr. Hattery said he would be willing to keep in touch with Mr. Potter and bring updates to the Committee. Mr. Sigler believes the Committee should give some guidance and frame the issues of the policy.

Ms. Mackesey arrived at this time.

Discussion followed and it was noted that Department Heads should be involved in the process. Mr. Potter said he would be willing to put together the information and organize it. Mr. Whicher said he likes the idea of framing it as this is going to be a very difficult issue and agrees with having a small

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group to work on it. Mr. Stevenson agreed that having a working group is logical and suggested a representative of labor be involved. *Mr. Hattery agreed to meet with Mr. Potter and come to the Committee in September with a proposal to proceed.*

**Policy 01-30 – General Business Hours for Tompkins County Government**

Ms. Younger provided a brief overview of the policy and the procedures followed for revising the following policy. According to policy 01-04, this is only an update for the Committee and that action is not required. Ms. Younger spoke to the process for updating policies as a whole and said it is an ongoing report on the Department Heads monthly meeting agenda. She would like to encourage other committee chairs to have this as an item on their agendas as well.

Ms. Kiefer referenced the policy below and questioned the General Information and Procedures sections. She believes the last line of the General Information section could be a procedure. Ms. Younger explained that the intent of procedures is to outline steps. *Ms. Kiefer said she will follow-up with Ms. Younger at a later date concerning this issue.*

**General Business Hours for Tompkins County  
Government Offices and Departments**

<b>Objective:</b>	To establish general business hours for the County organization as a whole in order to give as much access to the public as is practical, recognizing that exceptions may apply.	<b>Procedure Number:</b>	01-30
<b>Reference:</b> <i>(Laws both state and local)</i>		<b>Effective Date:</b>	January 12, 1981
		<b>Responsible Department:</b>	County Administration
		<b>Modified Date (s):</b>	July 3, 2008
<b>Legislative Policy Statement:</b>		<b>Resolution No.:</b>	

**General Information:**

The general business hours for Tompkins County offices and departments are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. All county offices shall be kept open for the transaction of County business on the days and hours designated, except for holidays and for those offices/departments that are legally required to operate outside of the core hours (for example, Emergency Response, Sheriff's Department, Child Abuse Emergency Services).

**Next Scheduled Review:**

July 2011

Closing of County offices and departments within business hours is discouraged, except in the case of an emergency (also see Policy #01-42). If the need arises to close a County office or department during general business hours, the County Administrator's Office should be notified promptly.

- I. Definitions** N/A
- II. Policy:** N/A
- Procedure:** N/A

**Resolution – Cancel August 5, 2008, Legislature Meeting**

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

**RESOLUTION NO. 151 – AMENDMENT OF RESOLUTION NO. 7 OF 2008 – ESTABLISHING 2008 MEETING DATES**

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 7 of 2008 established the Tompkins County Legislature meeting dates for 2008, and

WHEREAS, the Legislature desires to cancel its first meeting in August 2008, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Government Operations Committee, That Resolution No. 7 of 2008 is hereby amended to cancel the August 5, 2008 Legislature meeting.

**SEQR ACTION:** TYPE II-20

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**Board of Elections**

Resolution – Lease Agreement

Mr. Whicher said he has identified space that will be climate controlled for storage of the new voting machines and training purposes. Following a brief discussion, it was MOVED by Mr. Stevenson, seconded by Ms. Mackesey, and unanimously adopted by voice vote, to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature for approval:

**RESOLUTION NO. 152 – AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO A FIVE-YEAR LEASE AGREEMENT FOR THE TOMPKINS COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS IN ITHACA, NEW YORK**

WHEREAS, the Board of Elections has need for secure, dry space to store electronic ballot marking devices (voting machines) and additional space for training Election Commissioners on the new devices, and

WHEREAS, two additional agencies also seek office space and are interested in subleasing from Tompkins County, and

WHEREAS, the ICS Press site on Hanshaw Road in the Town of Dryden was identified as the best fit for all three entities, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Government Operations Committee, That the County Administrator, or his designee, is hereby authorized to finalize negotiations and sign a lease agreement with the landlord, Schug Realty, LLC, for the period of July 2008, through July 2013.

**SEQR ACTION:** TYPE II-20

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**County Attorney**

**Resolution – Conduct Public Hearing – Eminent Domain**

It was MOVED by Mr. Stevenson, seconded by Ms. Kiefer, to approve and submit the following resolution to the full Legislature for approval. Following a brief discussion and friendly amendments offered and accepted as reflected in the resolution below, a voice vote resulted as follows: Ayes – 5, Noes – 0. RESOLUTION CARRIED.

**RESOLUTION NO. 153 - AUTHORIZATION TO CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING - PROPOSED ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY FOR EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS (TOWER) FACILITY VIA EMINENT DOMAIN**

WHEREAS, the County constructed a telecommunication facility on leased premises, a portion of Tax Parcel No. 2.-1-7 in the Town of Enfield, and

WHEREAS, said telecommunications facility is an integral part of the County Emergency Communications System and access to it is essential to preserve the health and safety of Tompkins County citizens, and

WHEREAS, access has been obstructed frequently over an extended period of time, and

WHEREAS, the acquisition of an area surrounding the facility will ensure long term access to the telecommunications facility, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Government Operations Committee, That the Tompkins County Legislature conduct a public hearing pursuant to Section 201 of the Eminent Domain Procedure Law at the Tompkins County Courthouse on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2008, at 5:30 o'clock in the evening thereof,

RESOLVED, further, That the purpose of said hearing is to inform the public and to review the public use to be served by the proposed acquisition and the impact on the environment and residents of the locality where the proposed acquisition will take place,

RESOLVED further, That pursuant to Section 202 of the Eminent Domain Procedure Law, the Clerk of the Legislature shall cause to be published at least ten days and not more than thirty days prior to said hearing a notice of same in at least five consecutive issues of the Ithaca Journal.

**SEQR ACTION:** TYPE II-20

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**Report from the Finance Director**

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Mr. Squires provided a brief update regarding the Ithaca Wastewater Treatment facility. He attended a meeting of the joint commission committee and said they will be discussing the matter as outlined below and adopted by Resolution No. 113 of June 2008:

“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,

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

The Town of Dryden Supervisor had some questions. Mr. Squires said he was instructed that he could informally notify the businesses that the above-mentioned action is under consideration at the next meeting.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.