

COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Human Services Development Complex

Minutes from 01-22-14

Present:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John VanSoest-Town of Catharine | <input type="checkbox"/> Dave Reed-Town of Cayuta |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Harold Russell-Town of Dix | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ben Dickens-Town of Hector |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jocelyn Harrison-Town of Orange | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Scott-Town of Montour |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marvin Switzer-Town of Reading | <input type="checkbox"/> Jean Kosty -Town of Tyrone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dale Walter-Village of Burdett | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John King-Village of Montour Falls |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Keith Pierce – Village of Odessa | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mark Swinnerton-Village of Watkins Glen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dennis Fagan-Chairman Schuyler Co. Legis. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tim O’Hearn-County Administrator |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Peggy Tomassi-Schuyler County | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> J.F. Winkler, M.D., Health Officer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rebekah LaMoreaux – WG Area Chamber of Commerce | |

Call to order – 7:00 PM

Welcome –

Health Officer Reports – (handouts) Flu cases have risen with most being the Influenza A. FDA is reporting a shortage of Normal Saline due to the amount of Influenza type hospitalizations. The flu is affecting those adults under the age of 65 years old. Deaths associated with the flu are striking the middle age adults. Flu vaccines are still available at pharmacies.

Schuyler County Humane Society – Georgie & Mark Taylor gave a presentation on ‘Managing Large Scale Companion Animal Breeding at the Local Level’. Focusing on three areas: Hoarding, Dog Fighting, and Puppy Mills. Demonstrated the economic and environmental impact these have on our communities. Current laws are not strong enough. Local legislation needs to be in effect. There is movement for ordinances to be put in place to assure animals are properly protected in bad weather conditions.

Election of Officers – Nomination of the following slate:

President – Ben Dickens

Vice President – Mark Swinnerton

Secretary – Peggy Tomassi

Motion to approve slate by Tim O’Hearn, seconded by Dave Scott, approved unanimously.

2014 Goals – Continue to look at opportunities for consolidations or economies of scale. Tax Collecting could be done differently and would present a huge cost savings to the Towns/County.

Sales Tax Update – (handout) 2013 sales tax revenue was below budgeted amount. Beginning in 2014, the Towns/Villages will receive 20% vs the 24% they have received in the past.

2014 Budget Update – The Governor has made his budget announcement including a tax cap proposal. There is a property tax rebate for those tax payers whose municipality can remain under the tax cap.

Project Seneca Update – Meetings are held regularly. The beginning of March will enter into an IMA for bonding. The next public meeting will be based around the site. Rates will be flat for all users. The cooperation has been outstanding.

Around the Table-

Tim O'Hearn – Contiguous towns can share a judge.

Public Officials Conference will be held March 13th. More info to come.

John King – The entrance project is now complete and was done under budget.

Adjourn: 8:43pm

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Call to order – 7:00 PM

Welcome –

Health Officer Reports – (handouts) E-cigarettes are now producing side effects for some users. They are not yet FDA approved. Influenza & flu are still in the area. In Schuyler there are mostly respiration & GI complaints.

Time Warner Cable Franchise Agreements – Gayle Sedlak from WGSD stated that WGSD currently houses Channel 5 television with a studio & equipment. The school district is having a difficult time with Time Warner Cable and they are ready to pull the plug on being the host for Channel 5. From a COG perspective, Tim O’Hearn will reach out to Time Warner.

Household Hazardous Waste – Kristin VanHorn, Director of Planning stated how her office fields many call regarding household hazardous waste. She would like to apply for the Household Hazardous Waste grant along with Yates County which covers half of the \$9,000 cost to hold a HHHW day. She is asking for Town/Village buy in on the cost of the grant. The Comprehensive Plan is near completion. A Public Hearing is scheduled for May 8th and presented to the County Legislature for their approval at the meeting on May 12th.

Sales Tax Update – (handout) First quarter sales tax figures show an approximate 2% decrease in revenue. Anticipating a better showing next quarter.

2014 Budget Update – The state budget has been adopted. Dennis Fagan is concerned with the hypocrisy when the state is not responsible for their own programs. State Medicaid takeover would demonstrate a true tax relief. Albany should be more responsible to their spending. Tim’s budget presentation is being replicated statewide to represent the true savings figure tax payers will have. Ben Dickens shared about ‘mine safety training’ – another unfunded mandate where funding was taken away.

Schuyler/Yates County Study – The RFP’s have been submitted. Five consultants are being interviewed. The final selection will be made Friday. There is an anticipation of one year for the study to be complete. The Dept. of State representative visited today and assured that the state is interested in this project. There is solid commitment on behalf of both counties.

Project Seneca Update – John King stated the IMA work and the Task Force meetings continue. The IMA should be ready soon. As there is a bald eagle nest in the chosen site area, further work

will need to be done to assure non disturbance especially during mating season. The sites are being studied to be sure the best one has been chosen.

Around the Table-

Tim O'Hearn stated that Senator O'Mara & Assemblyman Palmisano are advocating for the NYS Academy of Fire Science remaining in Schuyler County. There is no funding in the budget for either site of Montour Falls or Oriskany until the study has been completed. Our voices need to continue to be heard. David Scott shared that they Town of Montour has 30 acres of land that could be turned over for expansion of the Fire Academy.

Fracking – Dennis shared that it is required to have 3,000 feet overburden over shale to conduct fracking. Our area does not have the boundary to conduct fracking. The Southern Tier has more of an environment appropriate for fracking. No research has been done with the Utica shale.

Chris Arnold inquired if anyone knew about the Emerald Necklace being considered in the Town of Cayuta as he is unaware. Tim stated that easements would need to be made on each property parcel in order for any scenic byway to occur. Trail guidelines would dictate which activities could occur on this byway. Municipalities would buy in to the concept. Kate Bartholemew will look into this more.

Next meeting: July 23rd.

Adjourn: 8:04pm