

Countywide-Shared Services Meeting

Tioga County Mayors and Supervisors

April 10, 2019

6:00 p.m.

Panel Attendees:

Keith Flesher, Supervisor, Town of Berkshire
Stuart Yetter, Jr., Supervisor, Town of Newark Valley
Jim Tornatore, Mayor, Village of Newark Valley
Lesley Pelotte, Mayor, Village of Nichols
Ken Sutfin, Mayor, Village of Spencer
Randy Thayer, Supervisor, Town of Spencer
Lewis Zorn, Supervisor, Town of Tioga
Patrick Ayres, Mayor, Village of Waverly

Absent:

Dick Cary, Supervisor, Town of Barton
William Strosahl, Supervisor, Town of Candor
Eric Halstead, Mayor, Village of Candor
Kevin Engelbert, Supervisor, Town of Nichols
Don Castellucci, Supervisor, Town of Owego
Mike Baratta, Mayor, Village of Owego
Charles Davis, Supervisor, Town of Richford

County Staff:

Martha Sauerbrey, Legislative Chair
Peter DeWind, County Attorney
Cathy Haskell, Deputy Legislative Clerk

Guests:

Barb Crannell, Councilwoman, Town of Nichols
Scott Parmelee, Trustee, Village of Newark Valley
Dean Morgan, Deputy Supervisor/Councilman, Town of Owego
Fran VanHousen, Trustee, Village of Owego
Matt Freeze, Reporter, Morning Times

Chair Sauerbrey opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Welcome:

Chair Sauerbrey thanked everyone for attending tonight's 2019 Shared Services kick-off meeting.

Update - Chair Sauerbrey:

Chair Sauerbrey reported the rules and regulations stipulate we must follow the same steps in the Countywide Shared Services Initiative (CWSSI) process, however, with less restrictive timeline dates. Chair Sauerbrey reported the Panel is required to conduct a minimum of two Shared Services Panel meetings and three public hearings this year. At the conclusion of these meetings, the Panel, by majority vote, could determine whether it is the best interest of the taxpayers to revise or update the previously submitted plan, develop a new plan, or not approve any plan in a calendar year. Chair Sauerbrey reported it is acceptable to submit a statement explaining why the Panel chose not to submit a new plan. Chair Sauerbrey reported the CWSSI is in place through 2021.

Update - County Attorney DeWind:

County Attorney DeWind reported although the timeline dates are less restrictive, the Shared Services Panel needs to allow ample time to conduct the minimum requirement of two Shared Services meetings, three public hearings, 45-day time period for Legislative review, Panel vote, public vote, and submission to the State by the end of the 2019 calendar year.

Mr. DeWind reported the Panel could vote to continue with the ongoing plan with no new plan submission or extend the current IT shared services plan with the addition of new municipalities.

Update – IT Shared Services Plan:

Chair Sauerbrey reported the following IT Shared Services update, per information gathered from ITCS Director Camin:

- Process of finalizing the MWBE exclusions for single-source vendors for the State grant.
- Process underway with Southern Tier Network for the Town of Owego and Village of Waverly connections. The Town of Owego connection is ready for use and moving forward with the phone service work to prepare for the migration. Anticipates 3-4 months to complete the moving of phone services. Village of Waverly should be following in the next few months for their phone service. Once the phone system migration is completed, IT will work on getting the equipment set to bring the computer systems onto our network. Anticipates having both municipalities on our system by year-end.

Chair Sauerbrey reported the Village of Owego is moving forward with a new municipal building, therefore, expressed future interest in the IT Shared Services Plan. Mr. Camin met with the Village of Owego to begin discussion.

Village of Newark Valley Mayor Tornatore expressed future interest in the IT Shared Services Plan.

Town of Spencer Supervisor Thayer expressed future interest in the IT Shared Services Plan, but also expressed concern regarding availability of their current software and securitization of data.

Mayor Tornatore reported IT Director Camin will be attending the April 18, 2019 Council of Governments (COG) meeting to provide an update on the IT Shared Services.

Topics of Discussion from Panel:

- **Code Enforcement Services:** Mayor Tornatore reported COG has been discussing code enforcement services and the possibility of consolidation of services at the county level, however, no formal voting has transpired at this time to determine interest. Mayor Tornatore reported discussion is in the exploratory stage and there are numerous unanswered questions at this time. However, there is consistent discussion centering on the current aging situation. Mayor Tornatore reported County Planning Director Jardine is in the process of seeking grant funding to conduct a code enforcement study.

Chair Sauerbrey reported code enforcement services is an important role in the community and some counties submitted this service as part of their Shared Services Plan last year. Chair Sauerbrey reported the Village of Owego Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) project will require code enforcement services.

Mayor Tornatore reported the Villages of Newark Valley, Owego, and Waverly Housing Study will draw additional emphasis for code enforcement services.

Town of Owego Deputy Supervisor/Councilman Morgan reported Chenango and Seneca Counties have consolidated with countywide code enforcement services and Ms. Jardine is researching the logistics of these arrangements.

There are two levels of code enforcement:

1. Building code for residential and commercial construction. This is the most critical level that municipalities need to address.
2. Property Maintenance addressing nuisance complaints.

Deputy Supervisor/Councilman Morgan reported municipalities establishing an administrative service surcharge, in addition to the fine, will help to eliminate or decrease the number of nuisance complaints.

Deputy Supervisor/Councilman Morgan reported the NYS Uniform Fire and Building Codes are standard across the State and supersedes any local municipal established codes. Municipalities have the option to develop additional restrictive local codes tailored to their municipality and several municipalities have done so, however, these are secondary to the Uniform State codes. Tioga County does not have any local codes and strictly uses the NYS Uniform Codes. The State will be updating the NYS Uniform Fire and Building Codes in October 2019 with State training available in 2020 following the new codes going into effect.

Town of Newark Valley Supervisor Yetter reported the Town of Newark Valley, as well as other municipalities, went through codification process years ago where they paid an outside company to maintain and update their local codes, however, later discontinued services, as they believed they could achieve the same results in-house at a cost-savings.

The consolidation of code enforcement services to countywide would require gathering all the municipalities adopted local laws for review. From a personnel standpoint, Deputy Supervisor/Councilman Morgan reported these individuals would be County employees subject to civil service examinations, rules, and regulations.

Village of Waverly Mayor Ayres reported uniformity of the application of the law is important.

Deputy Supervisor/Councilman Morgan reported a minimum of 24 hours of certification training is required annually and this creates a burden for the smaller municipalities with part-time staff.

The Southern Tier Building Officials Association (STBOA) is an organization many municipalities are affiliated with and they offer periodic trainings. Tioga County is a member of STBOA.

Town of Tioga Supervisor Zorn reported municipalities that do not have the availability of a fully certified code enforcement officer could reach out to other municipal code enforcement officers or call the State to request assistance.

Village of Waverly Mayor Ayres reported each municipality currently budgets for code enforcement services, therefore, expressed further discussion of consolidation services is worthy to determine cost-effectiveness and better efficiencies similar to the IT Shared Services Plan.

Town of Tioga Supervisor Zorn inquired as to whether a public referendum is required for the appointment of a county code enforcement officer and consolidation of services.

Panel members expressed the importance of having availability of a code enforcement officer on-site during the entire building phase to ensure project compliance with all specifications and codes.

Next Steps:

- County Planning Director will research Seneca and Chenango Counties to determine the process these counties followed for consolidation, advantages and disadvantages, and overall outcomes.

- Panel members will continue discussion on shared code enforcement services.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 12, 2019, at 6:00 p.m. in the Hubbard Auditorium, Ronald E. Dougherty County Office Building, 56 Main Street, Owego, NY.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Haskell

Deputy Legislative Clerk