



## **Tioga County Worksession Minutes** **February 20, 2025 – 10:00 a.m.**

### **Legislators Present:**

Legislator Brown  
Legislator Bunce  
Legislator Ciotoli  
Legislator Monell  
Legislator Mullen  
Chair/Legislator Sauerbrey  
Legislator Standinger – *arrived @ 10:17 a.m.*

### **Legislators Absent:**

Legislator Flesher  
Legislator Roberts

### **Guests:**

Stephanie Baldwin

### **Staff present:**

Peter DeWind, County Attorney  
Cathy Haskell, Legislative Clerk  
Jackson D. Bailey II, County Administrator  
Linda Parke, Personnel Officer  
Elaine Jardine, County Planning Director – *departed @ 10:04 a.m.*

**Call Meeting to Order:** Chair Sauerbrey opened the meeting at 10:02 a.m. with a **Public Hearing on Annual Agriculture District Inclusion.**

Legislative Clerk Haskell took roll call and read the legal notice as published in the Tioga County designated newspapers. Public Hearing adjourned at 10:04 a.m.

**Approval of Worksession Minutes:** On motion of Legislator Monell, seconded by Legislator Brown, the February 6, 2025 minutes were unanimously approved.

**Action Items:** There are currently no action items.

### **Other:**

- **Radio Communications Project Update** – Chair Sauerbrey asked County Administrator Bailey to provide a brief update on the radio communications project.

County Administrator Bailey reported the standing meeting with Motorola and County staff was held yesterday and the following topics were discussed:

- ✓ **Town of Nichols Special Use Permit Waivers:** County Planning Director Jardine is currently working with the municipality to complete the Special Use Permit waivers. Due to the municipal meeting schedule, this may delay the site remediation for that tower, but it is moving along as it should.
- ✓ **Spencer Site:** The plan is to move forward with the Spencer site construction once the weather breaks.  
**Warehouse Storage:** The owner of the storage facility is looking to sell the property and inquired when the County would be able to vacate the location. Per Motorola, this should occur by the mid-to-end of year. Once construction commences at the tower sites, they will start to move the equipment. Legislator Monell inquired as to whether the County is paying rent for the storage facility. Mr. Bailey reported the County is paying a monthly rent of approximately \$2500. County Attorney DeWind reported a contingency plan has been discussed in the event the owner sells the property. Mr. DeWind reported we are well over the original two schedules for project completion, and this is stretched out a little longer than what the property owner had anticipated. Chair Sauerbrey reported it is her understanding that whatever equipment that could be delivered and staged at the tower sites has been done.
- ✓ **Next Meeting:** There is another meeting scheduled for Friday, February 21, 2025 at the Public Safety Building. Motorola will also be on the call with County staff in person. Mr. Bailey reported several departments have been invited to attend to help support the project as it moves forward. The departments include the Treasurer's Office, ITCS, ED&P, County Administrator, Public Works, and County Attorney. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the site plans and the utility proposals. There are several sites within the project that the actual utility implementation was never finalized. Motorola will be giving proposals as to what they can do to get the utility lines established and determine the sites that need utility implementation. Ultimately, a proposal will be brought forward to the Legislature for consideration.

Chair Sauerbrey reported she does not believe that Motorola at any point in this project brought this concern forward. Mr. Bailey reported this will inevitably lead to an additional change order which could be substantial depending on the proposal.

Mr. Bailey reported that the County's Chief Accountant, Laura Schurter, is very familiar with the tower site preparation process as she was involved in this process with her former employer. She is working with Director of Emergency Services Cornelius to provide her guidance on this process.

Legislator Mullen inquired as to the number of tower sites that require the utility infrastructure. Mr. Bailey reported that approximately five sites may need electrical remediation.

Mr. DeWind reported there are still some tower sites that need the shelter itself, as well as an access road and right-of-way to get the shelter to the site, and then electricity to the site.

Mr. Bailey reported he, the Treasurer's Office, and Diane Rockwell will be meeting to do an intensive review of the financials regarding the grants, reserves, surcharge funds, and ARPA funds. Mr. Bailey reported that as of change order #6, the contracted project amount is \$18 million. We have spent approximately \$4.3 million with \$13.7 million remaining. Depending on the forthcoming change order, we may have to consider appropriation of the fund balance or possibly liquidating another reserve.

Legislator Mullen reported this project started out at \$12 million and is growing. It may be time to have a serious conversation about hiring an experienced project manager who has done this type of project.

Mr. Bailey will create an updated report for the Legislature following the February 21, 2025 meeting.

- **ARPA Updates – March Legislative Standing Committees** – Mr. Bailey would like to request that the Department Heads provide their respective committees with an ARPA expenditure update at their March meetings. Mr. Bailey will provide an overall ARPA expenditure report as part of his County Administrator report for the March 6, 2025 Legislative Worksession.
- **Remote Work Updates** – Mr. Bailey reported he will remind the Department Heads to provide a Remote Work update at their March Committee meetings. Legislator Bunce inquired about the percentage of employees working remotely. At last count, there were over 100 employees who submitted a remote work request, however, not all are working remotely or working remotely on a regular basis. Based on this number, 25% of the County's workforce is eligible to work remotely.
- **H5N1 (Avian Flu) Update** – Legislator Brown reported discussion occurred at the Region 7 DEC meeting and every county in New York State has at least one reported case. It is typically waterfowl, so geese and ducks are the most common birds.
- **Village of Owego Electric Vehicle Grant** – Legislator Ciotoli reported the Village of Owego has an upcoming public hearing to pursue a grant for the purchase of an electric vehicle.
- **Southern Tier 8 Board** – Legislator Ciotoli reported he met with ED&P staff yesterday to gain a better understanding of the Southern Tier 8, as he is now serving on this board. They are trying to utilize grant resources for expansion and one of the possibilities discussed is an incubator for green technologies and start-ups.
- **Chamber of Commerce Event** – Chair Sauerbrey reported the Chamber of Commerce is hosting an informational meeting on economic development. They have invited people from Micron to speak at this meeting. Chair Sauerbrey will share the event information with Legislative Clerk Haskell, who in turn, will send to the Legislators.

- **Introduction of New Deputy Legislative Clerk** – Ms. Haskell introduced and welcomed Stephanie Baldwin as the new Deputy Legislative Clerk. She is observing today and will officially start her position on Monday, February 24, 2025.

**Executive Session**: With no confidential topics for discussion, an Executive Session was not necessary.

Meeting adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

Next Worksession scheduled for Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Cathy Haskell*

Legislative Clerk