

*Northern Oneida County Council of Governments
Executive Board Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2022
Jervis Library, Rome, NY at 2:00 pm*

Present: NOCCOG Chair Bob Sauer (BS), Vice Chair John Doiron (JD), Director Ed Davis (ED), Director Tom McDonald (TM), Fiscal Officer, Betsy Mack (BM). THC Associate Director of Community and Regional Projects, Jennifer Harvill (JenH), Associate Municipal Advisors, Lisa Bellinger (LB) and Joe Rowlands (JR), Municipal Projects Coordinator, John Healt (JH) and GPS Project Administrator Mark Clark (MC).

Meeting called to order at 2:04 pm by Chair BS.

Approval of Minutes. Motion made by BM seconded by ED to approve the June 28, 2022, executive board meeting minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

Financial Report

Motion by TM, seconded by ED to approve the fiscal officer's report as presented. All in favor, motion approved.

BM presented the proposed 2023 budget to the Board for review. Unexpended balance is high. New project ideas are needed.

Tug Hill Commission Updates

- JenH reported that the September THC meeting will be held in Trenton on the 19th and the fall dinner will be held at Zero Dock Street in Carthage on October 20th.
- A webinar and presentation will be held this Saturday, September 17 in West Leyden focusing on Swancott Mills.
- There is a new program, NY Forward, in which two NOCCOG municipalities, Trenton, and the Village of Boonville, have both applied.
- New Planner Matthew Smith started in August. JenH mentioned that Alaina Mallette is leaving the THC at the end of the month.
- There is a budget workshop and training scheduled for Nov. 29 & 30 with Laird Petrie at the Tailwater Lodge in Altmar.
- Local Government Conference is scheduled for April 5 & 6 at the Turning Stone Casino. Planning for the 5th as a separate session leading to the reception, allows attendees to enjoy the reception and stay the night prior to the full day conference. ED mentioned the survey concerning the Turning Stone as the venue, JenH stated that 2/3 of municipal officials polled preferred the Turning Stone, and the results were roughly the same from attendees polled at the conference. JenH also reported that the topics for the LGC are being finalized.
- Planning for the 50th Anniversary of the THC is underway, and ideas are welcome.
- Laird Petrie has been well received by the Tug Hill communities, and a very useful resource for the NOCCOG municipalities. Most recently in the Village of Camden where the treasurer of 30+ years left without much assistance to the incoming treasurer. High praise for Laird from the village. BS suggested that using these "real life experience" examples could generate better interest and "bring the program home."

Administrative Items

- **IMAs/Membership dues** - JH reported that all membership is current, however, Oneida County has yet to send their contribution. The delay may be due to the late return of some signed paperwork.
- **NOCCOG Annual Dinner Meeting** - Finalized for October 27, at the Delta Lake Inn. JH has scheduled speakers Khris Dodson and Hannah Phillips. Khris is from Syracuse University and will discuss transfer of

knowledge, position knowledge inventory, and succession planning. And Hannah, from Mohawk Valley Edge, will do a presentation on the Griffiss Business and Technology Park.

Program Updates

- **LGEC** – JH stated the group seems to be moving forward. There is a computer literacy training that is being held in 6 of the Mohawk Valley’s counties. Many municipalities are lacking in computer basics, so this is a good refresher. The “Stop the Bleed” program planned for the Woodsmen’s Field Days fell through; there was a health issue with Walt, who was in charge of instruction and demonstrations, so all of those types of programs were cancelled this year. However, ED and JH did staff the THC booth at the Woodsmen’s and reported the attendance was great, and the woodsmen’s geared videos playing at the THC booth was a draw. JH missed last week’s LGEC meeting, stating the agenda and minutes are not consistently sent out prior to meetings, so the reminder isn’t always there. JH encouraged all to think of issues or topics that could be a subject of a future training or session. Website Basics – maintaining your municipal website, was given as an option. It was discussed to ask in the monthly announcements if there is anything where NOCCOG can assist, topics or training, maybe use examples of assistance utilized in the past.
- **Succession Planning Training** - JH mentioned that Khris Dodson is collecting information to have the basis for a presentation or webinar. Having Khris speak at the dinner meeting should generate interest and stress the importance of this often-overlooked subject. The THC will continue to pursue this training, possibly having Khris present at the Local Government Conference.
- **Town and Village updates** - JH states the updates are still being sent and currently, most feedback is from the Watertown staff. There was discussion as to the length of the summaries. JH mentioned that the seemingly important topics are highlighted in the updates. There was also a discussion as to the value of the summaries. It was decided that the value is there for most communities, allowing municipalities to network if they discover they are facing similar situations.
- **GPS update** - JH reported that Mark and Jacob mapped fire hydrants and storm collection basins in the Village of Camden. As Jacob left for college in August, NOCCOG brought Mike Thompson on board and Mike has picked up where Jacob left off. Once the collection basins are complete, the plan is to move to curb stops. This should take the mapping program to the end of the season. JH emailed log in information to both Trenton and the Village of Camden that allows them to look at what has been mapped, as the data the mappers collect is not made public until agreed upon by the municipality. Once agreed, the data is released to the NOCCOG portion of the Tug Hill Commissions map webpage. JH states this has to be completed by Mickey Dietrich. JH will attend a meeting in the Village of Camden and apprise the Board of what has been done to date. There are some categories that need to be added to the program. BS commented on the importance of the program, and the need to make our communities aware of this service offered by NOCCOG, stating the “personal touch” of attending and describing the practical uses of the program to the right people makes all of the difference. He mentioned that there is some skepticism as there is no cost to partake in the program. MC mentioned that recent improvements in the program have made a big difference when collecting data in the field. There are still some missing street names and categories that need to be added to certain maps.
- JH is still continuing the conversation with Jason Cingranelli from Verizon. (Jason is the rep that set the account up originally with Jennifer Armstrong.) Jason is still trying to get JH added to the account so service can be paused in the winter months when the iPads are not in use. There was a support ticket that was being processed, but they tried to reach out to JH the day he came back from vacation. Because JH didn’t reply right away, they called the Watertown office. As the account is set up through NOCCOG, not THC, the office staff told them there was no such account, so the ticket was closed. Jason is trying to get another work ticket started but hasn’t had any luck.
- **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) committee**
JH reported that he went on a very informational tour of SUNY Cobleskill and their Institute for Rural Vitality program. Through the program, farmers and small business owners can utilize the facilities at the

college, everything from making beer and wine and processing beef, to making and packaging salsa and cheese curd.

- **Website** - JH reported the website is still very much under construction, with corrections, edits and content being added as time allows. He stated that he is still learning how to edit and add useful content, and there is much to add.
- **Drones** - It was previously agreed to pay for JR's training, licensing, and registration for drones. JR has the needed course content, and needs to schedule a lot of time, as the training is extensive. After JR is certified, he will know better which drone, or drones, will suit the needs of NOCCOG best. JR discussed the state-of-the-art optics in the cameras in today's drones. It was discussed to possibly meet with Peter Healt, from the Oneida County Sheriff's Office for purchasing advice and information.

Other Items

- **Milage Stipend**- JH reported the State mileage rate followed suit with the federal rate Federal rate and increased to .625/mile. NOCCOG started the milage stipend in April when the average price was \$4.20/gallon. Currently the local average is still \$3.95. A discussion on continuing the stipend concluded with BM offering the stipend should continue as long as the price of gas remains over \$3 per gallon. All agreed.

New Project Idea

- **NOCCOG scholarship** - JH mentioned there are only 4 school districts in the NOCCOG area: Adirondack, Camden, Holland Patent and Remsen. His thought was to award \$500 each year to a graduating senior in each of the NOCCOG school districts that plan to go into a field related to municipal government or public service. It was agreed to have JH look into this further.
- **Trenton Falls** - BM mentioned that Trenton Falls will be open this coming weekend. The weather forecast looks good, if anyone has the time, they should stop.

Next meeting

Scheduled for December 15, 2022, at 2pm, in person, at Jervis Library

Motion to adjourn made by ED, seconded by JD. All in favor. Motion approved. Meeting adjourned at 3:33 pm.

*Respectfully submitted,
John Healt, Municipal Projects Coordinator*