

Executive Committee

Robert Sauer, *Chairman*
John Doiron, *Vice-Chairman*
Betsy Mack, *Fiscal Officer*
Thomas McDonald, *Director*
Lawrence Mierek, *Director*

Municipal Projects Coordinator

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**DRAFT
MINUTES**

*Northern Oneida County Council of Governments
Executive Board Meeting Minutes
September 12, 2024
Town of Trenton Municipal Offices at 2:00 pm*

Present: Chair, Bob Sauer (BS) Vice Chair, John Doiron (JD), Fiscal Officer Betsy, Mack (BM), Director, Tom McDonald (TM), Director, Larry Mierek (LM), Associate Municipal Advisor, Joe Rowlands (JR), and Municipal Projects Coordinator, John Healt (JH).

Meeting called to order at 2:03 pm by Chair, BS.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by TM seconded by BM to approve the June 20, 2024, executive board meeting minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

Financial Report

Fiscal Officer, BM reported that invoice reminders were sent to the NOCCOG villages. Motion by LM, seconded by TM to approve the fiscal officer's report as presented. All in favor, motion carried.

Bookkeeping update presented by JH for the board's review.

BM and JH presented the proposed 2025 budget to the board for their review, prior to presenting to the membership at the annual meeting. JH noted reduced expenditures and revenues.

Tug Hill Commission Updates – JH reported on behalf of the Tug Hill Commission

- NYSACC Conference, Sept. 18-20 - up to 60 registered for the virtual sessions on Wednesday.
- The Tug Hill Commission annual dinner, Thursday, Sept. 19 - hopefully registrations have been returned, good venue- The Hayloft at Moonshine Farms, good food- The Pine Tree Inn, and good speaker, DEC's Deputy Commissioner for Natural Resources, Katie Petronis.
- Staffing - second interviews are being scheduled.
- Strategic Plan – The THC did a brainstorming session in August and will be coming to COGs with draft plan this fall. If there is anything NOCCOG wants the commission to be thinking about, please let Katie know.
- Local Government Conference - tentatively scheduled for late March or early April, at the Turning Stone, but nothing is signed yet.
- Workshops - GPS, Town Clerk Lunch & Learn, Castorland Ramble 10/12, East Bank of the Fish Creek working group 10/3, West Leyden FD.

Towns: *Annsville ~ Ava ~ Boonville ~ Camden ~ Floyd ~ Forestport ~ Lee ~ Remsen ~ Steuben ~ Trenton ~ Vienna ~ Western*

Villages: *Boonville ~ Camden ~ Holland Patent ~ Remsen ~ Sylvan Beach*

Administrative Items

- Membership Dues / Letters – BM reported that she has received payments from most of the villages.
- Annual Dinner Meeting – October 17, Woods Valley, Steve Smith from MVEDD is the scheduled speaker. JH reported the cost is closer to \$40 per person, but it was agreed to cap the attendees cost at \$30. We budget a loss of \$2,500 for the dinner. Speaker and guest, municipal advisors and executive board dinners are covered. JH stated that Bob Smullen and Marianne Buttenschon have rsvp'd already, as has Ben Simons. Directors, invited guests and advisors are covered, but the directors and advisors' guests are not. JR asked if the Oneida County Executive and County Sheriff have been invited. JH stated he did send an invitation to the executive, and he will get one out to the sheriff.
- Directors for 2025 - JD has let the board know that he will not be returning to serve next year. BM will remain. JD stated that he will ask the current Ava town board to gauge interest. Otherwise, JH will start reaching out to potential candidates.

Program Updates

- Training/Workshops – JH reported he is working with the THC for a GPS workshop, 9/26 in Lee. GPS Mapper Mike Thompson, Taylor McKinney, from the THC, and JH will do a 3-part presentation to include the benefits of municipal mapping, the Diamond Maps program and then the actual use of the program in the field. JH is also working with the THC for the Town Clerk Lunch and Learn, set for 9/30 in Trenton. NOCCOG is picking up the bill for the provided lunch. The discussion to sponsor an Amish training continued, as building, permitting, zoning and enforcement have been an issue in several NOCCOG municipalities. JR stated there are numerous reasons for noncompliance on the part of the Amish, but there is no support from the State, making enforcement all but impossible.
- Town/Village Updates – are still being sent. It was noted the Town of Lee redacted the move to change the town clerk position to an appointed one. Issues with abandoned/blighted housing continue, which brought a discussion to consider a workshop, or a lunch and learn with CEO's and see how their communities are dealing with the issue. Boonville is addressing town roads and ATV access. Many towns are getting away from Digital Towpath and most towns are looking for highway department employees.
- GPS Program – JH stated that Mike is working with the water department in Annsville. It was noted that Mike is having surgery on the 16th but shouldn't be out of commission for too long. The Village of Remsen is already using Diamond Maps and would like to transfer collected data to the NOCCOG/THC Diamond Maps database, and then continue collecting data. JH will be attending their meeting this month and will further discuss possible options.
- Scholarship Program - We received thank you notes from Ava Platt, Camden, and Dalayna Devoe, Adirondack.
- Quick Reference Guide - JH has been working on a different version of the guide, using the information that he has researched, the THC refence cards, and the outline from BS. JH brought very preliminary copy to share. The hope is to have these available by the start of the new year.
- Website – JH reported that the website still being updated with announcements, minutes and trainings
- 2024 Salary Survey – JH stated data is being compiled, but he continues to wait for the needed information from a few towns. The waiting makes him miss his self-imposed deadline. LM suggested to start the survey in February, when new budgets are readily available. JH agreed.

Other Items

- Forestport Expo – JH stated the Town of Forestport is holding their 2nd annual town expo on Wednesday, 9/25, partnered with National Grid. Forestport's Town Clerk asked if we'd be interested in having a table, and there is no cost to set up. Discussed was any possible benefit to NOCCOG by attending, which there probably is no direct benefit for us, other than exposure to the general public and name recognition. It was decided it really wasn't the "right" audience, and to not have a display table.

Additional Items

- NOCCOG Executive Meetings- it was discussed on a way to make the executive board meetings more inviting to NOCCOG members, as their input is always sought and appreciated. JH stated that the meetings are usually mentioned in the respective monthly announcements.
- Oneida County Association of Towns – JH mentioned he heard the OCAOT is planning to send a survey regarding low attendance at their meetings. It was discussed if NOCCOG could do a survey, as to where NOCCOG could assist member municipalities.

Associate Advisors

JR reported Western is still looking for a new accountant as well as a new attorney.

Next Meeting

Scheduled for Thursday, December 12, 2024, at 2pm, in person, at the Town of Trenton Municipal Offices.

Motion to adjourn made by TM, seconded by LM. All in favor. Motion approved. Meeting adjourned at 3:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



John Healt, Municipal Projects Coordinator