



Tioga County Worksession Minutes **April 20, 2023 – 10:00 a.m.**

Legislators Present:

Legislator Brown
Legislator Ciotoli
Legislator Flesher
Legislator Monell
Legislator Mullen
Legislator Roberts
Chair/Legislator Sauerbrey
Legislator Standinger (*Arrived at 10:12 a.m.*)

Legislators Absent:

Legislator Weston

Guests:

None

Staff present:

Peter DeWind, County Attorney
Cathy Haskell, Legislative Clerk
Amy Eiklor, Deputy Legislative Clerk
Linda Parke, Personnel Officer

Call Meeting to Order: Chair Sauerbrey opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

Policy Updates: Chair Sauerbrey reported the Executive Team is reviewing policies that haven't been updated in a number of years. They are looking to see if the policies need to be amended and if they align with current practice. The Executive Team will then bring forth policy updates via resolution to the Legislature. Chair Sauerbrey stated the Legislature is the policy-making body that is responsible for internal controls and oversight of county business. She reported over the past couple of years, there have been new staff in various departments and an increase in grant funding. Chair Sauerbrey emphasized the importance of transparency, particularly in how grant funding and spending is being done. She expects there will be policy updates presented to the Legislature in the near future.

Upcoming Events: Chair Sauerbrey reported the following upcoming events that Tioga County Legislators are invited to attend:

- April 20th – Tioga County Public Health will be holding an Open House from 2:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. The purpose is to create new relationships with providers and the public.
- April 21st – Congressman Marc Molinaro will be holding a Town Hall at the Town of Owego Shared Services Building at 12:30 p.m. He will meet with the public and answer any questions they may have. Legislator Ciotoli mentioned there is likely to be protesters and demonstrators on both sides of the political spectrum attending the Town Hall.
- May 20th - Waterman Conservation Center's Grant Celebration for the WISE Project.
- June 30th - ACHIEVE's Annual Dinner Dance at the Binghamton Doubletree with celebration and awards ceremony.

Approval of Worksession Minutes: On motion of Legislator Mullen, seconded by Legislator Brown, the April 6, 2023 minutes were unanimously approved.

Action Items:

ACTION ITEM FROM MARCH 23, 2023:

ACTION ITEM #1– 3/23/2023 – Additional Information on ERMA Program-

County Attorney DeWind was to research the ERMA Program further and report back to the Legislature. He presented his findings at the April 11th Finance, Legal & Safety Committee. At that meeting, the Legislature decided to opt-in to the ERMA program. County Attorney DeWind sent a letter to the organization letting them know the Legislature's decision.

This item is completed and will be removed from the Action Item List.

Other:

- ***County Administrator Meeting Update:*** Chair Sauerbrey reported the County Administrator Committee met last week and made progress on the job description. She invited a representative from the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC) to come to a worksession to speak to the Legislature. Ian Coyle, Livingston County's Administrator, will answer questions and speak about his job duties.
- ***Tioga County Government Services Expo:*** Chair Sauerbrey is working on a project that she expects to come to fruition in September. She would like to hold a Tioga County Government Services Expo that provides information to the public about the services Tioga County provides to the community. The event will allow the public to ask questions and learn about local government, which will improve communications within the community. Chair Sauerbrey will ask all departments to participate, create a booth, and present information to attendees. She would like to hold the event at the new DPW truck wash so taxpayers can actually see what their tax dollars are used for. The newly purchased building is large enough to have numerous booths set up, has restrooms available, ample parking, and will be cleaned up by September.

Legislator Brown suggested inviting local school districts as the event will be held in September when kids are back in school. Participation in Government students could benefit from the information provided at the expo. Legislator Roberts stated the expo would be a good opportunity for staff recruitment as the public would be able to ask

questions and see what each department does within Tioga County. Chair Sauerbrey is still in the planning stage but will present more information as the project progresses.

- **Tioga County Anglers and Fish & Wildlife Management Board Updates:** Legislator Brown reported he met with the Tioga County Angler's Association earlier in the week. The group is trying to restore the West Branch Owego Creek and replace pool diggers within the water. Legislator Brown explained pool diggers help channel the water to dig deeper holes for the trout, but also help with flood mitigation and erosion. The group hopes to raise \$65,000 for the project and was directed to apply for grants through Mildred Faulkner Truman Foundation and Tioga Downs. Legislator Brown explained the group would need 400 tons of limestone as wood is no longer allowed to be used. The current pool diggers were put in place throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. They were made of wood, which has since washed out and eroded.

Legislator Brown is the Legislative Representative and attended the Fish and Wildlife Management Board meeting in Cortland last night. He learned that the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) created an app to show public fishing access points throughout New York State. Tioga County was the first to have their access points established within the app. Legislator Brown explained Tioga County's surface area for trout stocking increased. Previously, surveying was done in the fall when river levels were lower than in the spring. However, the number of trout stock actually decreased by almost 1,000. Legislator Brown reported 40% of landowners on the creek that used to allow for public fishing access did not sign on this year. One landowner has two miles of creek access that was previously permitted for public use fishing but is no longer allowing that. Chair Sauerbrey asked why that is. Legislator Brown stated it isn't known at this time, but he hopes to speak with some of the bigger landowners that have not signed back on. He suspects part of it may be because some farmers are concerned about the public destroying crops or leaving behind trash. Legislator Roberts inquired if there is any liability to the landowners that allow public access. County Attorney DeWind cited General Municipal Law 9-103, which states land opened for recreational use protects landowners from most liability.

- **Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) Update:** As the Legislative Representative on the CCE Board, Legislator Brown reported he is heading a committee that hopes to improve the 4H program at the Tioga County Fair. Legislator Brown has attended Tioga County Fair Board meetings to keep himself informed. Currently, there is no 4H educator for CCE, which is of concern to some citizens of Tioga County. Tioga County currently provides about \$268,000 per year in funding to CCE of Tioga County.

Legislator Mullen mentioned schools throughout Tioga County are bringing back agricultural programs for students. Utilization of the CCE farm in Candor would be a tremendous asset to the high school agricultural students. Having a 4H program would further develop skills and knowledge of agricultural practices within Tioga County. As a result, there potentially could be local students that may go on to apply to become incubator farmers through CCE. Legislator Brown will continue to attend CCE meetings and report pertinent information to the Legislature.

- **Security Guards at 56 Main Street Update:** County Attorney DeWind reported there have been no major incidents with the security guards in place at 56 Main Street. The magnetometer is very sensitive, and the guards are working out some of the issues with placement. There have been no major complaints from the public or staff. The security guards report back to County Attorney DeWind at the end of each day.

Executive Session: Eight Legislators were in attendance with Legislator Weston being absent. Legislative Clerk Haskell and County Attorney DeWind remained in attendance. Motion by Legislator Brown, seconded by Legislator Mullen, to move into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter at 10:36 a.m. Motion carried. Motion by Legislator Brown to adjourn, seconded by Legislator Mullen. Executive Session adjourned at 10:41 a.m.

Legislator Brown motioned, seconded by Legislator Mullen, to adjourn the meeting at 10:41 a.m.

Next Worksession scheduled for Thursday, May 4, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Eiklor

Deputy Legislative Clerk