



Thursday, November 19, 2009

Minutes

CALL TO ORDER – Chair Tom Santulli called the meeting to order at 4:40 PM in the STC Conference Room.

ATTENDANCE

Chemung County – John Burin; Ted Bennett; Ernie Hartman; Richard Gunderman; Tom Santulli;

Schuyler County – none in attendance due to a scheduling conflict. Schuyler County was represented at the earlier meeting of the Budget and Personnel Committee.

Steuben County – Mark Alger; Greg Heffner; Robert Nichols; Phil Roche

Staff – Marcia Weber; Susan Cratsley; Jennifer Fais; Thomas McGarry; Janet Thigpen; Daniel Wilhelm

WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS – Chair Tom Santulli welcomed everyone to the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – the minutes of the October 15, 2009 meeting were approved on a motion by Ernie Hartman, seconded by Mark Alger, and carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. **Audit Committee**

Abstract of Claims - On behalf of the Audit Committee, Dan Wilhelm, STC Accountant, gave the report. Dan reported that three abstracts were reviewed and approved by the Committee Chair totaling \$12,627.31. On a motion by Phil Roche, seconded by Dick Gunderman, the abstracts were approved.

2. **Budget and Personnel Committee**

Marcia Weber reported that the Budget and Personnel Committee met earlier in the month and recommended approval of the proposed STC 2010 Budget totaling \$944,511. Dan Wilhelm handed out the 2010 Budget to board members in attendance. Marcia and Dan gave a detailed report on the budget and funding sources and addressed any questions that arose. The 2010 Budget in the amount of \$944,511 was approved on a motion by Mark Alger, seconded by Ernie Hartman, and carried.

3. **Physical Resources Advisory Committee** – R. Gunderman reported that PRAC met and discussed the following:

Climate Smart Communities - What is the pledge about? PRAC talked about the state initiative to encourage communities to become more energy-efficient and to reduce Green House Gases (GHG's) to protect NYS from the effects of climate change. These effects include increasing cycles of flood/drought, the advance of invasive species and rising water along the coastlines among others. STC staff is exploring ways to spread the word. See handouts.

NYSERDA State Energy Program funds still available for municipalities, not-for-profits and schools for energy efficiency projects. STC hosted a presentation by NYSERDA in early November attended by fourteen interested schools, hospitals and communities. This was a bigger turnout than the Rochester meeting. The deadline for applications is November 23.

Going Green in Chemung, Schuyler and Steuben. PRAC members shared information on the range of "green" projects happening in the region. These include: \$117,000 to the Town of Jasper, Steuben County, for the construction of reed beds as an energy-efficient alternative to sludge management. (ARRA funding)

\$821,500 to the Chemung County Library District for the installation of a green roof. (ARRA)

\$437,400 to the Village of Bath, Steuben County for the installation of two solar-powered water circulators. (ARRA funding)

Windmills in Cohocton, Howard and Hartsville.

New "screw" design windmill at Hunt Vineyards.

Solar power to pump water for remote grazing areas. (Finger Lakes RC&D)

Closed Town of Chemung rest stop on I-86 with geo-thermal facilities already in place - felt that the rest stop should be re-opened as a "green" rest stop.

Biomass furnace at US Salt facility in Watkins Glen.

Potential proposal for Van Etten "green" senior/community center.

Grass/wood pellet producers in Addison.

Renewable Energy Coalition proposal. STC received a proposal from Pipeline for Progress suggesting that STC consider sponsoring a regional Renewable Energy Coalition to help municipalities, county government, health care facilities, schools and universities save money, reduce carbon and create jobs. Staff will talk with Mike Fuller to get more details before presenting this to the Board for action.

Update on Marcellus Shale comments around the region. PRAC discussed the formation of citizen/government task forces in each of our counties. Schuyler County is established. Chemung and Steuben county groups are proposed. The purpose of these groups is to study the impacts and benefits of horizontal drilling and make recommendations to county government and localities. Jennifer noted that a public meeting was held at East High school last night that she and Janet Thigpen attended, and there is a Summit scheduled for November 30 at the Owego Treadway Inn. STC staff will attend and will develop comments for Board consideration via mail/email to submit before the end of the comment period on the Supplemental GEIS Dec. 31, 2009.

STC received \$285,000 ARRA funding for the preparation of the Susquehanna Action Plan. STC will be working with STE on this two year project. For more details, talk with Janet Thigpen, who is the project coordinator.

ACTION ITEMS

1. **ARRA Resolution** – Janet reported that, in order for STC to receive the \$285,000 of ARRA funding to develop a Susquehanna Action Plan for the Susquehanna Basin, a resolution needed to be approved. Since the STC region only covers about a third of the geographic area, STC is partnering with Southern Tier East on this project. On a motion by Dick Gunderman, seconded by John Burin, the Board approved a resolution be developed, signed and sent. The motion carried.
2. **Potential Meeting with Regional Group** – Marcia Weber reported that she and Tom McGarry met with Chuck Franzese, who is a member of the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC). The chapter that covers the STC region has a legislative breakfast each year. Chuck said that attendance has declined, and he believes that co-sponsoring the event with STC would broaden the appeal to the regional chapter. The target area would be STC's three county region and Tioga County. Marcia stated that they suggested an infrastructure workshop for counties and government; they would invite the leadership of counties and cities and perhaps the bigger towns. It was suggested that DOT, Environmental Facilities Corp., and USDA Rural Development be asked to give updates. Also, in the past, the state elected representatives attended to give updates on the state issues relating to construction, architecture and other topics.

Chuck Franzese said that county legislators have attended in the past. The tentative date is March 5, 2010; the place will be announced but is expected to be in the Corning or Elmira area. Marcia stated that this is an unusual request for STC, and she wanted to know whether the board believed it would be appropriate to co-sponsor an event with ACEC. She was asked how many people would be attending. Tom said around 50 people would attend. Tom said that this would be a promotion of the Southern Tier and upstate New York engineering and services and would bring in a number of resources. The board agreed that STC could work with ACEC to organize an infrastructure workshop.

REGIONAL PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

1. **Economic Development Administration Update** – T. McGarry reported on the following EDA Projects:

I-86 Corridor Infrastructure Project – Approved by EDA in the fall of 2009, the I-86 Corridor Infrastructure Project will provide critical water, sewer, and road infrastructure to serve industrial land including the new CVS distribution center in Chemung County. Proximity to the Interstate 86 transportation corridor was a major factor in the business decision to build the 750,000 square foot center. The project was assisted with \$1.45 million in ARRA funds and is expected to create up to 600 new jobs and contribute private investment to the local and regional economy.

Town of Erwin New Well - The Town of Erwin new well and supporting water system will serve the Corning Inc. diesel plant and other nearby businesses and is vital for future growth and expansion. Major construction is approximately 85% complete with a December 31, 2009 estimated completion date.

South Yards Industrial Park - The project area is located in the South Yards brownfield area adjacent to the City of Hornell. The plan of work includes the construction of an industrial access road, expansion and rehabilitation of a manufacturing facility, and extension of water and sewer services. Construction of a 15,000 square foot manufacturing facility was completed in November 2006. Hornell IDA is currently leasing the building to Gray Manufacturing, which supplies manufactured and remanufactured components and technology to the rail transit industry. Gray Manufacturing is also expanding into the building formerly occupied by Testori Interiors.

Schuyler County Business Park and Infrastructure Project – SCOPED is continuing to market the business park through direct contacts and meeting with potential tenants. A targeted website for the property is available at www.scoped.biz.

Tom stated that he attended a meeting in Wayland where there was discussion about developing the area adjacent to the Wayland exit of I-390. The group consisted of engineers, local officials and developers. The Wayland Area Revitalization group has identified a hotel and recreation center as a priority project and is interested in moving the project along as quickly as possible by securing private sources of funding.

Marcia reported that the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee approved legislation reauthorizing the Economic Development Administration at \$500 million annually through 2013. Marcia noted that there are significant changes in this bill, which is very positive for STC. The federal share for EDA projects has been restored to the pre-2006 level. It is based on unemployment rates and poverty rates. Marcia said this finally gets the region back to about a 50% match. It puts the match rates into law, not just regulation. If there is a change in administration, the rates will remain. It also outlines the specific roles and responsibilities for Economic Development Districts (EDDs). By putting this into statute, the functions of the EDDs are protected from revisions during the regulatory process. Marcia stated that it also increases funding for EDA grants.

2. **Appalachian Regional Commission**

Marcia Weber reported that Earl F. Gohl, Jr., is the nominee for Federal Co-Chair of the Appalachian Regional Commission. Mr. Gohl has 20 years of experience in Pennsylvania state and local government, including serving as the executive assistant to the Mayor of Harrisburg; an elected member of the Harrisburg City Council; and deputy secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Community Affairs. As deputy secretary, Mr. Gohl awarded and administered \$100 million annually in housing and community development programs benefitting communities within the Appalachian region. He also managed several initiatives to strengthen the capacity of rural local governments to meet economic challenges. In 1996 Mr. Gohl was appointed to serve as special assistant and then associate assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor. Mr. Gohl holds an M.P.A. from Pennsylvania State University and a B.A. from Rider College.

Mr. Gohl was director of the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration, which represents and advances the interests of the Government of Puerto Rico before federal, state, and local governments.

3. **Flood Program Update** – J. Thigpen reported on the following:

Janet reported that the new version of the STC website has a wealth of information under the Flood Mitigation program area. She tried to include as much as she could of the things she has done over the last 13 years. There is information about floodplain management requirements, flood safety, flood warnings, protection property, flood mitigation planning, and the stream processes guide. There is also information about stormwater management. The goal is to make the STC website into a good go-to place where people can find information or links to information about water resource issues for our region.

Janet stated that one of the purposes of the website is to help with Community Rating System credit. Eleven municipalities in our region participate in this program, which enables a five or ten percent reduction in the cost of flood insurance because the municipality implements and documents activities that reduce flood damage. This level of participation results in a total savings of \$36,000 per year in reduced flood insurance premiums. Four STC municipalities went through the five year recertification process. Janet assisted by attending meetings, assembling documentation of stormwater management programs, providing flood warning documentation, and assisting with links to the STC flood mitigation web pages. She also provided information about state programs for which all municipalities should get credit. Because of the paperwork burden, participation in this program is much higher in states where floodplain management occurs at the county level. In order to increase participation, Janet would like to find time to set up county programs so that most of the documentation is managed at that level and municipalities could participate with minimal local staff time. Janet is unable to fit this into the current funding programs and will look for opportunities to apply for money.

Janet reported progress with the Chemung County project to provide training in floodproofing techniques for protecting existing flood-prone development. She wrote a series of information sheets that provide the basic information about different floodproofing techniques and how to evaluate the options. A three-hour training course is being reviewed so it can be certified for Code Enforcement Continuing Education Credit. The training will begin in January 2010.

Janet reported that she wrote two applications for Round 10 of the Water Quality Improvement Program. One was for the Steuben County Water Quality committee to develop annual Reports and do some planning board training. The other was for an STC Riparian Corridor Project. Land use adjacent to streams and lakes has important implications for water quality, stream stability, erosion damage, and flood damage. This project would let STC conduct detailed analysis of what is currently happening in those sensitive areas and then do some targeted training and outreach to improve on that. This would let her do some floodplain management training, taking the message to individual municipalities.

Janet stated that Environmental Emergency Services bought a stormwater-floodplain simulation model, which she plans to use for training and outreach. It will be at the Regional Leadership Conference in April.

Janet reported that the Rural Stormwater Coalition for the STC area is going strong. STC hosts the Coalition's website. Jennifer Fais has developed some handout materials for the Coalition, one targeted at homeowners and another with recommendations for rural driveways. Dave Bubniak is working on GIS mapping of culverts and drainage systems for interested highway departments and is currently focusing on the county roads in Chemung County.

Janet continues to work with the Susquehanna River Basin Commission. She helped them with the New York portion of their Water Resources Program document. They are hoping to go live soon with a revised Susquehanna Flood Forecast and Warning System website, which will include materials that Janet developed for them. They plan to start an e-newsletter to go along with that, for which Janet would write most of the articles (public information pieces about a variety of flood-related topics).

Janet retains the position of secretary for the Environmental Emergency Services and works with their Flood Warning group.

Janet reported that she has finished her two (2) year term as Chair of the NYS Floodplain and Stormwater Managers Association. She continues to serve on the Board and several committees. She attended the state conference in Albany in September.

4. **2010 Census** – M. Weber reported that the Census Bureau is opening a regional office on 140 Baldwin Street, Elmira. Staff has been hired, and STC is anticipating being invited to the grand opening. STC is preparing to work closely with the Census on the complete count.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. **Next Board Meeting** – The December meeting will be cancelled. The next meeting will be January 21, 2010. The 2010 Board meeting schedule is in packets and also on the STC website at www.stcplanning.org
4. **Other** – Marcia noted that this is the last meeting for Phil Roche due to the term limits set by Steuben County on his position as Legislator. Tom Santulli thanked Phil for his service to STC and noted that he will be greatly missed

Marcia stated that all board appointments have expired except for Tom Santulli and Tim O'Hearn. Marcia urged county leaders to appoint new members and/or reappoint the current ones.

ADJOURNMENT - the meeting adjourned at 5:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Cratsley
Senior Typist