



Thursday, April 22, 2010

Minutes

CALL TO ORDER – Vice Chair Patrick Donnelly called the meeting to order at 4:35 PM in the STC Conference Room.

ATTENDANCE

Chemung County – Theodore Bennett; John Burin; Ernie Hartman; Richard Gunderman

Schuyler County – Danielle Hautaniemi; Paul Marcellus

Steuben County – Don Creath; Patrick Donnelly; Greg Heffner; James Griffin

Staff – Marcia Weber; Susan Cratsley; Victoria Ehlen; Jennifer Fais; Daniel Wilhelm

WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS – Vice Chair Patrick Donnelly welcomed everyone to the meeting. Mr. Donnelly is the new STC board member from Steuben County and is chair of the Steuben County Legislature. Everyone introduced him/herself.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – the minutes of the January 21, 2010 meeting were approved on a motion by Ernie Hartman, seconded by Richard Gunderman, and carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. **Audit Committee**

a) **2009 Audit** – On behalf of the Audit Committee, Don Creath, Vice Chair, reported that the STC audit is complete with no significant findings. Don reported that Rick McNeilly, STC Auditor, met with the Audit Committee and Budget and Personnel Committee before this meeting. Mr. McNeilly stated that this was an excellent audit. Don gave a brief summary of the audit. Marcia Weber commended Dan Wilhelm, STC Accountant, for all his work. The STC 2009 audit was approved as presented on a motion by Jim Griffin, seconded by Greg Heffner, and carried.

b) **Abstract of Claims** - Don Creath reported that seven abstracts were reviewed and approved totaling \$49,839.04. On a motion by Don Creath, seconded by Ernie Hartman, the abstracts were approved.

- c) Don mentioned that STC has applied for a credit card through M & T Bank, using the same E.I.N. (Employer Identification Number) as Steuben County, which would require a resolution by the Steuben County Legislature. Don stated that the Legislature will discuss this issue at their meeting on Monday.

2. **Budget and Personnel Committee** – Marcia Weber reported the following:

- a) New Staff Member – Marcia noted that Chelsea Robertson will be the new Planner. She is a graduate of Binghamton University with a BA and MPA. She comes to STC highly recommended by people with whom we work.

3. **Physical Resources Advisory Committee** – On behalf of the Physical Resources Advisory Committee, Dick Gunderman gave the following report:

PRAC talked about a wide array of issues from invasive pests to the sale of wine in grocery stores to new rules on unemployment taxes and farm worker overtime. The following are highlights:

Biofuels - There is continued work on grass pellet production. U. S. Salt is looking at biomass (wood chips, slab wood, etc.) for fuel if they receive funding from the Farm Bill. Much depends on the cost of other fuels.

NYS Farmland Protection Projects - With the reduction of the Environmental Protection Fund, there may be limited money for Purchase of Development Rights.

County agriculture and farmland protection plans: Chemung County is considering adopting their plan in May. It contains eight important action areas. Farm Bill funding hinges on adoption of farmland protection plans.

Support for the Finger Lakes RC&D Council. Jennifer Fais noted that the Finger Lakes RC&D is currently managing about \$1 million of cost share funds for grazing and Best Management Practices (BMPs) for water quality protection. RC&D's have been "zeroed out" in the federal budget. A letter of support is in the board packets for consideration. On a motion by Paul Marcellus, seconded by Ernie Hartman, the board approved signing and sending the letter of support. The motion carried.

Next meeting: MAY 11, 2010: WATER and MARCELLUS SHALE

Members of each county coalition in the region are invited to meet and talk about issues they are facing. We should have a better idea soon whether some ARC funding will be focused on Marcellus Shale, so we can now gather ideas on topics that need further exploration.

Jennifer invited everyone to join STC at the Eleventh Annual River Float on May 15. Boaters will launch from the Lindley Launch site and end at Mulholland Bridge in Erwin. The purpose of the Float is to educate local officials and the public about watershed protection and the availability of public access points.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT - M. Weber

1. Report on Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Local Development District Conference - Marcia reported that two staff and one board member attended the ARC Conference in Washington. She stated that the theme was "Leading the Charge for an Energy Efficient Appalachia." She attended many informative workshops. Victoria stated that she found this conference, her first ARC conference, to be very illuminating.

Paul Marcellus stated that he was very impressed with what he learned from the workshops.

2. Report on Economic Development Administration Regional Conference – Marcia stated that she and Victoria attended the meeting in Philadelphia and found it to be very useful. They met with the people with whom STC works at EDA. It is important to know them and for EDA to know the STC staff; it also allows STC to remind EDA staff of what projects they funded for the STC region. The conference theme was on broadband.

REGIONAL PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

1. Regional Leadership Conference – Marcia Weber reported that more than 500 local officials, community leaders, presenters, and exhibitors attended the 14th Annual STC Regional Leadership Conference on April 15 at Corning Community College. Tom McGarry, who ran the conference as a consultant with STC, presented Susan Cratsley with a Certificate of Appreciation for all her hard work, which made the conference run smoothly.

Ted Bennett stated that it was a good conference. More information will be available at the next meeting.

2. Telecommunications
 - a) NTIA Application - Marcia reported that this is a joint application with Southern Tier East Regional Planning Development Board, covering six counties: Steuben, Schuyler, Chemung, Broome, Otsego, and Delaware. The total project cost is \$24.5 million.

Each county contributed a cash match. New York State committed to a cash match of 10% of the federal award. Corning Inc. contributed 235 miles of fiber optic cable, enough to cover the three STC counties. The fair market value of this cable is \$924,948. The total match is 34% of the project cost. STC has gotten a letter of support from Senator Gillibrand, and Senator Schumer is also writing a letter of support.

This project is an excellent public-private partnership; the participation from all levels is encouraging and shows how needed this project is. The two regional planning boards are continuing to work to prepare for the next stage of the application, which they hope to reach; that is due diligence. They are also exploring other funding and investment opportunities in case they are needed. This project is such a good example of collaboration and meets so many of the region's needs that they are determined to see it funded.

- i. TIER Board Members from STC Counties - Marcia reported that the actual sponsor of the application was TIER, a Local Development Corporation (LDC) that was established under Southern Tier East. It couldn't be one of the planning boards because they are not allowed to own property, and the fiber-optic network is property. TIER was established as a regional lending organization, and the board is made up of representatives from the STE region. A meeting of the board has been called to reappoint the board so that it will be structured for technology and will include STC's three counties. This will be a board to manage the project and the resulting network, though a company will eventually be hired to run the actual fiber network. Marcia will ask each county to appoint a representative, and she proposed the following: Mike Krusen from Chemung, Tim O'Hearn from Schuyler, and Jack Wheeler from Steuben. All of these

people have been involved in planning the project. Marcia would like these names to be recommended by the board, and Marcia will talk to the county executives and chairs of the legislature to make the appointments.

There will also be TIER board participation by the executive directors of STE and STC. Four additional people from the region, including representatives of health, education, banking, and industry, preferably the telecommunications industry, will also be asked to join the board. This part needs to be done quickly, since there is tentatively a meeting on May 12 at 10 AM in Owego of all the representatives to begin the reorganizing of TIER. On a motion by Jim Griffin, seconded by Paul Marcellus, the Board recommended that Mike Krusen, Tim O'Hearn, and Jack Wheeler be appointed to the TIER Committee. The motion carried.

- ii. LDC Status - Marcia stated that she would like to get the board's approval for STC to create an LDC. This will give the STC region the option of handling other projects of this type. If, for example, the NTIA project doesn't come through, STC can consider developing a three county project under an LDC. Marcia was told it is not a difficult process, and STC has an offer of assistance from a lawyer who has set up many LDCs for STC's telecom consultant. Pat Donnelly suggested that Marcia first determine whether county input is needed in establishing the LDC. On a motion by Paul Marcellus, seconded by Dick Gunderman, the Board gave approval for STC to take the steps necessary to create an LDC. The motion carried.

- b) Google Fiber to the Home Application - Marcia Weber reported that STC submitted an application on March 26 to Google on behalf of the "Greater Corning Area." That includes the Towns of Corning, Erwin, and Big Flats and the City of Corning. The application includes designation of Marcia Weber as the single point of contact. Marcia stated that Corning Inc. agreed to contribute all the fiber and related equipment that would be needed to provide fiber to the home for this project, should Google select the Greater Corning Area as one of its sites. On a motion by Jim Griffin, seconded by Don Creath, the board approved the submission of the application and the designation of Marcia Weber as point of contact to Google.

3. Marcellus Shale

- a) STC Role(s) – Marcia reported that all three counties have committed to studying the Marcellus Shale impact on their counties, but she said it seems to be something that should be done on a regional level, perhaps in addition to what the counties are doing. Marcia proposes that STC take a coordinating role. She stated that while interviewing people for the planner position, she met with someone with experience with gas drilling in both Wyoming and this region. In Wyoming, this person was asked to set up a planning board to address all the issues that the region faced as a result of gas drilling. Her experience is outlined in a number of studies that are being read locally, and she is also cognizant of the issues in this area. Marcia would like to talk to the counties about working on the Marcellus Shale issue in a coordinating role, perhaps involving the former Wyoming expert.

- b) Possible Funding - Marcia reported that possible funding could come from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) for a three region project to coordinate activities and to research and provide information to enable municipalities to be

ready for the Marcellus Shale gas drilling. She stated that match would be required. There is another meeting scheduled with the NYS Department of State to talk about ARC funding for this. A lengthy discussion followed on the Marcellus Shale issues; the consensus was that STC should become involved on a regional basis.

4. Appalachian Regional Commission Fiscal Year 2011 Funding Cycle – M. Weber reported that the 2011 ARC funding cycle has begun. The applications are due to STC by June 14, 2010. The projects will be brought to the July 15 STC board meeting for approval.
5. Intergovernmental Reviews

New York State

1005 Reduction in Nutrients and Sediment Loads from NY

Project Applicant: Tioga County SWCD

Description: 2010 reduction in nutrients and sediment loads from New York headwaters of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, Year 2.

Federal Agency: USEPA

Cost: Federal: \$500,000 Total: \$500,000

Jennifer Fais described the project as an additional step in implementing the NYS Tributary Strategy. On a motion by Danielle Hautaniemi, seconded by Ernie Hartman, this intergovernmental review was approved.

1006 NYS Freshwater Fisheries Aquatic Education and Information

Project Applicant: NYSDEC

Description: funds the aquatic resource education program, including the construction of fishing educational piers, throughout NYS.

Federal Agency: US Dept. of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service

Cost: Federal: \$2,761,179 State: \$920,393 Total: \$3,681,572

Jennifer discussed this project application and stated that PRAC recommended that the Mill Street Pond in Elmira would be a suitable location for an education fishing pier for Region 8. On a motion by Dick Gunderman, seconded by Paul Marcellus, the STC Board recommended approval of the above application with the comment that the Mill Street Pond in Elmira may be a suitable location for an educational fishing pier in Region 8. The motion carried.

6. I-86 - Ted Bennett reported that there will be an I-86 Coalition meeting on Friday, May 21, 2010 at the Ramada in Painted Post. He encouraged everyone to attend.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. New Business

- a) Selection of Executive Committee Representatives – Marcia stated that the board will vote for the officers at the annual meeting on Tuesday.

- b) Annual Meeting Business – Marcia suggested that STC move its annual dinner meeting to March or April instead of February due to inclement weather conditions in February. The STC By-Laws do not state that it has to be in February, and it appears that attendance was increased due to the date change. The board suggested April.
 - c) Committee Review/Assignments –Marcia stated that if anyone would like to be added or removed from any committee, he/she should please let STC know.
2. Next Meeting – ANNUAL DINNER - April 27, 2010; the next regular board meeting will be on May 20, 2010.

ADJOURNMENT there being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:45.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Cratsley
Senior Typist