



## May 15, 2014 Minutes

**CALL TO ORDER**– Chair Dennis Fagan called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM in the STC Conference room.

### **ATTENDANCE**

**Chemung County** – Theodore Bennett; Donna Draxler; Ernie Hartman; Kimberlee Middaugh; Randy Reid

**Schuyler County** – Dennis Fagan; Thomas Gifford; Tim O’Hearn; Kristin VanHorn

**Steuben County** – Amy Dlugos; Joe Hauryski; Scott Van Etten

**STC Staff** – Marcia Weber; Susan Cratsley; Victoria Ehlen; Kemberli Sargent; Janet Thigpen; Dan Wilhelm

**INTRODUCTIONS** – Kemberli Sargent, STC Planner, and Kimberlee Middaugh, City of Elmira Manager, were introduced to the board.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – On a motion duly made (Hauryski/Draxler) and carried, the minutes of the February 20, 2014 meeting were approved.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

1. Audit Committee and Budget and Personnel Committee – Scott VanEtten reported on the following:

- a) **Abstract of Claims** – on a motion duly made (VanEtten/Hartman) and carried, the abstracts totaling \$73,643.38 were approved.
- b) **STC 2013 Audit** - the Audit Committee and Budget and Personnel Committee met and reviewed the 2013 STC Audit with no significant findings. On a motion duly made (Gifford/Hauryski) and carried, the 2013 audit was accepted as presented.

It was reported that the STC Auditor’s contract expires this year. STC will put out a request for bids to prepare the STC Audit.

2. **Regional Human Services Committee** – Amy Dlugos reported that the committee met and discussed the ARC application process and potential projects for the upcoming funding cycle.

## REGIONAL PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

1. **Economic Development Administration (EDA)** – at a recent webinar, the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) reported that the spending bill for EDA was passed by the Appropriations Committee and will come before the House of Representatives soon. In order to counteract possible cuts to or elimination of EDA by House members who have tried to do this before, NADO asks that all regional planning boards contact their representatives. STC will send a letter in support of EDA, and board members were encouraged to send letters also. Marcia will email STC's letter to the board to be used as a model.

STC has five possible projects that are eligible for funding for EDA projects.

STC received notification that it will receive funding from EDA for 2014-15.

EDA was very impressed with the STC Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

2. **ARC Conference, Washington, DC** – STC staff Victoria Ehlen and board member Kristin VanHorn attended the Appalachian Regional Commission Conference in Washington, DC in March. Kristin reported that it was very informative, particularly the Energy Initiatives class.
3. **Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) - Application Process for 2015** - Projects are due in the STC office by September 8, 2014. Anyone with a potential project should contact Victoria Ehlen at 607.962.5092 or [economicdevelopment@stny.rr.com](mailto:economicdevelopment@stny.rr.com).
4. **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Project Sheets** – STC is in the process of updating the CEDS. Projects planned or underway in the region are listed in the CEDS, both to make that information available and to show the importance of the projects, which is useful in applying for EDA and ARC funding. CEDS project sheets, forms for including projects in the CEDS, are available on the STC website at [www.stcplanning.org](http://www.stcplanning.org), or hard copies can be mailed from the office.
5. **ARC Augmentation Grant** – NYS Department of State (DOS) allocated additional ARC funds to STC in 2014 to enhance ongoing activities, specifically to develop a planning school for the region. The planning school will provide training to the boards and committees of interested municipalities so they will be knowledgeable about the issues that come before them.
6. **Flood Program Update** – Janet Thigpen reported on the following:
  - a) **USGS Congressional Briefing** – Janet was invited to speak at a Congressional Briefing in Washington, DC on stream gauges. The briefing was conducted first for the House and then repeated for the Senate. Janet provided a broad description of how gauge data are used for many different purposes. Senator Schumer supported this work by hosting a USGS briefing on gauges and by sending a letter to the appropriations committee about funding for USGS gauges. Janet also met with other Congressional staff to discuss stream gauges, flood hazard mapping, and other topics.

- b) **FEMA Risk Map Projects** – The Chemung Watershed mapping project was terminated by FEMA without any new maps resulting. FEMA held meetings in December, gave Janet a thumb drive with the work that they had done, and ended the project. Janet requested that FEMA follow up on commitments made at the meetings; Member of Congress Tom Reed’s staff is still trying to get a response. Of particular importance is the need for engineering certification of the work that has been done. Without this certification, additional engineering time is required prior to using this information for map revisions, floodplain management, or other purposes. The value of the new modeling for planning purposes is limited because the last step of generating map boundaries was not done for any of the work since the draft Chemung County maps in 2010. The LiDAR topography and surveying is potentially very useful.

FEMA has initiated a new project in the Finger Lakes Watershed and is working on the initial Discovery process to identify mapping needs and assemble watershed data. A Discovery Report should be completed in September. There are no promises that any mapping will follow. If a mapping project includes updated modeling of Catherine Creek, the region would need to address the need for certification of the levee in Montour Falls.

- c) **NFIP Reform Act** – In 2012 Congress passed the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act to try to reform the program and address the debt to the federal treasury. That act included triggers for eliminating subsidized rates for older buildings that pre-date floodplain maps and regulations. Some of the triggers were immediate and others would phase in the higher rates. This would affect only 20% of the policies nationally but 50% in the STC region. Congress enacted additional reforms in March (the Homeowners Flood Insurance Affordability Act) to eliminate the trigger for higher elevation-based rates when an older building is sold or is covered by a new policy. There will instead be rate increases of up to 18% or 25% for all subsidized policies until they reach the elevation-based rates and a new surcharge on all policies. To address the new insurance rates, Janet has developed and conducted training on Elevation Certificates and is developing additional training about how to retrofit buildings to reduce the cost of flood insurance.
- d) **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program** – Chemung County submitted a grant application to expand the locally-owned rain and stream gauge network operated by Environmental Emergency Services (EES), but no word has been received about whether this will be funded.
- e) **Flood Resistant STC Region** – STC is working on the LWRP project for a “flood resistant STC region.” This includes training, work on a regional Flood Education Plan, assisting with integration of flood risks into comprehensive plans, and assistance with revisions to local regulations.
7. **I-86 Map Update** – Ted Bennett discussed the importance of the completion of the I-86 Corridor to the east of the region. Displayed was a map showing sections that need to be finished. In support of this project, Ted encouraged board members to sign the map. He will forward the map to Southern Tier East, West, and Hudson Valley to have their regions sign the map and then will send it to Albany.

8. **Intergovernmental Review**  
**New York State**

**1405 Relocate Electrical Vault and Airport Lighting Improvements**  
**(Design and Construction)**

Project Applicant: Town of Erwin IDA

Description: relocate electrical vault and airport lighting improvements (design and construction)

Federal Agency: FAA

Cost: Federal: \$166,500 State: \$9,250 Local: \$9,250 Total: \$185,000

The board discussed this project at length. On a motion duly made (Hauryski/VanEtten) and carried, the board voted to take no action on this project.

9. **Other** – STC staff presented at the Steuben County Legislature’s Agriculture, Industry and Planning Committee meeting. If other counties would like to hear a presentation about the work done by STC, they should contact Marcia Weber.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. **Old Business/New Business** - none
2. **Next Board Meeting** - the next board meeting will be on June 19, 2014. At this meeting, the board will approve the CEDS for submission.

**ADJOURNMENT** - The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Cratsley