



SOUTHERN TIER CENTRAL REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Thursday, December 4, 2025

In-Person

Board Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

Chair, Jack Wheeler, called the STC Board Meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

Chemung County – Aaron Dowd, Ernie Hartman, Anita Lewis, Joe Roman, Kyle Sullivan, and Tom Tranter

Schuyler County – Shawn Rosno, Carl Blowers, Joann Lindstrom, Mark Rondinaro, and James Ryan

Steuben County – Jack Wheeler, Kelly Fitzpatrick, Jamie Johnson, James Kuhl, Jenn Miller, and Marie Myers Shearing

STC Staff – Chelsea Robertson, Katie Heverly, Jack Cook, Victoria Ehlen, Liv Lovejoy, Dot Richter, Cathy Rook, Janet Thigpen

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion duly made (Jamie Johnson and Joe Roman) and carried, the October 16, 2025, **Board Meeting Minutes** were approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Audit Committee

- a. The **Abstract of Claims** presentation was made by Tom Tranter. On a motion duly made (Tom Tranter and Ernie Hartman) and carried, 8 abstracts totaling \$25,503.00 were approved.

2. Budget and Personnel Committee

- a. The Budget and Personnel Committee met on November 20, 2025, at the annual Budget Breakfast, to review STC's **2025 Budget to Actual** in depth. The

presentation to the committee was given by Chelsea Robertson. Today, Chelsea Robertson presented a high-level overview to the STC Board. Some key points were:

- Revenue funding for 2025 was a little less than anticipated because no EDA contract was received and also there were some funding gaps created by other delayed contracts (such as 604b and CSC).
- Staff salaries were lower than anticipated after Sr. Planner, Brian Toy, moved to CA in June and another planner moved on in July.
- Regarding budget expenses, there were a lot of savings and reduced costs throughout 2025. Some savings were TTAP related, also travel expenses and per diem reductions were made (less staff attended the DDAA spring conference), supply expenses were reduced, no professional printing jobs were ordered (printing projects done in-house), STC utilized some free data services from Lightcast, and there was a cost savings in employee fringe benefits due to the mid-year departure of the two aforementioned STC staff members.
- A positive addition to the fund balance is expected at the end of 2025.

b. Chelsea Robertson also presented the **Proposed Budget for 2026** to the Board. Some key talking points were:

- Sources of funding were reviewed. Chelsea stated while federal funding is not guaranteed, she feels the ARC (Appalachian Regional Commission) funding will be granted.
- EDA (Economic Development Administration) funding is uncertain and STC does not have a contract yet.
- Funding for Arise (Appalachian Regional Initiative for Stronger Economies) in 2026 is secure.
- 604b funding is anticipated to be less in 2026 and a small LGE (Local Government Efficiency) grant was awarded.
- Chelsea thanked all 3 counties (Chemung, Schuyler, and Steuben) for kindly allowing her to attend and speak at their legislative meetings regarding an increase in their local share for 2026. The support of all 3 counties is definitely appreciated and makes all the difference in STC's ability to do our work.
- Local contracts were all confirmed for 2026 with two exceptions: Town of Thurston's Smart Growth comprehensive plan and the Addison local contract.
- The annual Regional Leadership conference (conducted by STC) has been budgeted for 2026 and will be held on June 11. The conference is not intended to be a money-making event, but rather a break-even service in support of the local governments.
- Chelsea has reduced 2026 expenses quite a bit. Salary expenses will be lower as only 1 of 2 vacant staff positions will be filled and operating expenses are decreased. Rental space is expected to be the same.

On a motion duly made (James Kuhl and Mark Rondinaro) and carried, the Proposed Budget for 2026 was approved.

- c. The **2026 Cost Allocation Plan** was presented by Katie Heverly. Chelsea Roberston prefaced Katie’s presentation by stating the cost allocation plan is a very important document, prepared by STC, to determine what STC’s indirect cost is. The indirect cost pays for consumables, office space and supplies, an accountant, an admin, and a small portion of the Executive Director’s time. The document is required to be filed with the EDA and then with the federal government.

Katie reviewed each expenditure line of the cost allocation plan with the board. Some of the expense lines were: percentages of indirect cost for staff, employee health, dental & vision insurance, FICA, NYS retirement, workers comp and disability insurance, office rent (which includes utilities), equipment rental, cleaning contract, administrative fee to Steuben County (for payroll & AP services provided), 1 year remaining on contract with MMB audit services, computer IT service contract, liability insurance, office supplies, phone service and other various costs. Lastly, Katie reviewed the anticipated 2026 indirect cost rate.

On a motion duly made (Jamie Johnson and Jenn Miller) and carried, the 2026 Cost Allocation Plan was approved.

REGIONAL PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

1. The **Evening Training recap, Practical Site Plan Review Practice**, presentation was made by Liv Lovejoy. Chelsea Roberston prefaced Liv’s presentation by stating this training event was held on October 15, very well-attended, and conducted by STC planners, Liv Lovejoy and Jack Cook. Eleven years ago, STC began offering evening trainings (approximately 1 per month or so) at the STC office as part of “Planning School” and also for operational knowledge useful to local governments, municipal staff, non-profits, etc.

Liv began her presentation stating the Practical Site Plan Review Practice training originated from community requests asking for hands-on experience and was targeted mainly toward Planning Board members and Code Enforcement Officers. Highlights were:

- Topics covered in the training included basic meeting structure and procedures, SEQR (briefly), site plan review, special use permits, subdivisions, and common mistakes.
- STC promoted the training event 2 weeks in advance of the 2-hour Wednesday evening class, had 17 attendees (16 of whom pre-registered) and the attendees represented 8 towns/villages and 2 counties (one of which was Tioga County and quite a distance to travel for a training event).
- Most attendees were Planning Board members and a few were Zoning Board of Appeals members.
- 13 out of 17 attendees completed the Feedback Form after the training and all comments were positive. All but one respondent felt their level of understanding increased and all respondents felt the training was helpful to the specific needs of their community and addressed their challenges in part.
- Some of the information Liv and Jack presented at the training was: a Site Plan Review checklist, flood prone review criteria, 239-m triggers, and two mock “applications” (the relevant SEQR Part 1 form and a site plan drawing for an ADU and a solar development).
- Attendees were very engaged in the hands-on practical training, collaborated well,

and asked pertinent questions.

- There was great interest in future training on the content provided by Liv and Jack and the training would also be beneficial to new Code Enforcement Officers or CEOs in communities without zoning. Some attendees also suggested smaller groups would allow the participants to drill deeper into the site review plan process.

Chelsea Robertson and Jack Wheeler each commented on the excellent job Liv and Jack did with this training class.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. The **next STC Board Meeting** will be held virtually on January 15, 2026.

ADJOURN

On a motion duly made (Aaron Dowd and Tom Tranter) and carried, the Board Meeting adjourned at 9:59 a.m.