



SOUTHERN TIER CENTRAL REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Thursday, January 15, 2026
(Virtual)

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair, Shawn Rosno, called the STC Board Meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

Chemung County – Aaron Dowd, Jennifer Furman, Ernie Hartman, Anita Lewis, Judith Rowe, Kyle Sullivan, and Tom Tranter

Schuyler County – Shawn Rosno, Carl Blowers, Chad Hendrickson, Joann Lindstrom, Judy McKinney Cherry, and Mark Rondinaro

Steuben County – Kelly Fitzpatrick, Tom Hauryski, Jamie Johnson, Jenn Miller, Heather Reynolds, and Marie Myers Shearing

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion duly made (Judy McKinney Cherry and Mark Rondinaro) and carried, the December 4, 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 (Jennifer Furman and Jamie Johnson) and carried, 8 abstracts totaling \$46,799.86 were approved.
2. Nominating Committee and Annual Meeting Preparation
 - a. Chelsea Robertson reviewed the **2026 Calendar of STC Board Meetings** and stated, in lieu of a June Board Meeting, all board members are invited and encouraged to please attend STC's 29th annual Regional Leadership Conference on June 11, 2026, being held at Corning Community College.

- b. Chelsea Robertson presented the **Nominating Committee** members, Jack Wheeler, Carl Blowers, and Tom Tranter, who will meet to discuss the next slate of officers to be proposed at the February 19, 2026, STC Board Meeting for board approval.
- c. **STC Board Membership updates** were presented by Chelsea Robertson. Chelsea has been working with the county clerks to rectify records, see who is up for re-appointment, and to get those re-appointments in motion. It is expected that the STC Board will remain mostly the same with just a couple of new appointments. Steuben County and Schuyler County plan to send their STC Board appointments before the next Board Meeting on February 19 and Chemung County plans to send their STC Board appointments by February 28.
- d. The **2026 Committee Assignments** update was also presented by Chelsea Robertson. Chelsea stated that prep work is underway and there will be a few assignment changes based upon open committee positions for board members or open positions for the agency of representation. Chelsea reviewed each of the Standing Committees, Advisory Committees, and Special Board Appointments with the Board. If anyone has a strong desire to be on a committee or removed from a committee, please contact Chelsea Robertson. Chelsea concluded her presentation stating the committee revisions for 2026 will be presented at next month's Annual Board Meeting for adoption.

REGIONAL PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

1. The **Village of Horseheads, NYS Swims Grant**, presentation was made by STC Planner, Jack Cook. Jack provided his services, and worked with the Village of Horseheads, for the past two years resulting in the Village of Horseheads being successfully awarded \$4 million from the NYS Swims Grant program for the Thorne Street pool. The grant has a 20% match. The total budget for the pool renovation is \$5 million; \$4 million coming from the NYS Swims Grant and the \$1 million match coming from the village. The renovation project includes the complete demolition of the Thorne Street pool with a new pool to be built in the same location and also a major renovation of the pool house. Jack and the village also worked with Hunt EAS, who designed the new pool. Everyone is very excited about the grant funding award and several board members commented, "Congratulations" to all and also "Good job, Jack!"
2. An update to the **ARC Waitlist** was presented by Victoria Ehlen. Victoria stated the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant cycle closed in September, the STC Board reviewed the applications in October, and then a waitlist of applications was developed for funding opportunities. The deadline for applications to be included on the waitlist was originally set for January 5, 2026, but then extended to January 31, 2026, resulting in 4 applications being developed on the waitlist. If there are any additional communities or organizations that have a project nearly ready to go and looking for ARC funding, please have them contact Victoria Ehlen to discuss.
3. Chelsea Robertson reported on **NYS Cell Phone Coverage**. A few days ago, the NYS ConnectALL Office, within ESD (Empire State Development) that manages broadband funding, contacted Chelsea about an upcoming wireless drive test to determine cell phone coverage in the Southern Tier area. NYS is funding the drive tests for cell phone coverage and began with a pilot program in the Adirondacks. The Southern Tier region is scheduled next for the drive test, which will probably be conducted in March and April of this year. Per the ConnectAll Office, they plan to drive every state route and every road

in the Southern Tier region that receives at least 500 vehicle trips per day. Chelsea presented an interactive map of NYS showing the roads that are currently scheduled to be part of the drive test and will email the map to all of the STC Board Members, the IDA's, the County Planning Departments, and the Municipal leaders for their review and input. The ConnectALL Office asked that we help identify areas on their map where there are a lack of cell phone service and a concern. Roads in purple will be driven during the test, but the roads in gray will not be driven. If there are gray roads in an area with little to no cell phone service and it is populated, or there are significant safety concerns within an area, or is an area that hosts a festival or an annual event that thousands of people attend, then these are concerns that the ConnectALL Office needs to know about. Their office is very concerned about safety and will target areas of concern during their drive tests. To report areas of concern, the ConnectALL Office has provided a tool on their inactive map that anyone can use. Using the map tool, STC Planner, Jack Cook, has already reported the Town of Erin and Town of Caton on the interactive map as areas of concern. To report an area of concern, scroll to the area on the map and draw a polygon around that area. For areas that lack service: click on the blue box on the bottom left side of the map that reads, "Report an area without coverage," type in an address or draw around the area with the mapping tool, and then click the blue "Submit" button. Anyone who needs assistance with the interactive map is encouraged to contact STC. Chelsea concluded her report stating the results of the Southern Tier drive test should be available by mid-year.

4. An **Intergovernmental Review, IGOR 2601**, was presented by Janet Thigpen.

APPLICANT: Elmira-Corning Regional Airport. Chemung County requested a total of \$22,101,750 in federal funding through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Airport Infrastructure Grant (AIG) for 3 projects beginning in 2026 as part of their Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP) for fiscal years 2026-2029. The 3 projects and total costs are:

- * Rehabilitate Runway 6-24 including Lighting and Signage - Construction (BIL AIG) – \$19,314,450
- * Install Passenger Boarding Bridge - Construction (BIL AIG) – \$1,257,300
- * Outbound Baggage Belt - Construction (BIL AIG) – \$1,530,000

Janet noted that one end of Runway 6-24 is in the FEMA mapped floodplain and that four responses were received during the review process.

- One comment was, "No interest in this project."
- Another comment was received in favor of approving the project and stated, "Timely maintenance is a cost-effective approach."
- Janet, in her role as Flood Mitigation Specialist, also submitted review comments stating the projects are upstream of areas prone to flooding from Sing Sing Creek. So, when managing the stormwater, anything that can be done to reduce the amount of water flowing off site would be beneficial and they should look for those opportunities. Janet further commented that because part of Runway 6-24 is in the mapped floodplain, any construction work in the floodplain area should be resilient to flood damage and should not cause increased flood damage off site. She also advised that a floodplain permit from the Town of Big Flats is required.
- The fourth comment received was from NYS DEC Flood Control, who recommended STC should not approve the project until areas of concern are resolved. The specific comments from NYS DEC to the IGOR review questions were:

- “The floodplain management program allows development including maintenance of existing infrastructure within the SFHA if it is located outside of the floodway boundary and is permitted by the local municipality. Is substantial fill being proposed to complete this work? Will the runway meet other requirements if it is improved and not brought above the base flood elevation? Will the runway be substantially improved and has mitigation been considered?”
- “Our office is available if needed for any technical questions as a support to the community for their local flood damage prevention law.”
- “In considering the answers to my questions in A, an evaluation of the risks for adding runway fill to place it out of the floodplain versus the possible risk to adjacent properties of additional flooding would be beneficial.”

Janet forwarded the NYS DEC comments to the consultant from McFarland-Johnson who submitted the IGOR materials to STC. Because NYS DEC was a week past the review deadline in submitting their comments, there has not been sufficient time yet for the consultant to respond. Janet also reached out to the Town of Big Flats to make them aware of the issues and need for a floodplain permit. Therefore, Janet recommended that the STC Board vote for “Approved Only with Conditions. Approval is conditional on the issuance of a Floodplain Development Permit from the Town of Big Flats that satisfies the concerns raised in the comments submitted by NYS DEC.”

On a motion duly made (Jenn Miller and Judith Rowe) and carried, the board approved (with conditions) IGOR 2601.

INTER-BOARD REPORTING

Chelsea Robertson discussed the **Inter-Board Reporting program**, which began last year, and she thanked the STC Board members for their involvement. Since many of the STC Board members also sit on other boards throughout the Southern Tier region, the goal for inter-board reporting is to keep everyone informed about the other boards’ activities and projects and to develop greater collaboration and coordination. So, this year STC will develop a reporting schedule to give board members more advanced notice of the dates to present their inter-board report as well as time to prepare a very brief report. The 2026 inter-board reporting calendar, with names of the STC board members who sit on other boards, will be presented at the next STC Board Meeting. Any amendments needed will be made and then the inter-board reporting calendar will be emailed to the STC Board.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next STC Board Meeting will be in-person on **February 19, 2026 – Annual Meeting.**

ADJOURN

On a motion duly made (Mark Rondinaro and Judy McKinney Cherry) and carried, the Board Meeting adjourned at 9:52 a.m.