



SOUTHERN TIER CENTRAL REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Thursday, July 16, 2026
(Virtual)

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

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

ATTENDANCE

Chemung County – Jennifer Furman, Courtney Dunn, Anita Lewis, Dave McCormick, Judith Rowe, 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, Hilda Lando, Jenn Miller, Marie Myers Shearing, and Jack Wheeler

STC Staff – Chelsea Robertson, Katie Heverly, Victoria Ehlen, Dot Richter, Cathy Rook, Alison Salisbury, Janet Thigpen, and Marcus Homa

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Chelsea Robertson introduced STC's **Summer Intern, Marcus Homa**, who is studying political science at Sienna College and minoring in data science. Last year, Marcus interned at STC for a short bit and we are so happy to have him back this year for the whole summer. Marcus handled some data collection and analysis at last month's Regional Leadership Conference and is currently doing some excellent work with TTAP, developing a user-friendly interface to navigate the TTAP employer network. Welcome back Marcus!

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion duly made (Jenn Miller and Judy McKinney Cherry) and carried, the **May 21, 2026, Board Meeting Minutes** were approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Audit Committee

- a. Tom Tranter presented the **Abstract of Claims** totaling \$31,627.94 to the board for approval. On a motion duly made (Jamie Johnson and Mark Rondinaro) and carried, 9 abstracts were approved.

2. Budget and Personnel Committee report

- a. STC **Staff updates** were presented by Chelsea Robertson with a note of "Congratulations" all around!
 - **Jack Cook**, who has been with STC for 3 years, received a much-deserved promotion to Senior Planner. Jack has taken on several new roles and has communities contacting him regularly for assistance. Please congratulate Jack after he returns from the Esri Conference. Well-done and congratulations Jack!
 - STC planner, **Liv Lovejoy**, has worked at STC for a few years and is moving on in August to fulfill a long-stated desire to start her own LLC. STC will probably contract Liv to do a little work here and there and Liv will continue to be active in Chemung County with various causes and groups. Congratulations and thank you Liv!
 - Flood Mitigation Specialist, **Janet Thigpen**, has scheduled her retirement for the end of September. STC has been preparing for Janet's well-earned retirement by hiring new staff and will send out information soon with details for her retirement party. Congratulations Janet! It's time for more "Grandma duty" and less flooding!
 - Chelsea Robertson was pleased to announce that she extended a job offer for a new Planner and it was accepted by **James McKinley**. James is from Prattsburgh and is the current Code Enforcement Officer for the Town of Jerusalem. James is also a certified Floodplain Manager with an excellent background that will greatly benefit STC. We are excited to welcome James to the team and he will begin working in the office the first week of August. Chelsea will officially introduce James at the September Board Meeting. Welcome James!

On a motion duly made (Judy McKinney Cherry and Mark Rondinaro) and carried, the Budget and Personnel Committee report was accepted.

3. Regional Leadership Conference Committee

- a. The **2026 Regional Leadership Conference** Event Report was presented by Alison Salisbury. 2026 was STC's 29th annual conference, held on June 11 at Corning Community College, and it was a very successful training event for the region. Alison thanked the many STC Board members who attended the conference and reported there was a total attendance of 314 people: 227 registered class participants, 46 vendor staff, 31 speakers, and 10 STC staff. A total of 27 classes were conducted with 60 class participants responding to the after-event survey (at an overall response rate of 23%). Numerous classes received very favorable ratings, but two classes in particular stood out as favorites: Zoning Board of Appeals Overview and Introduction to Records Management (the many positive comments received for this class were a bit of a surprise and we took note for future class ideas). Participants commended STC for the class offerings and range of information presented, but in particular they appreciated the class focus points:

diving into the depth and breadth of a subject, practical experiences, answering questions in-depth, and providing useful recommendations. Of the 24 vendors at the conference, many were viewed by the participants as being relevant to their needs especially in regard to engineering or municipal services. Some of the favorite vendors named were Williamson Law Book Company and Cornell Cooperative Extension for their various resources. To aid communities further, the survey asked participants what were the biggest challenges they were facing in their communities. Attendees consistently replied, “staying in the loop” on things like solar and renewable energy, “acquiring sufficient funding for projects,” “filling municipal board, planning board, or zoning board positions” with quality candidates, and “maintaining valuable rural communities.” Other feedback received was the attendees overwhelmingly enjoyed the BBQ lunch provided by Corning Community College’s catering service. Regarding the RLC budget, the goal has always been to break even with total expenses to total revenue. This year the conference was slightly over budget by \$2,300 due to the increase in cost of food and food services provided. Although slightly over budget, we feel the conference is of great value and importance to the large number of people who attend the multiple classes offered each year, build their skills during the 7-hour training day, meet informative vendors and access resources, and meet new connections from other counties and municipalities to enhance collaboration and share success stories or best practices.

****Please see attached “Report on 29th Annual Regional Leadership Conference” at the end of these meeting minutes.**

On a motion duly made (Jenn Miller and Judith Rowe) and carried, the Regional Leadership Conference Committee report was accepted.

REGIONAL PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

1. Dot Richter presented the **DOW-IRT (Innovative Readiness Training)** update. Dot began by stating at this same time last year, STC submitted an application for a military Innovative Readiness Training mission for a healthcare program to be conducted in Schuyler County. The IRT program would have provided free healthcare services in Watkins Glen to any resident of Schuyler County or resident from any of the neighboring counties. Unfortunately, our IRT mission application was not picked up for 2027; therefore, STC intends to re-apply for a 2028 IRT mission. Typically, it takes a couple of rounds before an application is approved. The Watkins Glen School District agreed to host an IRT mission, but they are also planning to do some renovation work in 2028 which may become an issue. In that case, alternative sites are being looked at and reviewed to possibly host a 2028 IRT mission. Also, there is quite a bit of competition for IRT missions during the summer months when school/college is out, so we are also looking at alternative dates/sites outside of the summer months to increase the chance of our application being approved for 2028. A key component of our application is Dr. Sachs, who is willing to certify all the medical staff. Joann Lindstrom contacted multiple area partners for their support of the IRT mission and Dr. Sachs was one of the first to respond and we are very grateful for his support. If no objections are presented by the board, then Dot will proceed with the application for an IRT mission in 2028 and present a future update when appropriate. There were no objections.

2. Intergovernmental Reviews

- a. **IGOR 2607** was handled by Liv Lovejoy and presented to the STC Board by Alison Salisbury. The **applicant: NYSDEC - Division of Environmental Remediation** requested a total of \$392,625 in new 128(a) funding for the federal FY 2026-2027, Brownfield State Response Program (BSRP). This amount was revised from the pre-application submitted in December 2025 to the approved funding allocation from the EPA. Funding will be utilized for personal services at the NYSDOH's Center for Environmental Health. The sub-allocation to DOH averages the salary of two staff positions at the Center for Environmental Health who may address activities associated with this funding. This funding seeks to address a subobjective of the DEC's Strategic Plan: *Assess and Cleanup Brownfields*. Two positive comments were received from Joann Lindstrom and Marie Myers Shearing stating "STCRPDB should approve this project" and one comment stating "no interest in the project" was received from Dave McCormick. STCRPDB approved without conditions IGOR 2607 and the Date of Clearinghouse Action was 6/24/2026 (to meet the 30-day process timeline).
- b. **IGOR 2608** was handled and presented by Alison Salisbury. The **applicant: NYSDEC - Division of Air Resources** requested a total of \$8,581,759 in federal funding through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the State Administered Clean Air Act, Section S105, Air Pollution Control Grant Funding SFY 2026-27 and would cover the entire state (not just the STC Region). Two positive comments were received from Joe Roman and Judy McKinney Cherry stating "STCRPDB should approve this project." STCRPDB approved without conditions IGOR 2608 and the Date of Clearinghouse Action was 7/13/2026.

3. Victoria Ehlen presented the **ARC Grants Review** to the STC Board for approval to take next steps. The EDPSC (Economic Development Policy and Strategy Committee) recently met on July 2nd to review and evaluate 9 ARC Grant projects (10 applications were received, but 1 withdrew due to conflicts with the ARC funding timeline). The EDPSC found that the projects were generally strong and gave specific, actionable feedback during the review process, assigning scores to each project. Victoria presented the 9 projects showing applicant name, amount of ARC funding requested, type of project, the project score assigned by the EDPSC (ranging from 57-98), and a brief description of each project. The EDPSC recommended that all 9 projects be approved by the STC Board for transmission to NYS DOS for their review and subsequent spin-up to ARC. Victoria concluded her presentation by letting the Board know that ARC application process has changed. With the new process, the EDPSC receives "pre-applications" to review and recommend and then the final applications will now be developed in Pathways (ARC's new online Grant Management Portal). After NYS DOS receives our ARC grant applications list, the applicants will upload their documentation and letters of support into Pathways over the next couple of months. Then the applications will proceed to the review phase with NYS and then with ARC.

Chelsea Robertson and Victoria Ehlen raised concerns about applicants beginning construction or incurring expenses before grants and matches are fully allocated and the grants are approved on both sides. Victoria warned that starting project work in this manner places the project in serious jeopardy and that this point is made very clear in conversations with the applicants. So, to further help the applicants understand the steps of the grant process, Victoria will attend applicant board meetings to let them know their current status in the process and to remind them that no project action is to be taken

until the ARC grant is fully secured and the match is also fully secured.

On a motion duly made (Mark Rondinaro and James Johnson) and carried, the STC Board gave approval for the 9 ARC Grant applications to be sent to NYS. Anita Lewis (Chief Development Officer for the Economic Opportunity Program) abstained from the vote.

4. The **TTAP (Twin Tiers ARISE Program) update** was presented by Victoria Ehlen. Recently, conversations have occurred with the Northern Tier about creating TTAP for adults. Interest was shown and now STC plans to submit a WORC (Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities) grant next year. STC will go through the project development process for the next year with Northern Tier and pull together TTAP partners and other interested, relevant partners from the regional workforce (such as community colleges, BOCES, CDC, and CSS Workforce NY) to create a strong application. The workforce integration for adults would ideally start up just as TTAP is ending in 2028. STC is also working to get P4P (pay for performance) applications out to the TTAP partners to enhance outcomes by utilizing the ARC funding that went into TTAP and then matching it against NYS's Office of Strategic Workforce Development funding.
5. Chelsea Robertson gave a slide presentation and overview regarding the **OMB proposed Rule Changes to 2 CFR 200**. Highlights of the presentation were:
 - Chelsea noted that NADO (National Association of Development Organizations) has a NADO Advocacy Blog about the proposed rule changes to the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).
 - The OMB (Office of Management and Budget) sets the rules for anyone who accepts federal dollars and the OMB, at times, changes those rules. The proposed changes will probably go into effect in 1 to 1-1/2 years. STC does work within a section of the CFR, and so the proposed changes will affect how STC does business.
 - Multi-Year awards go away except when legally permissible. Chelsea noted that EDA is a 3-year award and 604b is a 5-year award and administered through the state.
 - Alignment with Administration Priorities by removing the current merit-based (group review) process and replacing with a senior political appointee to conduct a pre-issuance review of discretionary award.
 - All grants will be reimbursement based and funding will not be issued until sometime mid-year through the end of the year.
 - Fixed-Amount awards will be eliminated and administrative funding will vary yearly.
 - Limiting repeat grantees – you lose points if you received funding the previous year.
 - Indirect Cost Rate – preference for discretionary awards will be given to those with lower Indirect Cost Rates.
 - An Applicant Risk Assessment will be conducted and the Agency may deny awards base on the applicant's membership in or affiliation with organizations deemed to overthrow the U.S. government, undermine public safety, or considered anti-American or extremist.
 - Ability to Terminate Funds. The old rule was that funding would only be terminated if the recipient asked for the termination, or by mutual agreement of both parties, or through recipient non-compliance. Now, new OMB proposed rules states funding may be terminated by an agency head if the applicant "no longer effectuates program goals or Federal agency priorities or the national interest as they exist at the time of termination." An agency head may also

terminate a contract if the applicant is “causing reputational harm to funding agency.”

- The Ability to Alter Award Conditions – The agency will be able to add or alter award conditions while you are under contract.
- New Ineligible Expenses – it will not be permissible to use federal funds to pay for membership in professional, technical, civic, or business organizations. This means STC will no longer be able to pay for DDAA or NADO memberships, NYS Floodplain & Stormwater Association membership, or National Floodplain Association membership using federal funding. The aforementioned organizations are extremely important to STC and our work. STC does not have many memberships and it will be painful for us to choose which memberships we can afford to retain and participate in.
- Conference attendance can only be paid for if expressly approved by the agency in the terms and conditions of the award contract.

INTERBOARD REPORTING

1. Anita Lewis is a board member with the **Chemung County Historical Society Inc.** and presented an inter-board report. The Chemung County Historical Society began in 1923, was chartered in 1947, and is located at 415 East Water Street, Elmira. It's a small organization with a small budget but does mighty things. The CCHS runs the Chemung Valley History Museum, which is open to the public Monday-Saturday from 10 am-5 pm, and contains an Exhibit Gallery, Research Department, the Booth Library, Museum Shop, and multiple resources for teachers and general education of all ages. CCHS is responsible for its membership programs and holds fundraising events throughout the year. One of the fundraisers this year was the 31st annual “Great Car Thing” which is a lot of fun for the community and well-attended. Every month Kelsey Jones, the Chemung County Historian and Historical Society member on staff, writes about or does a little something interesting involving Elmira history or other local area history. The CCHS also has a large connection with Quarry Farm, the site of Mark Twain’s summer cottage, and has held some meetings there although the home is not open to the general public for tours. Anita concluded her report by encouraging everyone to visit the Chemung Valley History Museum stating, “It’s a great place to see some history that you didn’t know exists.”
2. The inter-board report for the **Hornell City Planning Board** was delayed until September’s STC Board meeting due to unforeseen circumstances.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. **No August Board Meeting.**
2. The **next STC Board Meeting** will be in-person on **Sept 17, 2026.**

ADJOURN

On a motion duly made (Tom Tranter and Kelly Fitzpatrick) and carried, the Board Meeting adjourned at 10:09 a.m.



Report on 29th Annual Regional Leadership Conference

Held Thursday, June 11, 2026 at Corning Community College, with a total attendance of **314 people** (227 registered attendees, 46 vendor staff, 31 speakers, and 10 STC staff).



STC's TTAP vendor exhibit, right by check-in.



A class session in the *Planning Track 2* series.

Out of **27 classes**, the two popular favorites were *Zoning Board of Appeals Overview* taught by the NYDOS and *Introduction to Records Management* taught by Michael Martin of NYS Archives. Attendees loved other new and engaging topics such as *Solar Energy Siting, Policy, and Best Practices*, often identified as a community issue by attendees in last year's feedback. Both classes on grant writing, taught by STC staff, also received high ratings.



This year's conference hosted **24 vendors**, and these were the five that were most relevant to attendees' needs:

- LaBella Associates
- Cornell Cooperative Extension
- Hunt EAS
- Harter Secrest & Emery
- Williamson Law Books

Left: The refreshment area and a portion of the vendor exhibition hall.

Challenges attendees are facing in their communities include:

- Getting in the loop (and staying in the loop) with solar / renewable energy trends.
- Acquiring sufficient funding for projects.
- Filling (municipal board, etc.) positions with quality candidates.
- Maintaining viable rural communities.

2026 Regional Leadership Conference (continued)

Challenges continued ...

- A handful of attendees commented on the issue of balancing responsibilities such as “delivering service while keeping taxes reasonable” (a mayor) or “attracting commercial interests while balancing resident needs/desires” (a planning board member).



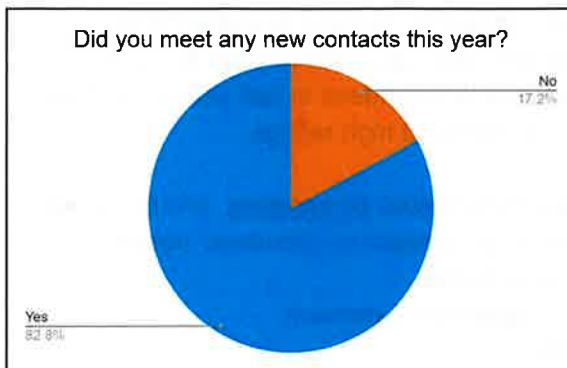
Vendors and attendees interacting in the vendor exhibition hall.



A class session in the *Mayors, Supervisors, and Clerks* series.

Feedback

Participant evaluations totalled 60, with an additional 9 from vendors and 2 from speakers, making for an overall response rate of 23%.



among participants only



among participants only

When looking at **qualitative feedback** from the conference, a prevalent comment amongst participants was that classes in which presenters went “in-depth” (as opposed to “hurriedly covering everything”), “shared individual experiences,” or directly engaged with audience members with questions/workshops were clear favorites. One respondent commented on how the *SEQRA In Action Workshop* in the afternoon made the morning session on SEQRA (*SEQRA - A Shared Responsibility*) “**meaningful**.” Applied examples of SEQRA was a highly requested topic in last year’s feedback.

2026 Regional Leadership Conference (continued)



Dr. Finley, CCC president, addressing the keynote audience.



The Keynote Panel taking a question from an audience member.

Feedback continued:

Participants as a whole noted how **CCC continues to be a great location** for the conference, though some individuals had suggestions on **timing**:

- Some municipal officials' inability to attend on a weekday
- Making more time for the Keynote panel
- Shortening breaks between classes

Left: The class schedule posted for STU 220.

Below: A class session in the *Special Sessions & Small Group* series.



Top requested topics:

- Communicating effectively with residents and/or working with social media
- Anything geared towards small towns / municipalities
- More classes on ZBA!

Top requested vendors:

- Engineering
- Water/wastewater systems
- Emergency preparedness
- Land surveying
- Legal services

