

**January 25, 2007
Meeting Minutes****Location**

6th Floor Legislative Conference Room, Broome County Office Building, 44 Hawley Street, Binghamton, NY

Attendance

Constituent Members: Supervisor Debbie Preston, Town of Conklin; Supervisor Margaret Turna, Town of Chenango; Supervisor Peter Andreasen, Town of Vestal; Tim Whitesell, Town of Binghamton; Supervisor Mike Marinaccio, Town of Dickinson; David Hamlin, Town of Fenton; Tarik Abdelazim, City of Binghamton, Randy Williams, Town of Windsor; Pat Brennan, Broome County; Harry Lewis, Village of Johnson City; Kevin Burke, Village of Port Dickinson;

Associate Members: Jim Dimascio, Greater Binghamton Coalition

Other Attendees: Jeremy Evans, Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development; Clare Simeone, League of Women Voters; Eric Denk, Chris Marion, Broome County Legislative Staff; Frank Kelley

Convene

Supervisor Debbie Preston convened the meeting at 4:07 PM and welcomed everyone in attendance. She introduced new County Legislative Clerk Eric Denk and Legislative Assistant Chris Marion.

Mr. Marion told the Council that he sent a request to each municipality for information about their parks. He is also drafting a letter to municipal assessors for information regarding exempt properties.

Bylaws

Supervisor Preston explained that a committee met to develop revisions to the Council of Governments bylaws. A copy of the proposed bylaws was sent out to all Council members with the meeting agenda. She said that there were some proposed changes including typographical errors and regarding Associate members.

Council staff member Jeremy Evans suggested that the Greater Binghamton Coalition and the Greater Binghamton Chamber be given one associate membership each. There was general agreement to this suggestion.

Supervisor Preston called for a motion to adopt the bylaws conditional upon the typographical errors corrected and wording added to include the Greater Binghamton Coalition and the Greater Binghamton Chamber as Associate member with one membership each. Mayor Harry Lewis made the motion and Supervisor Tim Whitesell seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

2007 Work Program

Supervisor Preston asked the Council members for ideas for a work program for 2007. She asked if there were speakers that should be invited to address the Council. She said that health insurance was an ongoing issue. She also suggested that courts could be another focus of the Council.

The Council briefly discussed the police consolidation issue and there was general agreement that although not all municipalities would be directly affected by police consolidation, they still have interest. Deputy County Executive Patrick Brennan volunteered to present the plan to the Council.

Deputy Mayor Tarik Abdelazim mentioned that Governor Spitzer would be forming a Commission on Government Efficiency and suggested that the Council seek dialogue with the Commission.

The Council briefly discussed flood recovery efforts and the status of State legislation that would help owners of flood-damaged property with tax bills.

Deputy County Executive Pat Brennan updated the Council on health insurance. He mentioned the CANUSA prescription drug program that the County is using. He suggested that municipalities could get savings from the program as well.

He said that at a New York State Association of Counties meeting last month he mentioned to members of Governor Spitzer's transition team that health insurance was a huge burden on local property tax. He told them to look at New York State law that makes it difficult for municipalities with less than 50 employees to join health insurance consortiums. He said that the State is looking at ways of making NYSHIP attractive to municipalities again. He is looking into what it would take to form a consortium for those local governments that have more than 50 employees.

Mayor Kevin Burke asked Mr. Brennan what happened to the idea of joining the school district health consortium. Mr. Brennan explained that the consultant that was working on it did not make any more progress on it and has not returned calls. He has apparently lost interest in the idea.

Supervisor Randy Williams suggested that all of the municipalities that have employees represented by the Teamsters work together and get on the same page so that the Teamsters cannot play one municipality against each other during labor negotiations.

Mr. Brennan suggested that municipalities could talk to Endicott which has had success dealing with Teamsters. He reminded the Council that labor negotiations was a shared services success story. Endicott has saved a lot of money by contracting with the County to accomplish its labor negotiations. He said that the County would work with any municipality to do the same.

Shared Services Update

Supervisor Preston turned the topic to shared services. She said that in the past most agreements between municipalities were informal but that many have been formalized. She mentioned the cooperation that existed between Conklin and the City of Binghamton during the flood.

Supervisor Marinaccio urged municipalities to formalize all of their agreements for their own protection.

Supervisor Peter Andreasen added that Vestal has a contract with the County to snowplow four county roads.

Pete one with county that adds contract for snowplowing for four roads

Mr. Evans told the Council that the Shared Municipal Services Grants had been awarded but that there had been no press release highlighting the awards. He said that Union, Endicott, and Johnson City received a grant to develop a combined zoning ordinance.

Supervisor Margaret Turna announced that the Town of Chenango and Broome County received a grant to build a shared salt storage facility at the Broome County Highway Department.

Greater Binghamton Coalition Update

Supervisor Preston turned the time over to Jim Dimascio, Executive Director of the Greater Binghamton Coalition, to give the Council an update.

Mr. Dimascio said that the Coalition has an updated strategy for 2007 that he would like to share with the Council. The strategy has specific achievable goals. One of these goals is to complete the physical one stop shop that will bring different organizations together. He said that last year the Coalition worked with 12 different organizations to create a new website.

Mr. Dimascio also stressed the importance of working closely with Tioga County. He is committed to marketing the region and working with different organizations to pool resources to do that. The Coalition is also forming a brownfields committee that is made up of brownfields experts, realtors, and others who will be instrumental in marketing and reusing the brownfields in the area. The Coalition's executive committee is also meeting once a month so that members stay informed about what projects are going on and to discuss goals.

Supervisor Preston thanked Mr. Dimascio and said that the Council would like him to give his presentation.

Other Items

Mr. Evans passed out information regarding several subjects. He passed out information regarding code enforcement reporting. He also said that as of January 1, 2007, all planning and zoning board members are required to receive four hours of training per year. It is up to the municipalities to decide where members can receive training. He outlined when the Planning Department would be hosted training over the next few months.

Mr. Evans also discussed the Phase II stormwater regulations. He explained that the most important action for municipalities to take in implementing their stormwater programs is adopting a local law regulating construction site and post construction stormwater controls.

Mayor Lewis urged the Council and municipalities to stay focused on legislation regarding sex offenders. He also reminded the Council of the new violence in the work place law that requires municipalities to provide training to all employees by July.

Election of Council Officers

Supervisor Whitesell nominated Supervisor Debbie Preston as President and Supervisor Michael Marinaccio as Vice-President. The nominations were seconded by Mayor Lewis and unanimously approved.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:13 PM

Recorded and edited by: Jeremy Evans
Approved by: Debra A. Preston