



July 19, 2012 Minutes

CALL TO ORDER – Chair Joseph Hauryski called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM in the STC Conference Room.

ATTENDANCE:

Chemung County: Theodore Bennett; John Burin; Donna Draxler

Schuyler County: Kate Bartholomew; Dennis Fagan; Danielle Hautaniemi

Steuben County: Mark Alger; Amy Dlugos; Joe Hauryski; James Johnson; Scott VanEtten

STC Staff: Marcia Weber; Susan Cratsley; Victoria Ehlen; Chelsea Robertson; Dan Wilhelm

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – On a motion duly made (Mark Alger/Dennis Fagan) and carried, the minutes of the June 21, 2012 meeting were approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. **Audit Committee**

- a) **Abstract of Claims** – Scott Van Etten reported that the Audit Committee reviewed two abstracts totaling \$29,043.86. On a motion duly made (Scott Van Etten/John Burin) and carried, the abstracts were approved.

2. **Budget and Personnel** – the Budget and Personnel Committee met prior to tonight's meeting and reviewed the following:

- a) Contract with GST BOCES and STC for the STN Chief Executive Officer – Joe reported that this is for the period July 2012 through December 31, 2012, which will then align the contract with STC's fiscal (calendar) year. The rates and responsibilities will remain the same. On a motion duly made (Dennis Fagan/James Johnson) and carried the contract is approved.
- b) Update on Lease – the current STC Lease expires at the end of this year. It is being negotiated and will be brought back to the board at a later meeting.

3. **ARC project Review and Ratings** (in packets) - Marcia Weber reported that the projects (in packets) are usually rated at this month's meeting. This year, STC used a preapplication process, and it was found at both the Economic Development Policy

Committee and the Regional Human Services Committee meetings that the information pertaining to the projects was not sufficient to allow them to rate the projects. The committees discussed the projects and made suggestions about how the applicants could strengthen their applications. It was decided to hold off on rating the projects until the September meeting. Victoria will contact the applicants with suggestions and ask all but one to submit full applications. In September, the committees will rate the revised project applications and bring the ratings to the board for approval. They are due at the NYS Department of State in October.

The fact that the Consolidated Funding Applications (CFAs) for New York State funding were due at the same time as the ARC applications could have had an impact on how many ARC projects were submitted and how comprehensive the applications were. It is worth reviewing the timing of the ARC project submittals next year so they do not coincide with the CFA application submittals.

REGIONAL PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

1. Flood Program Update –

Risk Map Project Update – Janet Thigpen reported that in the spring, all three counties and a couple of municipalities adopted resolutions asking that FEMA stop work on their floodplain mapping project until they had done a better job of assembling information about the watershed, evaluating mapping needs, and coordinating with local partners on the scope of work. This spurred scheduling of two Post-Discovery meetings in May to update local partners about the project status and the scope of work.

FEMA's Discovery Report and Maps: Janet stated that FEMA distributed a report and maps last December, documenting information about the watershed and mapping needs. Janet compiled local comments, which identified errors and expressed local concerns about the "proposed scope of work." FEMA distributed a revised Discovery Report this month. Although errors have been eliminated, Janet feels that it is not a useful document or a thoughtful evaluation of the data. Janet is compiling local comments on the revised report,

Of particular concern is FEMA's inclusion of Wellsburg in the list of communities with flood control levees. Wellsburg does not have a levee, but does have a gravel embankment along the creek, which has failed twice. If FEMA includes this type of structure in their levee database, it raises questions about whether failures of non-engineered structures might be driving some of FEMA's policy decisions, which are then applied to all levees. It also communicates the wrong message to residents, who should not be encouraged to trust this type of non-engineered embankment.

FEMA's Scope of Work: The scope of work for updated floodplain maps was discussed extensively at the May meetings. FEMA is considering the local requests and plans to schedule a meeting in September to finalize the scope of work. FEMA agreed to a conference call in early July to allow interim discussion, but that hasn't happened yet. Those who attended the May meetings got the impression that the ball was already rolling on the scope of work. FEMA seemed willing to make some adjustments but was already committed to most of their plan. They indicated that national priorities require mapping of flood hazards associated with levees. Changes to the scope are also limited by the work that has already been done (field surveying and processing of only

part of the LiDAR topographic data collected for Steuben and Schuyler Counties). FEMA also reported that they have no procedures for updating maps for only part of a municipality without extending their work to the municipal boundary (due to the change from paper maps to digital format).

Each of the counties sent a letter to FEMA that put local requests regarding the scope of work into writing. Those letters suggested that FEMA postpone the mapping of levees and direct resources to other mapping needs.

Levee Certification: Janet wrote a fact sheet summarizing the levee issues associated with this mapping project (in packets). At the May meetings, a representative from the Corps of Engineers stated that levee certification is a good use of taxpayer dollars because Corps levees have failed and problems can develop without any surface evidence. He later provided a list of four municipalities that have certified their levees to FEMA standards. Janet is in the process of contacting them to schedule a meeting. FEMA is revising their procedures for mapping protected areas when levees are de-certified. They could be ready to start mapping levee-protected areas in the Chemung Watershed by this fall.

Other: Janet has been working on stormwater training and helping with Community Rating System documentation for program recertification. (That program allows reduced flood insurance costs in municipalities that undertake additional efforts beyond the basic floodplain management requirements.) She hopes to start on the new Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) Flood Resistant Southern Tier project by fall.

2. **Board Discussion: Strategies, Projects, and Programs for Inclusion in the Cleaner Greener Implementation Plan** – Marcia explained the Cleaner Greener project and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) funding that will be available for projects identified through Cleaner Greener. The project's ultimate purpose is to reduce greenhouse gases over the next 20 years. STC's participation in this 8 county project (covering the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council area) and the resulting implementation plan will enable the region to be eligible for future NYSERDA funding. STC staff suggested projects to include in the plan, and Marcia asked the board if they had suggestions as well. **She urged the board to go to the website at www.cleanergreenersoutherntier.org to learn more about the project and to recommend regional needs and priorities. This should be done as soon as possible, since the project ends in October.**

Danielle Hautaniemi said that four areas were of particular interest: 1) transportation, making more efficient use of the area's transportation networks or enhancing them; 2) housing, since the region has aging housing stock with predominantly single family housing; other housing options could be proposed, such as more energy efficient buildings close to town centers; 3) reducing institutional energy use and reliance on fossil fuel; and 4) biomass development.

The group discussed this in detail and also stressed the need for NYSERDA to work with the existing business base and aged commercial and industrial stock. There is a significant cost to putting more energy-efficient systems in place, and big incentives are needed.

3. **Discussion Regarding STC's Energy Program** – Marcia reported that STC Planner Meghan Thoreau will be on family medical leave and asked if board members had priorities for STC's energy program. Wind energy was suggested as an area of regional interest. Board members said that it has been very helpful having Meghan work on the energy program and that the Energy Guide would not have been produced without her.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. **New Business** – no new business.
2. **Next Board Meeting** – the board agreed to cancel the August meeting. The next meeting of the Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board will be on September 20, 2012.
3. **Other** – there was no other business.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion duly made (Ernie Hartman/Scott Van Etten) and carried, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Cratsley