

Countywide-Shared Services Zoom Meeting

Tioga County Mayors and Supervisors

April 21, 2021

12:00 p.m.

Panel Attendees:

Stuart Yetter, Jr., Supervisor, Town of Newark Valley
Jim Tornatore, Mayor, Village of Newark Valley
Barbara Crannell, Deputy Supervisor, Town of Nichols
Lesley Pelotte, Mayor, Village of Nichols
Don Castellucci, Supervisor, Town of Owego
Mike Baratta, Mayor, Village of Owego
Charles Davis, Supervisor, Town of Richford
Al Fulkerson, Supervisor, Town of Spencer
Lewis Zorn, Supervisor, Town of Tioga
Patrick Ayres, Mayor, Village of Waverly
Martha Sauerbrey, Chairwoman, Tioga County Legislature

Absent:

Donald Foster, Acting Supervisor, Town of Barton
Keith Flesher, Supervisor, Town of Berkshire
William Strosahl, Supervisor, Town of Candor
Eric Halstead, Mayor, Village of Candor
Kevin Engelbert, Supervisor, Town of Nichols
Ken Sutfin, Mayor, Village of Spencer

County Staff:

Cathy Haskell, Legislative Clerk
Doug Camin, Chief Information Officer (*departed @ 12:26 p.m.*)
Drew Griffin, ITCS Deputy Director

Guests:

None

Welcome & Introductions:

Chair Sauerbrey opened the meeting at 12:04 p.m. Chair Sauerbrey welcomed and thanked everyone for participating today.

Update - Chair Sauerbrey:

Chair Sauerbrey reported this is the first official Shared Services Meeting of 2021. Chair Sauerbrey reported she expects we will have more meetings this year, as the State is requiring that we continue the program and there are many things in the works for shared services.

ITCS Update – Chief Information Officer Camin:

Chief Information Officer Camin reported three of the four entities we planned to bring on to our network are now complete with the Village of Nichols remaining. Regarding the Village of Nichols, this would be a take home set up, which is straightforward for ITCS to deploy now.

The final component of the Village of Waverly transition on to the County's network occurred approximately two weeks ago. Mr. Camin reported we are in good shape and most everything seems to be moving along well.

Going forward, the plan is to start the discussion and planning for bringing the Village of Owego and Town of Candor on to the County's network.

Mr. Camin reported he received confirmation from the State that they are going to be doing another round of Local Government Efficiency (LGE) grant funding, as they did originally. Mr. Camin reported this funding pays for the vast majority of the hardware that goes into the respective upgrades. For the municipalities who have already participated with their phone systems, these systems were completely funded by the State grant. The idea is that the State produces a funding stream that will pay for all the capital expenditures that are necessary to get everything running.

The plan going into the summer months is to submit an LGE grant application by July for the Village of Owego and potentially the Town of Candor. For other interested municipalities, ITCS is available to discuss the feasibility of inclusion. Village of Newark Valley Mayor Tornatore reported he has expressed interest for the Village of Newark Valley. Mr. Camin reported the challenge has always been the feasibility of the cost perspective connecting to the County's network. Currently, this has not been worked out yet. Chair Sauerbrey reported with the broadband initiative it might be possible to have a plan for this by next year.

Mr. Camin reported last year, through Southern Tier Network, a comprehensive broadband study was completed with Yates, Schuyler, Steuben, Chemung, and Tioga Counties. All of these counties have large service areas where Southern Tier Network covers most of the geography of the county already. All counties contributed funding towards the study, as well as Southern Tier Network. In Tioga County, the Tioga County IDA paid for the study with the idea this has economic development impact in the future. Our timing turned out to be good because the results of the study was the identification of areas that still lack broadband access. Relative to the other counties, Tioga County's broadband penetration is high and mostly due to Haefle in Spencer and Candor that covers geographical areas that other providers are unable to cover. The result of the study itself was a construction proposal ready set of documents that includes address points that we know do not have broadband service and a plan for building Southern Tier Network out to these locations.

With all the Federal Stimulus funding and a particular focus potentially on broadband buildout, Tioga County is in an advantageous position because we have this set of comprehensive documents identifying our needs and we have an entity in Southern Tier Network that is capable of doing it using available municipal dollars.

Chair Sauerbrey reported the Federal government has been discussing broadband funding, but we do not have a clear understanding what this involves. For instance, who receives the funding, does the amount of Federal Stimulus funding include broadband funding, or is this a separate funding initiative. It is believed there is a second initiative and the Stimulus funding is separate from the big infrastructure package currently in discussion.

Chair Sauerbrey reported the students in the Tioga Central School District could not access the Internet to do their schoolwork remotely, in addition to the other outlying areas in the Towns of Owego, Nichols, and Tioga that are also unable to access a good connection.

ITCS Deputy Director Griffin reported there are approximately 940 households identified in Tioga County that are unserved and this is a critical number. Chair Sauerbrey inquired as to whether private developers could have access to the broadband initiative funding that could possibly benefit areas such as Newark Valley. Mr. Camin reported the cost of construction is not as much of a problem for the private developer as is the cost of carrying the fiber line with pole attachments, tree cutting and various similar extraneous charges associated with overall maintenance, therefore, may not be financially viable. However, this is where a partnership with Southern Tier Network would be ideal.

Village of Newark Valley Mayor Tornatore inquired as to whether there would be interest by

Southern Tier Network to work with a private developer. Mr. Camin reported Southern Tier Network is definitely interested as the product of the broadband study is to pursue funding opportunities to construct the buildouts of these networks. Southern Tier Network intends to show some of the data to private developers to determine their level of interest. Mayor Tornatore further inquired as to whether the whole 96 corridor is attached to the hub at 56 Main Street, Owego, NY. Mr. Camin reported, yes, and stated the 96 corridor runs all the way up to Coddington Road and then over to Cornell University.

Chair Sauerbrey inquired as to whether it is feasible to have a Shared Services Plan ready to submit in December 2021. Mr. Camin reported the Local Government Efficiency (LGE) Grants through the Department of State are available for submission in July with awards announced in December; therefore, we could apply for the LGE Grant for the Village of Owego and Town of Candor. Mr. Camin reported any spending incurred from April 1, 2021 is eligible for the LGE grant prior to submission in July.

Other:

- **Town of Nichols Representative** – Chair Sauerbrey reported Barbara Crannell, Town of Nichols Deputy Supervisor, would be the official representative for the Town of Nichols on the Shared Services Panel.
ACTION: Chair Sauerbrey requested Town of Nichols Supervisor Engelbert sign a proxy letter indicating Deputy Supervisor Crannell will be the official representative acting in his stead at all future Shared Services Meetings.
- **Paper Shredding Shared Service** – Chair Sauerbrey reported the Tioga County Clerk has garnered interest from three municipalities who are interested in possibly sharing paper-shredding services through our local vendor. The County Clerk is currently gathering additional information for discussion at our next meeting.
- **Code Enforcement Shared Service** – Chair Sauerbrey reported this started out as a shared service topic of discussion and was referred to the Council of Governments (COG) for further discussion. During this time, a code enforcement feasibility study was done and this is still a viable issue noting several municipalities are struggling to maintain code enforcement officers. Chair Sauerbrey reported this topic would be addressed at our next meeting.
- **Marijuana Legislation** – Chair Sauerbrey reported this is not an area that the County is really involved in nor is this a shared service, but we can take this opportunity to talk about this topic. Chair Sauerbrey reported the legislation passed and is currently in effect. There are several areas pertaining to the towns and villages and provides an opportunity for municipalities to opt-out. Discussion ensued with several mayors, supervisors noting every community is different, and that nobody is going to judge the decisions rendered as the rest of New York State is doing the same process. Municipalities have until December 31, 2021 to opt-out.
- **FCC 10-digit Dialing** – As a point of information only, as this is also not a shared service, ITCS Deputy Director Griffin reported that as of April 24th local 10-digit dialing will go into effect in our area code and will become mandatory as of October 24th. If you are calling within the 607 area code, you will be required to dial the area code. This is changing due to the approved FCC Order for three-digit (988) dialing for the National Prevention Suicide Hotline. This will affect the re-programming of all calling and faxing systems, as well as re-programming personal contacts on mobile phones.
ACTION: Chair Sauerbrey will send the notification to Mayor Tornatore who will distribute to the town supervisors and village mayors.
UPDATE: Document sent to Mayor Tornatore, who in turn, emailed all town supervisors and village mayors on April 22, 2021.

Next Meeting: The next Shared Services Meeting will be scheduled for June. Date and time to be determined and announced.

Meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Haskell

Legislative Clerk