



Tioga County Worksession Minutes **April 6, 2023 – 1:00 p.m.**

Legislators Present:

Legislator Brown
Legislator Ciotoli
Legislator Monell
Legislator Mullen
Legislator Roberts
Chair/Legislator Sauerbrey
Legislator Standinger
Legislator Weston

Legislators Absent:

Legislator Flesher

Guests:

None

Staff present:

Peter DeWind, County Attorney
Cathy Haskell, Legislative Clerk
Amy Eiklor, Deputy Legislative Clerk
Linda Parke, Personnel Officer
Amy Poff, Benefits Manager
Alexander Freyvogel, Benefits Manager Trainee

Call Meeting to Order: Chair Sauerbrey opened the meeting at 1:00 p.m.

Security Update: Chair Sauerbrey reported that Securitas security guards will be in place at the entrance of 56 Main Street beginning April 10. A Press Release was sent to the public informing them of the changes and a large sign was placed outside of 56 Main Street relaying the information. A staff meeting took place yesterday to inform employees of the new security measures and to answer any questions they may have. Everyone entering the building, including employees, will have to pass through a magnetometer and are subject to bag searches. Individuals needing to use the elevator will need to check-in at the security desk where they will be screened via handheld magnetometer wand. The security guards will then unlock the elevators for the individual.

County Attorney DeWind stated sharp objects, knives, mace, protection spray, pocketknives, box cutters, and multi-tools will not be permitted. He reported firearms, including those of retired law enforcement and concealed carry permitted firearms, are not allowed inside.

Legislator Brown stated with the increase in security, there may be more First Amendment Auditors entering the building. County Attorney DeWind has already spoken to Securitas about the possibility of First Amendment Auditors and is preparing the guards should that happen. Security will not ask visitors to identify themselves and they do not have to show a form of identification to enter the building. Chair Sauerbrey stated signs have been put up throughout the building identifying certain spaces as private. Spaces marked as private cannot be accessed by First Amendment Auditors. Chair Sauerbrey encourages all staff members to wear their badges so they can easily be identified by security guards, and the public, as Tioga County employees.

Approval of Worksession Minutes: On motion of Legislator Roberts, seconded by Legislator Monell, the March 23, 2023 minutes were unanimously approved.

Action Items:

ACTION ITEM FROM MARCH 23, 2023:

ACTION ITEM #1– 3/23/2023 – Additional Information on ERMA Program-

County Attorney DeWind was to research the ERMA Program further and report back to the Legislature. He reported the program is run through Legal Aid and is meant for eligible senior citizens that are facing foreclosure. The program offers financial assistance for the payment of back taxes, maintenance, and other permissible home related expenses. In order for Tioga County residents to apply, the Legislature would have to opt-in the program via resolution. County Attorney DeWind would like more information from Legal Aid, in writing, stating that Tioga County would only refer residents to the program, but have no further obligation. County Attorney DeWind would like to see copies of the grant documents, deeds, and other related materials. He will add the item to the Finance, Legal & Safety committee agenda and report back to the Legislature at the April 20 Worksession.

This item will be carried forward from the April 6, 2023 Legislative Worksession.

Legislative Support: Legislative Clerk Haskell reported the following:

- ***Approval of Minutes:*** On motion of Legislator Brown, seconded by Legislator Roberts and unanimously carried, the March 9 Legislative Support minutes were approved.
- ***Financial:***
 - The Legislative Office has expended 22.5% of their 2023 budget.
 - Beginning this month, Ms. Haskell will start giving monthly County Auditor updates in her Legislative Support packet. She reported 865 invoices were audited in March, which totaled \$2,800,346.28 and 150 P-Card invoices were audited in March, which totaled \$45,277.11. Ms. Haskell informed Department Heads at last month's Leaders Meeting that incorrect invoices will be rejected. Employees receive an email if their invoice has been rejected, which contains the reason why it was rejected. It is up to the employee to correct the issue in a timely manner in order to ensure proper payment.

➤ **Old Business:**

- Ms. Haskell received notification from the Department of State that Local Law No. 1 of 2023 was filed on February 21.
- The Board of Ethics currently has two vacancies that must be filled via Legislative Appointment.
- Cyber Security Awareness Training on USB Security through KnowBe4 is due within 60 days of notification. All users are required to complete the training in order to avoid restricted access.
- Annual Policy Review & Attestation was due on March 31.
- Annual Financial Disclosure Forms must be completed and submitted to the County Attorney's Office by May 15.

➤ **New Business:**

- **Sales Tax Extender:** Ms. Haskell spoke with Assemblyman Friend's Office on March 21, 2023. He is working on getting both the Assembly and Senate Bill numbers. Tioga County currently has a three-year extender that expires on November 30, 2023. However, Governor Hochul is only entertaining two-year extenders. When Ms. Haskell receives the Bill numbers, the Legislature will need to adopt a resolution in support of these Bills for a two-year extender. After the resolution is adopted, Home Rule Request forms will be completed and sent to the Assemblyman's Office. The Governor would then sign the Bills. The process needs to be completed and postmarked by September 2, 2023. Ms. Haskell spoke with Assemblyman Friend's Office yesterday and they are waiting for the New York State Budget to pass before releasing the Bill numbers. If needed, Ms. Haskell can call a Special Meeting at the April 20 Worksession to pass the Home Rule Request resolution.

Resolutions: Ms. Haskell reviewed the agenda and resolutions for the April 11, 2023 Legislature meeting with discussion occurring on the following:

- **Appoint Member to the Tioga County Planning Board:** Legislator Roberts stated it was her understanding that this individual has been a Tioga County resident for less than one year. She recommended the Legislators take another look at the individual's summary of qualifications. Ms. Haskell will re-send the individual's summary of qualifications to the Legislators after Worksession. Legislator Roberts urged her fellow Legislators to review the summary of qualifications and vote accordingly.
- **Authorize Acceptance of 2022 SICG Targeted Grant (ST22), Appropriation of Funds & Modify 2023 Budget – Office of Emergency Services:** Ms. Haskell reported this resolution accepts and appropriates the \$6 million grant that was awarded to Tioga County for upgrades to the radio communications system.

Other:

- **Additional Defendants in Opioid Settlement:** County Attorney DeWind received an email yesterday from representing Counsel that additional defendants have been added to the opioid lawsuit and inquired if Tioga County would like those defendants included in the lawsuit. He stated Tioga County is joining a nationwide settlement against pharmacies and manufacturers that contributed to the opioid crisis.

Legislator Monell asked if there would be any harm in adding the defendants. County Attorney DeWind stated there would be no harm, just the potential for additional funds. There is no way to know the dollar amount at this time, but it could potentially be up to \$100,000. If Tioga County decides not to include additional defendants in the lawsuit, they would not be entitled to the nationwide settlement funds.

County Attorney DeWind asked the Legislature if there were any objections to including additional defendants in the lawsuit. On a straw poll vote, all Legislators were in favor of moving forward with including additional defendants in the lawsuit. County Attorney DeWind does not believe a resolution is needed to include additional defendants in the lawsuit. He will have more information at the Finance, Legal & Safety committee meeting on April 11.

Executive Session: Eight Legislators were in attendance with Legislator Flesher being absent. Legislative Clerk Haskell, Personnel Officer Linda Parke, Benefits Manager Amy Poff, Benefits Manager Trainee Alexander Freyvogel, and County Attorney DeWind remained in attendance. Motion by Chair/Legislator Sauerbrey, seconded by Legislator Monell, to move into Executive Session to discuss contract negotiations at 1:41 p.m. Motion carried. Motion by Legislator Monell to adjourn, seconded by Legislator Brown. Executive Session adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

Legislator Monell motioned, seconded by Legislator Roberts, to adjourn the meeting at 2:09 p.m.

Next Worksession scheduled for Thursday, April 20, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Eiklor

Deputy Legislative Clerk