

**December 8th, 2005
Meeting Minutes****Location**

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

Attendance

Constituent Members: Supervisor Mike Marinaccio, Town of Dickinson; Supervisor Debbie Preston, Town of Conklin; Supervisor Gordon Kniffen, Town of Kirkwood; Supervisor Ed Banks, Town of Fenton; Mayor Kevin Burke, Village of Port Dickinson; Tarik Abdelazim, Representative for Mayor Elect Matthew Ryan, City of Binghamton; Deputy County Executive Patrick Brennan, Broome County

Associate Members: Jim Dimascio, Greater Binghamton Coalition

Other Attendees: Darcy Fauci, Broome County; Richard Jones Sr., Town of Kirkwood; Ron Lake, Town of Kirkwood; Steve Contento, Village of Windsor; Tom Sinclair, Binghamton University Master's of Public Administration Program; Frank Kelly; Jeremy Evans, Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development

Convene

President Debbie Preston convened the meeting at 4:10PM. Debbie thanked everyone for coming and explained that no meeting was scheduled for December but that she wanted to hold a meeting to discuss the shared services grant opportunity. She then turned the time over to Jeremy Evans of the Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development and Dr. Tom Sinclair, Director of the Masters of Public Administration Program at Binghamton University.

Shared Municipal Services Incentive Grant

Jeremy began by using a PowerPoint presentation to highlight the importance aspects of the Shared Municipal Services Incentive Grant. The Grant is from the NYS Department of State and applications are due on January 13, 2006. Municipalities may request up to \$100,000. He also described what the grant may be used for but stressed that two or more municipalities must apply together in order to be considered for funding. Municipalities may also submit multiple applications.

Meeting attendees discussed whether fire companies would be eligible since the grant specifically states that special purpose units of governments are not eligible. Some thought that fire companies might still be eligible. Jeremy urged attendees to check with municipal attorneys and to submit questions about the grant to the Department of State through their website.

Jeremy then gave an overview of the grant selection criteria and finished by reminding meeting attendees that there is a 10% local match required that cannot be in-kind services.

Gordon Kniffen asked if the match had to be provided by each municipality. Jeremy responded that there is no restriction on who provides the match as long as it is local cash from one or more of the municipalities that apply for the grant.

Broome County Shared Services Database

Tom Sinclair took the floor to describe a concept he and Jeremy had been developing for an online shared services database. He mentioned that studying shared services is a deliberative process and decision-makers need to have (1) accurate and detailed financial data, (2) a means for measuring long term savings, (3) means to estimate personnel costs, and (4) a way to share results. He said that decision makers usually don't have all of this information that the Rockefeller School feels is necessary and that through this grant we might have an opportunity to make this data and information available.

Tom then described the Shared Services Database website concept by showing attendees a mock-up created by Jeremy. The central focus of the website is a matrix that shows all of the municipalities and all of the different services and activities they provide. The matrix is color-coded and allows users to see all of the efforts individual municipalities are making to share different services. Users can click on a municipality or a shared service to get more detail about what is happening. For example, by clicking on a box for the Town of Union and stormwater the user is taken to more information about an intermunicipal agreement that the Town of Union has signed for stormwater. The user can see who else signed the agreement and then they can also access the actual agreement or other associated documents.

Tom stressed that the database will allow citizens to see how much municipalities already do to share services, it will allow citizens to get detailed information about and feasibility studies that have been completed, and it will allow municipal leaders to access actual agreements that they could use as a template for their own shared service agreement. Users will also be able to see if municipalities have studied the possibility of a shared service but decided not to pursue it because it wasn't cost effective.

Tom also explained that another piece of this initiative was for the new Center for Applied Community Research at Binghamton University to work with the municipalities to develop templates that could be used to estimate cost savings for proposed shared services arrangements. These spreadsheet templates would allow municipalities to enter

in financial information to find out if sharing a specific service would make sense. The results of these analyses or any other studies about shared services would be added to the database and could be used by other interested municipalities.

Gordon asked if towns would update the information on the website and Jeremy said that is a possibility but that he (Jeremy) could also collect the information and have it posted. Several attendees also said that the county could act as the clearinghouse for the information.

Jeremy and Tom said that such clearinghouses exist but that the information is not very accessible. By having a website, all of the information would be available to anyone at any time.

Darcy Fauci asked if the database could have a personnel list included. She said that at the previous meeting there was a discussion about putting that information online.

Jeremy responded that personnel information, highway equipment inventories, contact info, and other information could all be integrated into the database. He said that the idea is use the grant funding to hire a web development firm to create a well-designed database and website that the county would eventually maintain.

Pat Brennan updated the Council on the three top shared services priorities. He said that 13 municipalities had returned information about health insurance and that information was on the Council of Governments website. Pat and Debbie affirmed that the topic of the January meeting will be health insurance and the County will try to have a consultant come to the meeting.

Pat said that municipal parks representatives are going to meet together to look at forming an association.

Pat also said that he has received six highway equipment lists back from municipalities. The previous lists that were on hand were two years old.

Mike Marinaccio said that he likes the database/matrix idea but that he is concerned that the application will not show direct cost savings from the project itself which may hurt its chances of getting funded.

Tom said that the other part of the project, working with municipalities and developing templates to get real numbers, could lead to cost savings.

Pat said that doing this project may put us ahead of the curve. Some states are requiring counties to list all of their shared services efforts already. Broome County would be ready if New York ever decided to do the same.

Ed Banks expressed concern that some may think that this project is an attempt by the County to get information that it will use inappropriately.

Mike said that we need to trust each other.

Debbie asked Jeremy and Tom what they needed from the municipalities at this point. They responded that each municipality should pass a resolution in support of the grant application.

Tom suggested that the Council of Governments draft an official letter of support as well.

Someone else suggested that the mock-up of the Matrix should be put online so that those who were not in attendance could get an idea of what the project entails.

Mike requested that Debbie ask for a show of support from the supervisors and mayors in attendance and that their support be documented in the minutes.

Debbie asked if there was any elected official that was not in favor of supporting the grant application. Debbie Preston, Mike Marinaccio, Kevin Burke, Ed Banks, and Gordon Kniffen were all in favor of supporting the grant application.

The Council confirmed that the next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 26, 2006 and the topic will be health insurance.

Mike thanked Ed Banks for telling him about the health insurance coverage Fenton has begun to use. Mike said that Dickinson is changing to that coverage as well.

Ed Banks raised concerns over tire collection and the Broome County landfill's tip waiver day. He applauded this service that the county provides but said that the Landfill collected an unusually large amount tires. Fenton received a large overage fee from the Landfill and was told it was because of tires. He tried to get additional information from the Landfill but was told that he needed to file a Freedom of Information Act request to do so.

Darcy said that she would look into getting the information for Fenton.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 PM.

Recorded and edited by: Jeremy Evans

Approved by: Debra A. Preston