



Tioga County Worksession Minutes

June 5, 2025 – 1:00 p.m.

Legislators Present:

Legislator Brown (*arrived @ 1:07 p.m.*)
Legislator Bunce
Legislator Ciotoli
Legislator Flesher
Legislator Monell
Legislator Roberts
Chair/Legislator Sauerbrey
Legislator Standinger (*arrived @ 1:13 p.m.*)

Legislators Absent:

None

Guests:

Andrew Aronstam
Matt Freeze, Reporter, Morning Times

Staff present:

Jackson D. Bailey II, County Administrator
Cathy Haskell, Legislative Clerk
Stephanie Baldwin, Deputy Legislative Clerk
Peter DeWind, County Attorney
Linda Parke, Personnel Officer
Jamie Wahls, Democratic Election Commissioner (*departed @ 1:06 p.m.*)
Kelly Johnson, Republican Election Commissioner (*departed @ 1:06 p.m.*)
Brittany Woodburn, ED&P Director (*departed @ 1:13 p.m.*)
Rich Hallett, Undersheriff (*departed @ 2:04 p.m.*)

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

Board of Elections “I Voted” Sticker Presentation: Democratic Election Commissioner Wahls and Republican Election Commissioner Johnson reported this year they launched an “I Voted” Sticker contest in partnership with the Tioga Arts Council to involve the community and engage our youth in thinking about elections. The contest information was distributed a couple of months ago to all school districts and youth groups with a submission deadline of May 30, 2025. The contest was geared to three different age groups: 5–9-year-olds, 10–13-year-olds, and 14–18-year-olds with most submissions coming from the high school age group.

The Legislature chose one winner from each age group and the winners will be invited to the July 15, 2025 Legislature meeting to be recognized for their winning submission. The three chosen designs will be used in this year's "I Voted" stickers for the November general election.

- In the age group category of 5-9 years old, the Legislature chose entry #2.
- In the age group category of 10-13 years old, the Legislature chose entry #1.
- In the age group category of 14-18 years old, the Legislature chose entry #1.

Housing Development Specialist Position Discussion: ED&P Director Woodburn distributed the current and proposed ED&P Organizational Charts she provided to her ED&P Committee in May. Ms. Woodburn reported that the County Planning Director plans to retire in February 2026, and the Legislature granted permission previously by way of resolution to create a County Planning Director Trainee position with the intent of filling this position six months in advance of the anticipated retirement for training purposes. Ms. Woodburn reported she has a resolution for Legislature consideration at the June 10, 2025 Legislature meeting to promote the current Economic Development Specialist into this role with the intention that she will assume the County Planning Director position when it is vacated in February 2026. This will leave the current Economic Development Specialist position open, and Ms. Woodburn would like to abolish this position and create a Housing Development Specialist position, as this title is more in line with the duties currently being done in the department. Ms. Woodburn reported this position does a lot of work on behalf of the Land Bank in terms of administering grant programs, Land Bank Initiative funding, NY Main Street funding, and other programs the department is looking to pursue. Ms. Woodburn reporting housing is a huge priority for New York State and every other program being rolled out is primarily housing-related or infrastructure extension to develop housing. Ms. Woodburn reported new programs are coming out for single-family and two-family home development, as well as single-family home rehabilitation. This position would manage existing grant funds for housing-related projects that are currently underway. Ms. Woodburn reported the Land Bank was just awarded \$1.8 million in grant funds and they are in the process of closing out another \$900,000 grant that has been administered out of ED&P in the last two years. Ms. Woodburn further reported a NY Main Street grant is underway and foresees this position administering this grant. ED&P is also working on a preliminary engineering study to help expand infrastructure to an IDA-owned site for single and two-family housing development. Ms. Woodburn reported ED&P is looking at the Home Buyer Development Program for the Temple and Liberty Street property in the Village of Owego.

Ms. Woodburn reported she spoke to County Administrator Bailey and brought this proposal forth to the ED&P Committee in May and everyone seemed agreeable to present a resolution this month. The salary range is the same as the Economic Development Specialist position so there is no budgetary impact.

Legislator Roberts inquired that if the current Economic Development Specialist is doing this type of work, then what is the need to abolish the position and create the Housing Development Specialist. Ms. Woodburn reported in the past the Legislature has talked about transparency and wanting to know what is going on in the ED&P department and this new title is clearer and in line with what the position is doing. Ms. Woodburn reported that if the Legislature would prefer to keep the current title with doing more of the housing

development work, she can do that with no issue. Ms. Woodburn reported this is the area where she needs support for a lot of the work that is underway.

Legislators Bunce and Monell indicated they have no issue with this title change.

Legislator Ciotoli inquired as to whether the title of the position would better aid in getting grant funding. Ms. Woodburn reported she does not believe they will specifically look at the title, but we are a unique department in that we are not just Economic Development. We are Economic Development and Planning, and housing development and community development are key functions of Planning, so it addresses the lack of positions we have had on the Planning side of the department.

Legislator Roberts inquired as to what happens with the Economic Development Specialist side to attract new businesses as opposed to now being engaged in housing. Ms. Woodburn reported that she as Director, the Deputy Director, and the other Economic Development Specialist all engage in this type of work. Ms. Woodburn reported she does not believe the department will lose any functionality by this change. Ms. Woodburn reported that the department has pursued the Microenterprise Grant to continue to help businesses, capital grant funding, low-interest loans, site selection, expansion of utilities to sites in our industrial zoning districts, and we will continue to do this work.

Legislator Brown reported a lot of the grants are mixed between private business development and housing. Ms. Woodburn confirmed there are mixed-use projects with commercial space on the first floor and residential on the upper floors.

Ms. Woodburn reported the State just came out with the County Infrastructure Program which is all geared towards housing development and downtown revitalization and the programs coming out right now support that.

Legislator Bunce inquired as to whether there are any plans to have a Deputy Planning Director. Ms. Woodburn reported that it was not her intent at this time.

Legislator Roberts inquired as to whether Ms. Woodburn foresees the need in the future to re-establish the Economic Development Specialist that is being abolished. Ms. Woodburn reported she is structuring the department where the need is, therefore, she has no plans at this time.

Ms. Woodburn reported she did speak to her ED&P Committee about a split administrator position between TCIDA and TCPDC (Land Bank) as they are both Public Authorities, but that will require continued discussion with the two Boards to determine salary and fringe with the intent for these entities to fully cover the position through their Administrative Services Agreement with the County. Ms. Woodburn reported she has had preliminary conversations with both Boards and believes they are interested in exploring this possibility.

Legislator Flesher reported that Ms. Woodburn is doing a great job and has put a lot of thought and effort into this and stated this is forward-thinking on her part. Legislator Monell agreed.

Approval of Worksession Minutes: On motion of Legislator Roberts, seconded by Legislator Monell, the May 22, 2025 minutes were unanimously approved.

Action Items: Currently, there are no action items.

County Administrator Report: County Administrator Bailey provided the following report:

- **Collective Bargaining** -Tioga County Corrections Association, Inc. negotiations are ongoing with the latest meeting held on June 4, 2025.
- **I4A FUN-damentals** – Training is open to all employees and will be held on Friday, June 27, 2025 from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. in the Hubbard Auditorium.
- **Budget 101/Finance Overview** – Training is near completion in NeoGov and will soon be available for review in the test environment before making this available to the staff.
- **Department Visits** – All departmental visits are to be determined at this time.
- **County Coroners** – Meeting was held on May 23, 2025 at the Public Safety Building to discuss records storage, digitization efforts, billable processes, and the 2026 budget. Legislative Clerk Haskell and County Administrator Bailey have a follow-up meeting with all four Coroners on June 26, 2025 to begin the 2026 Budget discussions and determine how they want to move forward.
- **Strategic Plan** – In keeping with the biannual timeline of Departments presenting their Strategic Plan in July and January, a general reminder will be sent to the Department Heads to provide an updated report of their Strategic Plan at their July 2025 Legislative Standing Committees and inform the Legislators of their intentions going forward and staying in alignment with their 2026 budget initiatives.
- **YTD Budget Report (All Funds)** - As of May 31, 2025, the total revised budget is \$116,730,360 for revenue and \$132,405,624 for expenses. The new applied fund balance being appropriated is \$15,675,264, an increase of \$412,109 for the additional appropriations approved by way of resolution for the Harnick Road capital project through Public Works. The actual YTD revenues received are \$54,880,554 with \$39,819,104 paid expenses for a remaining budget of \$61,849,506 in revenues and \$92,586,320 in expenses.
- **County Administrator YTD Budget** – As of May 31, 2025, the County Administrator's budget reflects a 39% utilization with nothing significant to report.
- **2026 Budget Status** – The 2026 budget was opened to all departments on June 2, 2025 and the approved 2026 Budget Calendar and Directives were emailed. A separate notice was sent to all the outside agencies to provide their funding request letters and tentative budgets to the County Administrator.
- **Radio Tower Project** - The shelter is being placed at the Town of Richford tower site. As additional progress is being made, Emergency Services Director Cornelius will do a press event and invite everyone to the site. County Administrator Bailey will be meeting with Emergency Services Director Cornelius and consultant Frank Yoder to discuss procurement related to the site preparations.
- **PIO Training** – Completed the EO:105 Public Information Basics Online training.

- **Policy Review** – We have two policy resolutions for Legislature consideration at the June 10, 2025 Legislature meeting: Gifts and Donations Policy and Remote Work Policy – Pilot Program.
 - **Gifts and Donations Policy** is new and has been reviewed by the Policy Review Committee, as well as the Executive Team. The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines for the overall management of gifts and donations to Tioga County government ensuring that all donations align with Tioga County's mission and services while maintaining transparency, ethical standards, and legal compliance. This policy specifically states that Tioga County does not permit the acceptance of solicited donations and prohibits the active solicitation of donations with certain exceptions as noted. The Legislature agreed with this policy.
 - **Remote Work Policy – Pilot Program** remains unchanged currently and the resolution is only extending the sunset date of June 30, 2025 to December 31, 2025. This policy is still under review by the Policy Review Committee. Legislator Ciotoli inquired as to whether there was any positive or negative feedback on the policy. Legislator Monell inquired as to whether there is anyone or any Department that is a multiple offender of policy non-compliance and, if so, why are they still permitted to continue working remotely. County Administrator Bailey reported this has been addressed. Chair Sauerbrey reported if a department is short-staffed, the Legislature has the discretion to temporarily call all staff back in the office. County Administrator Bailey reported some of the feedback from the Deputy Directors and Supervisors on the Policy Review Committee is that the Department Head may approve an employee for remote work, but may not understand the full scope of granting the request and the Deputy Directors and Supervisors would like to add policy language to give them a second consideration of the request to recommend retraction or modification of the request, if necessary.

Other policies currently under review include Meals and Beverage Guidelines, Vehicle Use Policy, Procurement Policy, and Active Shooter Policy.

- **Leaders Meeting** – The next Leaders Meeting is scheduled for July 29, 2025 at the Public Safety Building. The Squad 9 TAM consultant will do a presentation on the TAM Program and D5 Consultants will do De-Escalation training.
- **NYSAC County Administrator Association Meeting** – County Administrator Bailey will be attending this all-day training in Madison County on June 20, 2025.
- **Total Taxable Sales by Category** – Sales tax analysis document as of February 28, 2025 was provided to the Legislature highlighting the top 20 of the 75 categories based on the 2024-2025 reporting. The top five sources are automobile dealers, gasoline stations, department stores (including online sales), electric power generation transmission distribution, and restaurants and eateries.
- **2025 Leadership Tioga** – The next session will be held at Tioga Opportunities, Inc. on June 11, 2025.

- **County Utility Analysis** – Public Works tracks utility usage for each County building and the analysis provided dates to 2010. Legislator Bunce reported the concern was regarding the NYSEG rates and whether they are on the rise for the County buildings. In working with Deputy Commissioner of Public Works Ruggiero, County Administrator Bailey provided a very detailed report. Legislators requested the document be emailed to them. Chair Sauerbrey reported Tioga County was with MEGA for several years and it may be beneficial to look at this organization again.
UPDATE: Document was emailed to all Legislators on June 5, 2025.
- **Insero & Co. Auditors** – The auditors are on-site starting this week doing their internal annual audit. They are auditing ARPA expenditures, in addition to their regular audit.
- **Active Shooter Training** – County Administrator Bailey reported he received a response from Captain Yeager for in-person active shooter training. The Health & Human Services Department Heads preferred a one-day morning/afternoon session with an alternative date at the end of the year. The dates proposed are June 23rd for 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the County Office Building and June 24th at the Health and Human Services for the same session times. Additionally, they proposed August 18th for another morning/afternoon session at the County Office Building. County Administrator Bailey will work with Safety Officer Holbrook to create a roster for participation tracking. All Legislators agreed to the training dates as specified.

Legislative Support: Legislative Clerk Haskell presented the Legislative Support report and minutes are documented in a separate document that will be sent to the Legislators.

Resolutions: Ms. Haskell reviewed the agenda and resolutions for the June 10, 2025 Legislature meeting with discussion occurring on the following:

- **Authorize Salary Increase for Assistant Public Defender for Family Court:** Legislative Clerk Haskell reported the way this resolution was originally presented appeared that this would be a \$20,000 salary increase for this position each year for the three-year Fourth Family Defense Grant. Ms. Haskell reported she and the County Administrator had a phone conversation with ILS/Assigned Counsel staff just prior to this meeting to better understand the intent of this resolution. County Administrator Bailey reported this resolution will increase the annual salary from \$75,879 to \$95,879 and it will hold this \$20,000 for the next three years. The only increase beyond \$20,000 would be if the Legislature authorized annual Management/Confidential salary increases and these increases would be on the base salary of \$75,879 and not the additional \$20,000 grant funds. County Administrator Bailey reported any funding associated with this grant will have its own Org, so it can be tracked.
- **Authorize Salary Increase for Part-Time Assigned Counsel Administrator** – Ms. Haskell reported this resolution is also through the Fourth Family Defense Grant authorizing an additional \$20,000 salary increase for the Assigned Counsel Administrator and is based on the same structure as the resolution for the Assistant Public Defender for Family Court.

Legislators agreed both resolutions need to be re-worded for clarification regarding the additional \$20,000. Legislative Clerk Haskell and County Administrator Bailey will revise the resolution for Legislature consideration at the June 10, 2025 Legislature meeting.

- **Approve Salary Above Hiring Base for Deputy Sheriff – Sheriff's Office** - Legislative Clerk Haskell reported this resolution was presented by the Sheriff's Office at their Public Safety Committee this week. The Committee agreed that this would move forward to the Personnel Committee for additional discussion. The Personnel Committee decided to pull this resolution for consideration at the June 10, 2025 Legislature meeting due to legalities of transferring a candidate who is still on probation. Legislator Flesher reported that the Sheriff's Office wants to hire a lateral transfer from Cortland County, however, the Deputy is still on probation until mid-July. Civil Service law prohibits this type of transfer while still on probation, therefore, the Personnel Committee recommended submitting this resolution in July for Legislature consideration. The Sheriff's Office wants to bring this Deputy on board at the Year 2 Deputy salary range, based on his experience. Legislator Flesher reported the intent of bringing this resolution forward now is to ensure that the Legislature is willing to offer the Year 2 Deputy salary. Legislator Flesher reported he would like to give the Sheriff's Office an assurance that the Legislature will authorize the above-based salary barring no issues with the transfer.

Undersheriff Hallett reported that the resolution was to ask that the salary be approved and then be given a contingent offer based on passing the probation period, submitting all the paperwork to Personnel, and going through all the necessary pre-hire steps. It is a contingent offer, but the salary would need to be approved.

Personnel Officer Parke reported the County is not able to move forward with the resolution while the Deputy is still on probation and not eligible for a transfer. Personnel Officer Parke reported she would be in favor of a resolution submission in July providing they receive the roster from Cortland County indicating he is in competitive status.

Undersheriff Hallett expressed concern that if we wait until the July 15, 2025 Legislature meeting and the resolution is not adopted, the academy starts July 28, 2025 and there is no possible way to go off the list to replace him. The Personnel Officer reported there is no valid list at this time until the exam results are available.

Legislator Bunce inquired as to whether the Legislature can do a straw poll vote on starting this Deputy at the Year 2 salary.

Legislative Clerk Haskell reported that if the candidate is released from probation and has met the eligibility requirements for transfer from the Personnel Office, a Special Meeting may be needed due to the timing of the July 15, Legislative meeting and the probation period ending July 17, 2025.

Legislator Standinger objected to the way this resolution was presented but certainly agrees the Year 2 Deputy salary is appropriate.

On a straw poll vote, all Legislators were in favor of starting the Deputy above the salary base at the Year 2 salary and that a special meeting may be needed if the timing of the probationary period and the regular meeting do not align.

The resolution will need to be re-presented at the July Public Safety and Personnel Committees.

Other: None

Executive Session: All Legislators were in attendance along with Legislative Clerk Haskell, County Administrator Bailey, County Attorney DeWind, and Personnel Officer Parke. Motion by Legislator Roberts, seconded by Legislator Brown, to move into Executive Session to discuss employment matters of particular individuals, contract negotiations, and committee appointments at 2:05 p.m. Motion carried.

Motion by Legislator Ciotoli, seconded by Legislator Flesher to adjourn Executive Session at 2:43 p.m.

Chair Sauerbrey will be appointing Legislator Bunce, Legislator Ciotoli, Legislator Monell, County Administrator Bailey, and Linda Parke to the ITCS Director Search Committee at the June 10, 2025 Legislature meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 2:43 p.m.

Next Worksession scheduled for Thursday, June 19, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Haskell

Legislative Clerk