



## **Tioga County Worksession Minutes** **September 4, 2025 – 1:00 p.m.**

### **Legislators Present:**

Legislator Aronstam  
Legislator Brown  
Legislator Ciotoli  
Legislator Flesher  
Legislator Monell  
Legislator Roberts  
Chair/Legislator Sauerbrey  
Legislator Standing

### **Legislators Absent:**

Legislator Bunce

### **Guests:**

Matt Freeze, Reporter, Morning Times

### **Staff present:**

Cathy Haskell, Legislative Clerk  
Jackson D. Bailey II, County Administrator  
Peter DeWind, County Attorney (*departed @ 1:20 p.m./returned @ 2:15 p.m.*)  
Linda Parke, Personnel Officer  
Brian Cain, Probation Director (*departed @ 1:33 p.m.*)  
Shawn Yetter, Commissioner of Social Services (*departed @ 1:33 p.m.*)  
Gary Hammond, Commissioner of Public Works (*departed @ 2:22 p.m.*)

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

**Interview Search Committee Appointment:** Due to the upcoming retirement of the Commissioner of Social Services, Chair Sauerbrey discussed the need to appoint an interview search committee at the September 16, 2025 Legislature meeting.

**Approval of Worksession Minutes:** On motion of Legislator Monell, seconded by Legislator Brown, the August 21, 2025 minutes were unanimously approved.

**Action Items:** Currently, there are no action items.

**County Administrator Report:** County Administrator Bailey presented the following report:

## **DEPARTMENTAL MANAGEMENT & LABOR RELATIONS**

**Collective Bargaining** – Tioga County Corrections Association, Inc. (TCCA) and Tioga County Law Enforcement Association (TCLEA) negotiations are ongoing. The current Collective Bargaining Agreements expire December 31, 2025.

**Department Head Evaluations** – County Administrator Bailey prepared his part of the Department Head evaluations and presented to the Legislators for their review and comments. Mr. Bailey reported he would like to receive the evaluations back either at the September 16, 2025 Legislature meeting or the September 18, 2025 Worksession for further discussion on how the Legislature would like to move forward with scheduling meetings with the Department Heads. Mr. Bailey would like to conclude the evaluation process and submit all evaluations to Personnel by September 30, 2025.

## **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT & BUDGETING**

**Budget Officer** – Mr. Bailey reviewed the 2026 Outside Agency Funding Requests for Legislature consideration.

- **Tioga Opportunities, Inc.** requested \$122,670, which is an increase of \$381.00 citing NYSOFA funding match. Chair Sauerbrey reported this agency conducts the aging services for the County. The Legislature was in favor of this request.
- **A New Hope Center** requested \$60,000, which is an increase of \$47,000 citing position sustainability. Probation Director Cain and Commissioner of Social Services Yetter were in attendance to speak about the services this agency provides for their departments and the community noting that without their services this would result in increasing staff within their departments to provide the required services and this would far exceed the agency's request to continue providing these services. Probation Director Cain reported this agency conducts the family offense petitions and has been doing so over the last 25 years. Based on the number of petitions being made, this would equate to at least two positions; a full-time Probation Officer and a Probation Assistant which would more than double their request in salary and fringe. Mr. Cain further reported this agency provides domestic violence education classes for Probation, as well as State Parole. Probation routinely receives court orders for all domestic violence cases to attend domestic violence education and without this service there would be nowhere to send them. They run the 24-hour hotline for domestic violence for law enforcement. Commissioner of Social Services Yetter reported A New Hope Center advocate comes onsite to the Health & Human Services Building to work with the individual for a domestic violence situation and transport the individuals to the shelter. Additionally, this agency has become extremely important in providing services at the Child Advocacy Center and are a crucial component in service delivery. Legislator Standinger reported in his prior career this agency was very responsive, especially to domestic violence. Legislator Flesher reported this agency and the services provided are invaluable, but moving forward, if the funding sources are eliminated, we are going to have to be prepared to continue with this funding or increase County staff to do the work. The Legislature was in favor of this request.
- **Council on the Arts** requested \$8,554, which represents no change from the 2025 budget.
- **Tioga County Libraries** requested \$76,284, which is an increase of \$1,300 citing this increase is just for the Berkshire Free Library programmatic expenses. Legislator Flesher reported the Berkshire Free Library makes this annual request and between Richford and Berkshire, they

can absorb the increase amount requested. Legislator Flesher does not support coming to the County to request funds that only benefit two of the smallest towns in the County representing only a percentage of the County residents.

- **Historical Societies** requested \$11,400, which is an increase of \$4,730 citing this increase is just for the Tioga County Historical Society programmatic expenses. Legislator Roberts was not in support of the increase as the Legislature asked our departments to maintain zero-based budgets. Proposal was made to support a \$2,000 increase with Legislators Roberts, Aronstam, and Sauerbrey not in support.
- **Tioga County Tourism** rescinded their initial request of \$199,000 to remain at the 2025 budget of \$170,000.
- **Soil & Water Conservation** requested \$368,715, which is an increase of \$33,519.30 (2%) citing programmatic expenses. Legislator Monell reported a lot of this agency's funding is in jeopardy due to federal funding cuts. Chair Sauerbrey proposed a 5% increase. Legislators were in favor of the proposed 5% increase.
- **Soil & Water Conservation Dean Creek Watershed** requested \$602.00, which represents no change from the 2025 budget.
- **Tioga County Agricultural Society (Fair Board)** requested \$10,000, which is an increase of \$2,935 (42%) citing programmatic expenses. Legislator Brown reported the Tioga County Fair has improved dramatically over the last few years. They are doing more agricultural displays and community-oriented items. Legislator Brown reported the fair attendance this year of 16,000 attendees helps to promote Tioga County. Legislator Roberts is not in support of this request. Legislator Brown proposed 50% of the requested increase. Legislator Flesher reported we are looking at services that impact residents and the Tioga County Fair is not a necessary event, but it is an event that could promote and highlight the County, especially with the 4-H. A counter proposal was made for a \$700.00 increase. All Legislators, except for Legislator Roberts, were in favor of the proposed \$700.00 increase.
- **Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE)** requested \$278,027, which is an increase of \$5,000 (2%) citing programmatic expenses. Proposal was made for a 1% increase, and all Legislators were in favor of the proposed 1% increase of \$2,500.00

Legislator Aronstam reported all these requests are for good purposes, but it is a matter of being good stewards of our taxpayers' money and determining the best way to spend it.

Historically, Legislator Roberts reported the previous Legislature stayed with zero-based increases.

Legislator Flesher proposed when we discuss the outside agencies for the 2027 budget that the minutes are available to refer to the discussion and the amounts requested.

- **2026 Budget - Radio Tower Financial Update** – Mr. Bailey reported he met with staff from Emergency Services, Treasurer's Office, and Sheriff's Office, to go over the radio tower project to determine if there is a need for a capital expense in the 2026 budget. It was determined that based on the ARPA funding, State Interoperable Grant, additional grant funding, and reserves there was no budgetary need for the 2026 Capital Budget at this time.
- **2026 Budget – Capital Budget Review** – Mr. Bailey reviewed the Capital Budget line by line based on departmental requests. Legislators were in favor of the capital expenses in the earmarked reserves. Mr. Bailey reported that a portion of the Court House Annex roof is eligible to be charged back to the State, the Public Health vehicles are eligible for 36%

State reimbursement, and the Social Services vehicles are eligible for 75% State reimbursement. Overall, Mr. Bailey reported decreases of \$1,972,760 from the Capital Fund Balance, \$3,873,121 from the Capital Reserve Equipment & Infrastructure, \$18,650 from the Hardware Reserve, \$1,500 from the Software Reserve and an increase of \$500,000 to the Capital Reserve New Equipment Storage Facility Reserve, resulting in estimated balances of \$70,000 for the Capital Reserve Equipment & Infrastructure, \$1,000,000 for Capital Reserve New Equipment Storage Facility, \$494,380 for the Hardware Reserve, and \$627,180 in the Software Reserve. Mr. Bailey reported the total fund balance appropriation with this proposed capital budget is \$769,260.

- **2026 Budget – Capital Fund Balance Worksheet** – Mr. Bailey reviewed the capital fund balance worksheet and considering the YTD revenue and expenses and estimated revenue and expenses, the estimated fund balance at year-end is \$19,744,539. Mr. Bailey reported considering the proposed fund balance appropriation of \$769,260 and the restricted fund balance amount of \$16,148,129 this will leave an unrestricted fund balance of \$4,365,670.

Mr. Bailey reported the Management/Confidential Recommendations, Legislative Salaries, Departmental Adjustments, and County Administrator Recommendations will be on the September 18, 2025 Worksession agenda. Following this Worksession, the budget will roll from County Administrator (Level 2) to Legislature (Level 3).

#### **ADMINISTRATION & COMMUNICATION**

- **Policy Review Committee** - The Policy Review Committee meets monthly, and the next scheduled meeting is September 12, 2025,
- **Leaders Meetings (Quarterly)** - The next Leaders Meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, at Public Works with discussion on Contracts/Procurement.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS**

- **Tioga County Chamber of Commerce 2025 Leadership Tioga** – Mr. Bailey reported the next Leadership Tioga class will be held in the Hubbard Auditorium on Tioga County Government. Presenters include Dr. Ellen Pratt, County Administrator Bailey, Chair Sauerbrey, and Legislator Aronstam.
- **Waverly School Internship Program** – Mr. Bailey reported everything is set up for the internship program with most of the time being spent in the District Attorney's office starting on Monday, September 8, 2025. Mr. Bailey reported he spoke with the school district and BOCES representative, as he would like the students to spend time with the Legislature and attend Legislative meetings. Chair Sauerbrey reported at some point this should be covered through a media release to the community.
- **2025 NYSAC Fall Seminar** – Mr. Bailey will be attending the NYSAC Conference in Niagara Falls, NY from September 8-10, 2025.

**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 September 16, 2025 Legislature meeting.

## Other:

- **Public Access Law Library Appointment:** Chair Sauerbrey reported she received notification that her current term as a Board Trustee expires September 30, 2025 and she needs to appoint a Legislator to serve the new two-year term of October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2027. Per Judiciary Law, Ms. Haskell reported each court law library shall be under the care and management of the chief administrator of the courts and each shall have a board of trustees consisting of four members, all of whom shall be residents of the county. The chair of the board shall be a judge, and the remaining members shall be an attorney, a Legislator, and a member of the county bar association. Members serve a two-year term and shall be eligible to be reappointed to successive terms of office. Each board trustee shall provide the chief administrator with assistance in maintaining and operating the court law library. The County's Law Library is in the Coburn Free Library, Main Street, Owego, NY. Chair Sauerbrey will appoint Legislator Aronstam to serve on this Board of Trustees at the September 16, 2025 Legislature meeting.
- **Academy Street Milling/Paving** – Legislative Clerk Haskell reported she was notified yesterday by the Village of Owego DPW Supervisor that milling will occur on Academy Street next week. The road and County Office Building parking lot will still be accessible during this process. Chair Sauerbrey reported she notified DMV Supervisor for road testing purposes. Ms. Haskell reported it is anticipated that paving will occur within the next week or so and this will close the road and access to the County Building parking lot for up to a half-day at the most. Village of Owego DPW Supervisor anticipates giving the Legislative Office as much notice as possible. Due to the closure of the road, staff and public will need to use the back driveway as an ingress/egress and the Village of Owego will provide flaggers to mitigate any issues.

**Executive Session:** Legislators Aronstam, Brown, Ciotoli, Flesher, Monell, Roberts, Sauerbrey, and Standingier 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 Bunce, to move into Executive Session to discuss employment matters of particular individuals at 2:22 p.m. Motion carried.

Motion by Legislator Monell, seconded by Legislator Ciotoli to adjourn Executive Session at 2:36 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 2:36 p.m.

Next Worksession scheduled for Thursday, September 18, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Cathy Haskell*

Legislative Clerk