



Consensus Commission Meeting – December 12, 2014
Location: Minoa Village Hall, 240 N. Main St., Minoa, NY
Meeting Minutes

Present: Cornelius B. Murphy, Co-Chair; M. Catherine Richardson, Esq. co-chair; Aminy I. Audi; Laurence G. Bousquet; William M. Byrne; Bethaida González; Darlene D. Kerr; Melanie W. Littlejohn; Hon. Mark A. Olson; Dr. Dennis J. Nave; Hon. Mark A. Nicotra; Ann Rooney. On the phone: Dr. Donna J. DeSiato; Stephen F. Meyer; and Sharon F. Owens.

Absent: James T. Walsh, Co-Chair; Co-Chair; Hon. Patrick M. Kilmartin; Andrew M. Maxwell; and Hon. Chad M. Ryan

Staff: Kathy Murphy, SYRACUSE 20/20; Rob Simpson, CenterState CEO; Kevin Schwab, CenterState CEO; Travis Glazier, Onondaga County; Laurie Black, SYRACUSE 20/20

Consultant: Joe Stefko, Center for Governmental Research (CGR)

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 a.m.

Welcome – Hon. Richard Donovan, Mayor of Minoa

Catherine Richardson welcomed the Commission members to the December meeting. She noted that each Commission member has a binder that was developed to contain the general materials that will be helpful to the Commissioners moving forward. In addition, once the baseline is finalized, each Commissioner will receive a bound copy of the baseline. Catherine thanked Mayor Donovan for hosting Consensus and asked him to provide an overview of the Village of Minoa.

Mayor Donovan provided an overview of his community and pointed to some of the challenges facing local governments. He introduced the Commissioners to members of his Village team and discussed the benefits to the community that were derived from building the new village building. Minoa is mostly bedroom and has a little commercial. Mayor Donovan raised concerns about the burdens that State government place on local governments. He stressed that the problem of government cost is not at the local level. Local governments are efficient and are not wasting large amounts of money. He pointed out that villages are like small cities with population density and infrastructure needs. He also stressed the importance of the State investing in aging infrastructure. Villages pretty much stand on their own. He receives \$31,000 in State aid. He stated that his tax cap is 1.048% and will generate \$7,000. That is not a lot of money for the Village to be allocating to all that it does. He encouraged Commissioners to reach out to any of the villages if there is a need for more information, they are an open book. Catherine thanked the Mayor and all the Mayors for their cooperation throughout the process so far.

Committee Updates

Committees are meeting and the Committee chairs were asked to provide an update:

Infrastructure

Bill Byrne provided an update on the Infrastructure Committee's December 2nd meeting. The Committee has added some non-Commission members that help bring expertise to the discussion. The Committee reviewed some of the baseline elements and focused on the issues it wanted to focus on. It is anticipated that the first three months are an information gathering point, meeting with local experts.

Municipal Operations

Aminy Audi provided an update on the December 2nd meeting of the Municipal operations committee and clarified the elements of local government that the committee will be working on. The committee discussed the structure of the committee. The committee decided that give the broad scope of the areas under consideration that it would make the most sense to bring a range of speakers to the committee as opposed to expanding committee membership at this point in time.

Public Safety

Darlene Kerr provided the Public Safety committee's update. The Public Safety committee met and discussed the types of experts that they would bring in to talk as well as began reviewing the data. The committee is looking at fire and EMS. Joe would secure two additional sources of data for EMS. Validating the data will be important. The committee will be considering how would you redesign delivery today based upon population changes and other factors. On the police side, the committee is organizing how they will approach police and who should be part of the core committee and who will be the experts. The committee spent a lot of time discussing the inconsistency of the data and the different reporting systems that are used to report the data which makes it challenging to compare the data.

Economic Development

Larry Bousquet provided the Economic Development committee update. The Committee met to discuss the scope of the committee and agreed to focus on land use and planning, economic development and zoning. At this point, the committee is working to get its arms around the scope of the issues within each category and has begun the process of requesting additional information from Joe and CGR. The committee will invite speakers to meet with the committee from the three focus areas.

Public Engagement

Melanie Littlejohn provided the Public Engagement Committee update. Public engagement will ramp up its efforts with the release of the baseline. It was noted that the recent presentation at Thursday Morning Roundtable was very well received and attendees were very interested in the data being presented. Once the baseline is approved by the Commission, the intention is to meet with the Post Standard editorial board as well as other media outlets in the community. In addition, public forums will be announced that will be spread out throughout the community and enable a diverse participation in the discussions about the baseline. The committee is suggesting that Consensus provide media outlets with a periodic column that could be used to help explain the baseline. There is a strong commitment among the public engagement committee to make sure that diverse media outlets are engaged in the baseline rollout as well as a commitment to being intentional about reaching out to all aspects of the public to ensure diverse representation of the community.

Baseline Discussion

Joe Stefko facilitated the discussion with the Commission about the most current version of the baseline analysis. He stressed that the document when it is released, it remains a living, breathing document. It was noted that the committees will continue to request data that will assist them in their work; however, the baseline does not have to reflect those additional request. The most current version has been updated based upon the revisions for the town, villages, county and city. There was a substantive change made to the fire reported data to reflect different reporting requirements for fire and EMS data. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the data contained within the report and the need to get the data as accurate as possible before the baseline is released to the public and media.

It was recommended that an introduction paragraph at the beginning states clearly that the baseline is a living and changing document. Also the report will include explanations for any of the concerns that were discussed about the data for public safety. The changes will be circulated among the Commissioners before there is a preliminary baseline released. A motion was made and unanimously approved to accept the baseline subsequent to the changes that were discussed.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 a.m. To view the full Consensus meeting, go to [www.https://www.cgr.org/consensuscny/calendar/](https://www.cgr.org/consensuscny/calendar/)

The next meeting is scheduled for January 23rd at noon.