



**Consensus Commission Meeting - February 13, 2014  
Village Hall, Fayetteville, New York  
Meeting Minutes**

**Present:** Cornelius B. Murphy, Co-Chair; M. Catherine Richardson, Esq., Co-Chair; James T. Walsh, Co-Chair; Aminy I. Audi; Laurence G. Bousquet; William M. Byrne; Dr. Donna J. DeSiato; Bethaida González; Darlene D. Kerr; Hon. Patrick M. Kilmartin; Melanie W. Littlejohn; Andrew M. Maxwell; Stephen F. Meyer; Dr. Dennis J. Nave; Hon. Mark A. Nicotra; Hon. Mark A. Olson; Sharon F. Owens; Ann Rooney; Hon. Chad M. Ryan.

**Absent:** Not applicable

**Staff:** Rob Simpson, CenterState CEO; Kathy Murphy, SYRACUSE 20/20; Dan Young, CenterState CEO; Kevin Schwab, CenterState CEO; Laurie Black, SYRACUSE 20/20

**Presenters:** Not applicable

**The meeting was called to order at 12:10 pm.**

**Welcome and Introductions of Commission Members**

Co-Chair James Walsh welcomed the members to Consensus and thanked everyone for being willing to serve on this historic Commission. The members introduced themselves and shared thoughts about why they agreed to serve on Consensus.

**Welcome - Mayor Mark Olson Village of Fayetteville**

As the host of the Commission meeting, Fayetteville Village Mayor Mark Olson welcomed the Commission to Fayetteville and shared some historic facts about the Village, formed in 1844 with 4,400 residents and is actually experiencing growth. Fayetteville is the birth place of Stickley furniture and the Erie Canal is a key part of the Village's history and they are continuing to make those connections. Quality of life is the mission of the Village of Fayetteville. There are six elected officials and Mayor Olson is the 50<sup>th</sup> Mayor. He spoke to the merger of the police department which merged the village of Manlius, Fayetteville and Minoa. They have had discussions relative to fire department consolidations. Mayor Olson also spoke to the efficiency of the Village and efforts to restrain costs of Village government noting that the tax rate over a decade has only grown from \$6.75 in 2004 and is now \$6.70 in 2014, even with a reduction in sales tax and growth in pension and health care costs. He is excited to be on the committee to share what the Village has done to control costs.

**How We Got Here - Rob Simpson, President, CenterState CEO**

Rob Simpson, President & CEO of CenterState CEO, provide a historic overview of how the Commission was created. He noted that with focused effort, SYRACUSE 20/20, CenterState CEO and several partners worked to secure widespread support for the creation of Consensus.

The County Executive and Mayor provided their support, the County Legislature and Common Council both passed resolutions supporting the creation of a Commission and Senator DeFrancisco and Senator Valesky secured State funding support to launch the Commission. Outreach had also been done with the towns and villages through their respective associations. Rob Simpson stated that he was thrilled with the willingness of the Commission members to serve; everyone who was asked agreed to serve on the Commission. He noted that the Commission is an opportunity for our community to distinguish itself by taking the issue of how we govern ourselves head on. He stressed that we are well positioned given the local leadership that is being demonstrated and the willingness to take a close look at how we are aligned.

### **RFP Review and Approval - Neil Murphy**

Co-Chair Neil Murphy provided an overview of the draft RFP that the Commission members were to review and vote on for purposes of the Commission to hire a consultant to assist with the work of the Commission over the next twelve to eighteen months. Specifically the consultant will:

- Document the project scope, milestones, communication standards, deliverables, timeline and resource requirements in conjunction with recommendations made by the Commission.
- Complete a review of the current state of local government in Onondaga County (19 Towns, 15 Villages, One City and One County) including a comparative analysis of the costs of service delivery within each municipal jurisdiction. The outcomes of the data will support the recommendations to be made to the public. The data should be collected in a model to allow maximum input from the Commission, and the public and reflect where we are today, where changes may be made, and what outcomes result.
- Provide support to the Commission regarding the development and implementation of a public communications strategy throughout the project.
- Develop a series of recommendations for improving service delivery and cost-effectiveness across jurisdictions in Onondaga County. These recommendations should be data-driven and include reasonable estimations of potential efficiency savings and / or service impacts that may result.

Rob Simpson stressed to the Commission that funding should not limit the work of the Commission and that if additional funding is required for Consensus to fully address the scope of the RFP, he will work with Kathy Murphy Pietrafesa to secure those dollars.

The RFP will be distributed to companies and institutions that have done work related to local government modernization. The Commissioners made suggested revisions to the RFP and approved it unanimously. A subcommittee of Consensus members volunteered to assist in the review of RFP responses and to bring recommendations back to the full Commission. Rob Simpson will coordinate the subcommittee and Commission members who volunteered will be contacted to set up a meeting.

### **Goals of Commission & Discussion - Catherine Richardson**

Co-Chair Cathy Richardson noted that in the Commission packet are the slides from the PowerPoint presentation at Thursday Morning Roundtable earlier in the morning and with discussions with the Editorial Board prior to the meeting. The PowerPoint includes the vision and makes the case that the “time is now” given the historic cooperation between elected officials, businesses, higher education and many other stakeholders. Given the level of cooperation, it is a great time to develop a new vision for governance in our community. The Commission will be charged with developing an overarching vision for the future for the region. The Commission will have a heavy emphasis on public engagement and listening to the diverse voices in the community. The Commission will utilize technology to hear from people and to enlist ideas from individuals from many parts of our community.

### **Organization - Kathy Murphy, Chair, Syracuse 20/20**

Ms. Kathy Murphy discussed the full Commission contact list and requested that each Commissioner provide us with an emergency contact number for us to be able to reach the members in short order. She also stated that at least a six month meeting schedule will be developed for the Commission members for ease of planning moving forward. In addition to the set meeting schedule, there will be numerous opportunities for Commission members to attend meetings with the public to hear feedback from citizens.

Kathy Murphy noted that staff will work to arrange to have all meetings recorded and placed on the website. It is also a priority to arrange meetings in locations to allow Commissioners to have an opportunity to call-in if they physically cannot be at the meeting. Staff will work to develop a virtual “library” of helpful materials including reports, studies, articles and best practices for both Commissioners and the public to access. A list of potential speakers will be developed with the assistance of Commissioners to identify potential individuals to invite to talk to both the Commission as well as the general public. In addition, a list will be developed of places where the Commission will go to meet with the public and to hear from various interest groups and opportunities to meet with the public.

A listserv for the Commission will be set up and will include staff to facilitate easy communication between members.

### **Public Outreach and Engagement Effort - Jim Walsh**

Commission members expressed a strong commitment to robust public engagement process, recognizing that the public is central to the entire process. All possible communication tools need to be explored and utilized as part of the Commission outreach. Being mindful of the diverse ways that residents of Onondaga County receive information, the Commission members will assist in identifying the numerous opportunities for connecting with the public and ensuring that all voices can be heard. Several commission members volunteered to participate in a subcommittee that would develop a plan for public engagement as part of the work of the Commission. The subcommittee will meet and report back to the full commission.

**The meeting adjourned at 2:05 P.M.**