



Consensus Commission Meeting – April 14, 2014
Oncenter - Montgomery St, Syracuse
Meeting Minutes

Present: Cornelius B. Murphy, 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; Melanie W. Littlejohn; Andrew M. Maxwell; Stephen F. Meyer; Dr. Dennis J. Nave; Hon. Mark A. Nicotra; Hon. Mark A. Olson; Sharon F. Owens.

Absent: M. Catherine Richardson, Esq., Co-Chair; Hon. Patrick M. Kilmartin; Ann Rooney; and Hon. Chad M. Ryan

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

Presenters: DeWitt Town Supervisor Ed Michalenko

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 pm.

Welcome and Introduction of Guest Speaker

Dr. Murphy called the meeting to order and updated the Commission on his conversation with County Executive Joanie Mahoney in response to her correspondence to the Chairs of Consensus asking for an expedited commission process. Dr. Murphy assured the County Executive that Consensus was committed to balancing the need for a streamlined process with the need to be responsible and transparent. He committed to providing the County Executive with ongoing updates, as is the case that the Mayor will also receive ongoing updates from the chairs.

Dr. Murphy thanked DeWitt Town Supervisor Ed Michalenko for taking time out of his busy schedule to come discuss the vote that will be taking place on April 16, 2014 in the Village of East Syracuse regarding abolishing its police force and contracting with the Town of DeWitt for police service. Supervisor Michalenko indicated he was not sure which way the vote would go. The issue has been brought up a number of times over the years, most recently in October 2012 when the residents rejected the proposal with a vote of 2:1 against. Less than 18 months later, the residents of the village will vote again.

Supervisor Michalenko described the scope of services of the contract that the village would enter into under the proposed dissolution. The proposal would have the Town establish a post in East Syracuse with an enhanced service agreement for four years. According to Supervisor Michalenko, the four year period allows for a reasonable transition period for the village.

In offering some observations to Consensus from his experience with the East Syracuse police discussions and other town discussions, Supervisor Michalenko stressed the importance of getting all interests on the same page and having partners understand that compromise will be necessary. Time must be built into the process to make sure that all issues are dealt with upfront and are put out on the table. It takes time and people must get around the table and talk to each other. Public engagement is critical and the more of it, the better. Finally, patience must guide the process.

Public Engagement Subcommittee Update

Melanie Littlejohn provided an update on the April 1, 2014 meeting of the Public Engagement Subcommittee. The Subcommittee has identified various phases of outreach that will be part of the consensus process. The first phase is an education stage - where Commission members will be trained with the Consensus PowerPoint and go into the community to share with people the "who, what, where and why" of Consensus.

A list of organizations for outreach was circulated to Commission members for their input. Commission members are asked to think about who might be missing from the list. The Subcommittee will help put together an "elevator speech" and will work to ensure consistent messaging. Another recommendation is that a straightforward graphic of the Consensus process/timeline should be developed – it should be something that can be distributed to individuals during the public outreach phase. In addition to the graphic reflecting the timeline, it was suggested that "leave behind" should be also be available during the public outreach phase.

The second phase is a public engagement phase after the consultant is on board and we will be engaging with the public in a number of formats to solicit feedback, comments and input on various services and possible recommendations. This phase will be grounded in the data that is collected by the consultants and will be a robust engagement period for both the consultants and Commission members. During this phase, feedback will be collected in a variety of formats and forums during.

The third phase occurs once the consultant has issued recommendations and the Commission members will again be soliciting feedback on the various recommendations in a variety of formats.

A fourth phase was suggested that will occur after the Commission finalizes its report. There potentially could be a "summit" after the commission concludes to assess what had been accomplished a year later.

A summary of the Public Engagement Phases are:

Phase I: Public Education Phase – explain who, what, why and when of Consensus

Phase II: Public Engagement Phase – solicit input from the community – this is a robust process that occurs in many ways – forums, surveys, focus groups etc.

Phase III: Public Feedback on Findings/Recommendations

Phase IV: Summit – Post Process

There was a lot of emphasis/discussion on the need to improve the Consensus website and to begin to use social media to engage the public in the Commission's work. Kevin Schwab and

Travis Glazier are working with the web developer and provided an estimated June 1 deadline for getting a more functional web site.

RFP Committee Update

Rob Simpson provided the update on the work of the RFP Committee. The RFP had been distributed broadly to over 45 organizations, companies, firms that have been involved in this type of work. A total of 3 responses to the RFP were received and the committee reviewed the responses and recommended that in-person interviews of two of the three respondents be held. It was noted that there really are not a lot of consultants that have a track record of doing this type of comprehensive analysis on the scale that we are envisioning as part of Consensus. The two finalist consulting groups are The Center for Governmental Research (CGR) and Fairweather Consultants.

The in-person interviews are scheduled for April 24th from 3-5:00 p.m. and all Consensus members are invited to participate. Based upon the review of the responses to the RFP, it is the committee's assessment that both consulting groups exceed the credibility threshold. The committee is pleased that there are two good candidates to choose from and meeting face to face with both groups will provide an added level of comfort in the decision making process. The committee members want to ensure that both consulting groups fully understand the scope of what Consensus is trying to accomplish.

The committee is working toward a May 1st selection of the consultant. It was recommended that a set of questions and scenarios be developed in advance of the consultant interviews. Those questions will be circulated among the commission members and provided to the consultants in advance.

Schedule Discussion

Kathy Murphy noted that we would like to develop a 4-6 month schedule for the monthly Commission meetings. The Commission members were asked their preference and there seemed to be agreement that early mornings on the 4th Friday of the month would be the most convenient for members. A schedule will be circulated at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 P.M.