



**Consensus Commission Meeting – August 22, 2014
SYRACUSE 20/20, 120 Madison Street, Syracuse
Meeting Minutes**

Present: Cornelius B. Murphy, Co-Chair; M. Catherine Richardson, Esq. co-chair; James T. Walsh, Co-Chair; Co-Chair; Aminy I. Audi; Laurence G. Bousquet; Dr. Donna J. DeSiato; Bethaida González; Darlene D. Kerr; Andrew M. Maxwell; Stephen F. Meyer; Hon. Mark A. Olson; Ann Rooney; and Dr. Dennis J. Nave by phone.

Absent: William M. Byrne; Hon. Patrick M. Kilmartin; Melanie W. Littlejohn; Hon. Mark A. Nicotra; Sharon F. Owens; and Hon. Chad M. Ryan

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

Presenters: Joe Stefko, Center for Governmental Research (CGR) and Brian Roulin, CGR

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 a.m.

Welcome

Dr. Neil Murphy welcomed the Commission members to the August meeting and took a motion from Steve Meyer, seconded by Dr. Donna DeSiato, for approval of the meeting minutes from July 25th. The minutes were approved. Dr. Murphy welcomed Dr. Joe Stefko, President & CEO of Center for Governmental Research (CGR), to the meeting and indicated that Joe would be providing an update on the work related to the baseline analysis.

CGR Presentation – Baseline Review Status Update

Joe provided an update on the preliminary review of the baseline analysis being conducted by CGR. The baseline report will continue to be developed over the next six to eight weeks. The baseline report is the existing conditions review and is for the Commission and the broader community can have a common point of departure as the Commission moves into discussions about options. The baseline can be considered as the “Who Does What and How Much Does It Cost” report.

Joe noted that they are currently in the process of outreach to the towns and villages and cataloging the work that is already being done within the community. They have met with 15 local leaders to discuss the status of local government operations. The small group discussions are an acknowledgement that town supervisors and village mayors have already been doing a lot of good work in this area of shared services and consolidation from informal agreements to more formal arrangements. The discussions with the local leaders will allow Joe to document the work that is currently taking place and incorporate those examples into the baseline.

From these preliminary discussion it is clear that these are tough times for local governments with cost drivers growing faster than revenues. Local leaders are having to make tough decisions within the current fiscal environment. Joe has also heard local leaders identify the challenge of public engagement and getting people involved in the process. Finally, there is some skepticism that comes up from these small focus group discussions. The baseline analysis will give each locality the ability to see their specific local government in a

broader context which increases the collective understanding and the opportunity for greater communication and learning between and among local governments.

Joe also presented some preliminary data from the baseline analysis. They have been using the municipal budgets from all local governments and the data from the Comptroller's Office. In 2013, local government expenditures were \$1.8 billion. This is the first step as they continue to drill down to the story behind the budget number. The data sources used to date include:

- Municipal budgets for the current FY
- Final exp/ rev reported to OSC (2003-13)
- Service delivery menus for each local government
- Governmental facility deployment
- Fire coverage boundaries
- Police coverage boundaries
- Countywide population density

Joe reviewed the spending trends since 2003-2013 overall and broken down by level of government and service area. Joe provided charts that shows at the highest level the per capita expenditure per services as well as charts reflecting which services are provided by what number of local government units. Finally, Joe provided a chart that reflected the full value tax rates per local government. All the slides that were included in Joe's presentation can be viewed at www.consensuscnny.com/about/video/ for the August 22nd meeting.

Committee Discussion

Catherine Richardson presented the committee structure that is being proposed for the work of the Commission. Joe Stefko generally described the important role that the committees will play in considering the findings of the baseline analysis and then to be responsible during the options phase of the work. Six committees have been proposed and chairs for the committees have been secured.

Public Safety - Darlene Kerr
Municipal Operations – Aminy Audi
Governance - Donna DeSiato & Steve Meyer
Public Engagement – Melanie Littlejohn
Infrastructure Systems - Bill Byrne
Economic Development - Larry Bousquet

Catherine will e-mail members to ask them to select one or more of the Committees to serve on.

Public Engagement Committee Update

Bea Gonzalez provided the update on the work of the Public Engagement Committee. The Committee is targeting specific organizations/groups to do outreach asking for the opportunity for Consensus to get in front of more individuals to inform the community on the work. The Committee is also discussing the framework of a speaker's bureau. The Committee discussed the website and the options for driving more people to the website. Mark Nicotra has also volunteered his services for helping to develop videos for the website. There was a follow up discussion about the importance of getting the public engaged and let them know as the process continues to unfold and for respective organizations such as CenterState to continue to provide updates on the process to a wider audience. Commission members should encourage the community to go to the website and sign up so Consensus can continue to reach more people and keep them engaged.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 A.M. To view the full Consensus meeting, go to www.consensuscnny.com/about/video/;

The next meeting is scheduled for September 26th at 7:30 am