

May 17, 2017

Shared Services Property Tax Savings Plan Public Meeting

Attendees

Gary Conklin, Town of Reading Supervisor
David Scott, Town of Montour Supervisor
John VanSoest, Town of Catharine Supervisor
David M. Reed
Ken Thurston, Schuyler County Highway Supt.
Brandon Theetge, Town of Cayuta Supervisor
James Howell, County Legislator
Don Desrochers, Town of Tyrone Supervisor
Alvin White, Town of Hector Supervisor
Rory Miller, Town of Tyrone
Tim O'Hearn, Schuyler County Administrator
Peggy Tomassi, Schuyler County Administrators Office

Meeting was held in the Legislative Chambers, Watkins Glen and began at 7:02pm.

Presentation

Tim O'Hearn gave presentation on the County-Wide Shared Services Property Tax Savings Plan Law, timelines, plan approvals, and plan submission. Kristin VanHorn, Schuyler County Planning Director & Shawn Rosno, Community Services Director will assist with research & compiling information. Purpose of this law is for municipalities to seek shared services which will provide quantifiable savings.

Points of Conversation (general discussion unless otherwise noted)

At this time, there are no penalties for failure to comply with this initiative but it could be down the road.

The DOS will not recognize any shared services plan that are currently in place although ideas that are in the planning stage or upcoming phases of a current plan may be used.

David Reed expressed displeasure with the mandate stating his concern with consolidations where home rule authority is taken away. He feels this is another effort to grab power by the county.

State mandates consume a large portion of County budget.

The Supervisor/Mayor can opt out of any portion of the plan by submitting a written reason for opting out. The overall plan, once finalized, will require a vote by each elected official. If a 'no' vote is given by any town/village, it must be stated in writing as to the reason why, and they will have the responsibility to answer to their constituency. If the Panel decides that the plan is not achievable in the next year, it can be decided to wait until 2018 to submit a plan. A majority vote of the entire Panel will need to be met even if not all are present.

The state is offering a one-time match for quantifiable, approved savings realized by a new initiative. There is no cap on the reimbursement.

There is no time frame for continuing any sharing of services although it has to be for at least one year. Time frames can be decided within an IMA.

The DOS still has funds available for consolidations. Any actions approved by the plan cannot supersede state or local laws. As an example, Public Referendums would need to be held in order for a merger/consolidation to occur.

Think of this as a blank slate. For an area that serves 18,000 people, would we look the same if we were to build our local government structure from scratch? There are single municipalities that have thousands more people than we do as a whole county that is comprised of 8 towns & 4 villages.

Next

The Shared Services Panel will meet Thursday, May 25th at 7:00pm in conference room #120 of the Human Services Complex, Montour Falls.

Notes taken by Peggy Tomassi