



Inclusion Through Diversity

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TWO PAGES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Highlights of the **April 1, 2014** meeting of the Tompkins County Legislature

Bonding Approved for Human Services Building Renovation

The Legislature, by unanimous vote, approved bonding to support renovation to the County Human Services Building, located in the 300 block of West Martin Luther King, Jr./State Street, providing a new headquarters for the County's Day Reporting Program. (Legislator Brian Robison was excused.)

The measure authorizes the County to issue up to \$1.68 million in serial bonds and notes to fund a one-story bump-out on the southeast corner of the building, adding about 1,600 square feet, to make room for the Day Reporting program. The project will build and reconfigure about 7,000 square feet of interior space to add the space for Day Reporting, and relocate Department of Social Services facilities such as interview rooms to the new addition, with no loss of program space. As part of the renovation, the size of the Beverly Livesay Conference Room will be slightly reduced, but not as much as first planned. The project will enable Day Reporting to vacate the Old County Library and move into what County Administrator Joe Mareane characterized as "a 21st Century center for Day Reporting," adjacent to other Probation programs.

Legislators had questions on various design elements of the project during the presentation from LaBella Architects prior to the vote.

Legislator Martha Robertson noted, that, after so many years of working to find a new home for Day Reporting and empty the Old Library, the Legislature's action is "a really big deal," and she thanked all involved, including Administrator Mareane and Facilities Director Arel LeMaro, for getting the process to this point. The addition and renovation is scheduled to be fully completed by April 2015.

Contact: James Dennis, Vice Chair, Public Safety Committee, 387-4058

Legislators Hear Presentation on Public Safety Building Project. Action on Bond Resolution Delayed

LaBella Architects delivered a presentation to the Legislature regarding design and financial information for the proposed renovation of the County Public Safety Building, which would add a covered outdoor recreation area to the jail and renovate the current little-used indoor recreation area as dormitory space for seven jail beds—the same presentation previously shown to the Legislature's Public Safety and budget committees.

The purpose of tonight's presentation was to gain Legislator input on where the project currently stands. Many Legislator questions related to design of the outdoor rec. area, which has already been modified some, based on previously expressed concerns, and some Legislators asked that more be done to add light and a greater visual sense of openness to the area.

Although a vote on the bond resolution for the project was most recently scheduled for the Legislature's next meeting April 15, Administrator Joe Mareane said a number of ideas have been suggested to further modify the design and that the decision timetable will be delayed to permit those ideas to be considered and developed. He now expects the proposal to be coming back to committees for review during next month's committee cycle. Project information and the presentation shown tonight are posted on the County Administration website at <http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/ctyadmin>.

Contact: James Dennis, Vice Chair, Public Safety Committee, 387-4058.

Bid Awarded for County Hauling and Disposal Services

The Legislature awarded New England Waste Services of N.Y., Inc., a division of Casella Waste, contracts covering municipal solid waste and construction and demolition material over the next five years. The vote was 12-1, Legislator Leslyn McBean-Clairborne voting no; Legislator Brian Robison was excused. Casella's was one of two bids received for each service.

Cost under the contracts will be \$36.77 per ton for municipal waste and \$31.30 per ton for construction and demolition material, which County Solid Waste Manager Barbara Eckstrom said represents a decrease in cost, with the funds available in the Solid Waste Management Division's budget.

Contact: Kathy Luz Herrera, Chair, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee, 273-8169; Solid Waste Division Manager Barbara Eckstrom, 273-6632.

Among other business:

County Administrator Mareane provided a status update regarding passage of the State Budget, noting that the Governor prevailed for the most part on the two-year Property Tax Freeze and two-year rebate program. In the second year, as well as staying within the Property Tax Cap, localities will have to demonstrate savings of the equivalent of 1% of the tax levy through consolidations or shared services, but through some mechanism will be given credit for such savings achieved in the past. The budget, Mareane said, includes no mandate relief and no "circuit breaker" provision for other than New York City. Administrator Mareane also cautioned it appears the baseline tax cap for 2015 will be very low—1.25-1.5%.

The Legislature awarded a five-year contract for terminal advertising at Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport to Communique Design & Marketing, of Ithaca. Under the contract, the Airport will be paid 50% of gross advertising revenue each year.

The Legislature accepted and adopted the 2013 to the Tompkins County Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Plan, first approved in 2006, must be updated every five years to be eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency pre-disaster mitigation funding, and must be accepted and adopted by each local government participating in preparation of the Multi-Jurisdictional Mitigation Plan. All municipal jurisdictions in the County participated in the Plan's development.

The Legislature endorsed the 2014-15 budgets of the Ithaca Tompkins County Transportation Council (ITCTC) and affirmed the ITCTC recommendation to increase the ITCTC Staff Director's salary by 2%, retroactive to January 1, 2014, to \$81,960.

Legislature Chair Michael Lane made three proclamations:

- He proclaimed April Tompkins County Public Library Month on the occasion of its Sesquicentennial, recognizing 150 years of Library service to the Tompkins County community.
- He proclaimed April as Fair Housing Month in Tompkins County, noting that the County's Office of Human Rights is "charged with and committed to broadening awareness of Fair Housing laws through expanded education and enforcement initiatives, especially among our most vulnerable populations" and "encouraged all agencies, institutions and individuals, public and private, to take action to end unlawful housing discrimination," and
- He proclaimed the week of April 13-19 Public Safety Communications Week in Tompkins County, in honor and recognition of the County's public safety telecommunicators of the County Department of Emergency Response Communications Center "whose diligence and professionalism keep safe our community's citizens and visitors."

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