

Southern Tier West Regional Planning & Development Board

Local Government Conference Planning Committee Minutes

Date: November 25, 2025

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: Via Zoom

Meeting Summary

Members Present:

- Kier Dirlam, Allegany County
 - Michelle Linza, Allegany County
 - Crystal Abers, Cattaraugus County
 - Don McCord, Chautauqua County
 - Lauren Sharp, Chautauqua County
 - Sarah Phearsdorf, Staff
 - Lisa Keck, Staff
 - Kimberly LaMendola, Staff
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Discussion Summary

The Committee discussed potential session topics for Southern Tier West's 31st Annual Local Government Conference, scheduled for June 4, 2026, to be held at Houghton University.

Following discussion, the Committee identified the following list of proposed conference topics:

Proposed Conference Topics

- Why It Is Important for Towns to Conduct Revaluations
- NYS Notary Examination Training
- Board Ethics
- Battery Storage Projects for Planning Boards
- Solar Energy: Best Methods for Municipal and County Review
- How the Solar Review Process Interacts with Utility Variances
- Short-Term Rental Laws: Impacts on Local Efforts and Municipal Requirements

- Data Center Power Laws: The Five Most Important Laws Municipalities Need to Know
- Importance of Regularly Updating Zoning Laws
- Local Laws 101: The Process of Enacting and Amending Local Laws
- The Role and Purpose of Planning and Zoning Boards
- Cybersecurity for Municipalities
- Real-Life Examples: What Happens When AI Is Used Without Proper Oversight
- Emergency Planning and Disaster Response
- Hazard Mitigation Planning
- Code Enforcement: Typical Steps to Bring a Violation to Court
- State-Level Roles in Zoning and Land-Use Regulation
- Floodplain Management
- Key Steps to Develop a Project Prior to Grant Writing
- Redevelopment of Historic Downtown Buildings: Key Steps and Processes
- Why Historic Downtown Preservation Matters
- Nuts and Bolts of Land Banks
- Key Tools and Strategies for a Main Street–Style Economic Development Project
- Baseline Water Quality in Allegany, Cattaraugus, and Chautauqua Counties
- Post-Grant Checklist: You Got a Grant—Now What?
- Major Issues Facing the Great Lakes Watershed
- Public Meetings: What to Expect and How to Engage the Community
- Municipal Website Requirements
- Running a Meeting Legally: Public and Government Context
- Records Management 101