

*Third Special Meeting*  
March 19, 2026

The Third Special Meeting of 2026 was held on March 19, 2026 and was called to order by the Chair at 10:00 a.m. Legislators Aronstam, Cantella, Ciotoli, Flesher, Monell, and Rose were present with Legislator Brown arriving at 10:02 a.m., Legislator Standinger arriving at 10:07 a.m. and Legislator Bunce being absent.

Chair Monell asked Legislator Cantella to have a moment of prayer. "Heavenly Father, we thank you for this day. We thank you that you have sustained us from our birth until this day. Lord, we ask that you would bless the work of our hand, the words of our mouth, the thoughts in our mind, and the intent of our heart. Lord, we lift up the people of Tioga County to you today and we pray your peace, your security, your prosperity upon them and that it would go well with their soul."

Legislator Cantella led all Legislators and those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

There were eight people in attendance.

Planning Director Sara Zubalsky-Peer presented the following resolution for Legislature consideration.

"This resolution is for a property that the Tioga County Industrial Development Agency (TCIDA) owns on Strong Road off from Montrose Turnpike, Owego, NY. There are approximately 86 acres of vacant land situated just outside the Village of Owego and uphill from Owego Gardens.

"Currently, the Town of Owego zoning permits only single- or two-family residential development on this site. In 2022, TCIDA retained Lawson Design Group to prepare a conceptual plan based on the sewer requirements including all the minimum lot sizes, setbacks, subdivision requirements and the resulting plan included the potential development of up to 25 single family homes on 2 acre lots consistent with their current zoning.

"More recently, this past year, Economic Development and Planning (ED&P) engaged Lawson Design Group again to evaluate the feasibility and cost of extending municipal sewer and water infrastructure to the site to support that future development. We found that there are poor soil conditions there with rural percolation rates, so onsite septic systems are not a viable option. In their final report, which I have copies of if anyone is interested, it indicates that extending the municipal sewer is approximately \$2.5 million dollars and is necessary to enable project cost. Based on these findings, ED&P is interested in enhancing the sewer extension component of the project by applying to the Empire State Development (ESD) County Infrastructure Grant Program. ED&P may be eligible

for up to \$500,000 in funding toward the sewer extension. Counties are the only eligible applicants, so the County would serve as the applicant and act as a pass-through entity for the grant funds on behalf of the TCIDA. There is a 50% match requirement, however, TCIDA is pursuing other grant funding sources to provide the required match. The application deadline is April 1, 2026, which is why the resolution is being presented today.

“As a note, the cost of extending municipal water at this point is cost prohibitive so other options are being evaluated for adding water to the site. We are trying to start with the sewer infrastructure first and taking it one step at a time as we get closer to developing this future site.”

Legislator Cantella spoke. “Is the vacant parcel wooded or open fields?”

County Planning Director Zubalsky-Peer spoke. “The parcel is open vacant fields.”

Legislator Rose spoke. “At this week’s NYSAC Conference, during the Governor’s Address, she mentioned there is a grant program called Housing Smart Communities. Are you aware of this? It sounds like this kind of funding was exactly what might be helpful when we are looking to do something like you are talking about.”

County Planning Director Zubalsky-Peer spoke. “Municipalities need to opt-in to be a Pro Housing Community to be eligible for these grants and the Town of Owego has not currently opted in.”

Legislator Rose spoke. “This is something we should examine because the Governor clearly stated that she has more money than applicants. She also stated she understands the barriers, but said they were doing everything in their power to make them more accessible. This is one of those situations when I say we put politics aside and look at what is best for the community and I would like to know and see what that would mean for this project. I am coordinating with the Village and Town of Owego and would be happy to be a message carrier, but it would be helpful to me to have support from this Legislative body to say that this is something we should look into rather than speaking for myself.”

Legislator Ciotoli spoke. “This would fall to the Town of Owego to opt-in as a Pro Housing Community.”

Legislator Flesher spoke. “My question is where the other \$1.5 million is coming from for this project. If this is a \$2.5 million dollar project and we are looking at \$500,000 in grant funds, where is the remaining funding coming from? Is TCIDA on the hook for these remaining funds? The only other concern I have is this market rate housing or is this low-to-moderate income housing?”

County Planning Director Zubalsky-Peer spoke. "I cannot speak to what grants TCIDA is applying for, but the remaining funds would be the responsibility of TCIDA and not the County. As for the type of housing, I would assume this would be market rate, but I am not sure."

Legislator Ciotoli moved for the adoption of the following resolution, seconded by Legislator Brown.

REFERRED TO: LEGISLATIVE WORKSESSION

RESOLUTION NO. 158-26 *AUTHORIZE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING TO SUBMIT APPLICATION FOR ESD COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROGRAM AND AUTHORIZE LEGISLATIVE CHAIR SIGNATURE ON GRANT RELATED DOCUMENTS*

WHEREAS: The FY2026 New York State Budget includes an additional \$50 million for the County Infrastructure Grant Program that supports county-led infrastructure projects that contribute to placemaking, support the creation of housing, and encourage visitation and tourism; and

WHEREAS: The Tioga County Industrial Development Agency (TCIDA) owns 86 acres of vacant land on Strong Road in the Town of Owego; and

WHEREAS: TCIDA in partnership with the Economic Development and Planning Department are interested in extending sewer infrastructure to the site to encourage the future development of single- or two-family residential homes; and

WHEREAS: Tioga County is eligible to apply for up to \$500,000 in grant funds through the County Infrastructure Grant Program; and

WHEREAS: TCIDA will provide the fifty percent match that is required in an amount not to exceed \$500,000; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Tioga County Legislature hereby authorizes submission and administration of said grant to New York State Empire State Development in an amount not to exceed \$500,000; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Tioga County Legislature authorizes the Economic Development and Planning Department to pay the required \$250 non-refundable application fee; and be it further

RESOLVED: That upon award authorizes the Chair of the Legislature, County Administrator, or other authorized officer to sign any and all grant-related contracts and other paperwork, contingent upon review and approval by the County Attorney.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yes – Cantella, Ciotoli, Flesher, Monell, Rose, Standinger, Aronstam, and Brown.

No – None.

Absent – Legislator Bunce.

RESOLUTION ADOPTED.

County Attorney DeWind presented the following resolution for Legislature consideration.

County Attorney DeWind spoke. “These are more opioid settlements coming out of the nationwide settlement. This does not involve the Attorney General’s Office. All the settlements would be restricted funds, but they would be direct share to the County. The amount of the more or less \$97 million dollar pool would depend on how many actually sign on to the final settlement. I do not have a good idea yet specifically from our attorney who recommends that we enter into these settlements how much the County would likely receive for each of these. This resolution is being presented today for Legislature consideration as they are due within the next month.”

Legislator Standinger spoke. “Is this a class action suit?”

County Attorney DeWind spoke. “Yes, this is part of the opioid nationwide lawsuit out of Ohio.”

Legislator Brown moved for the adoption of the following resolution, seconded by Legislator Cantella.

REFERRED TO:

LEGISLATIVE WORKSESSION

RESOLUTION NO. 159-26

*AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING A SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT WITH ASSOCIATED PHARMACIES INC., J M SMITH CORPORATION, LOUISIANA WHOLESALE DRUG COMPANY, INC., MORRIS AND DICKSON CO., NORTH CAROLINA MUTUAL WHOLESALE DRUG COMPANY, INC., AND UNITED NATURAL FOODS, INC. CONCERNING CLAIMS RELATED TO THE OPIOID CRISIS*

WHEREAS: Tioga County has joined in legal action seeking compensation from those who are responsible for causing and perpetuating the opioid addiction

crisis including manufacturers of opioids, distributors of opioids and chain pharmacies for their role in contributing to the opioid epidemic by falsely promoting prescription opioids it manufactured and sold and by falsely promoting the increased use of opioids directly and generally through various “front groups” and failing to implement measures to prevent diversion of prescription opioids in connection with distribution of its products, all of which contributed to a public health crisis in New York; and

WHEREAS: Associated Pharmacies Inc., J M Smith Corporation, Louisiana Wholesale Drug Company, Inc., Morris and Dickson Co., North Carolina Mutual Wholesale Drug Company Inc., and United Natural Foods, Inc. have offered to settle claims against them by entering into a national settlement and paying a sum to be used for restitution and abatement; and

WHEREAS: The final amount to be received by Tioga County will vary depending on several factors including the number of Plaintiff's ultimately agreeing to enter into the settlement; and

WHEREAS: It is in the best interest of Tioga County to resolve claims with respect to Associated Pharmacies Inc., J M Smith Corporation, Louisiana Wholesale Drug Company, Inc., Morris and Dickson Co., North Carolina Mutual Wholesale Drug Company Inc., and United Natural Foods, Inc. without further litigation and enter into an agreement to settle all allegations against them and avoid protracted litigation; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That Tioga County is authorized to participate in the proposed settlement with Associated Pharmacies Inc., J M Smith Corporation, Louisiana Wholesale Drug Company, Inc., Morris and Dickson Co., North Carolina Mutual Wholesale Drug Company Inc., and United Natural Foods, Inc. and the County Treasurer is authorized to submit such forms and agreements, as approved by the County Attorney to compromise the claims against the Defendants and distribute the proceeds between the participating parties.

#### ROLL CALL VOTE

Yes – Cantella, Ciotoli, Flesher, Monell, Rose, Standinger, Aronstam, and Brown.

No – None.

Absent – Legislator Bunce.

RESOLUTION ADOPTED.

Meeting adjourned at 10:11 A.M.