



Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Allegany and Steuben Counties
Southern Tier Extension Railroad Authority

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“This institution is an equal opportunity organization”

Steven Havey, Chairman
Richard Zink, Chief Executive Officer

STERA Management Evaluation Report

Year Ending December 31, 2024

The following is a summary evaluation of the senior management of STERA for the year ending December 31, 2024. STERA has no direct employees. Instead, STERA contracts with the Southern Tier West Regional Planning and Development Board for staffing and administrative assistance. During the year ending December 31, 2024, Southern Tier West has two staff persons assigned to this STERA contract, Richard Zink and Kim LaMendola. These two individuals hold two of STERA’s Corporate officer positions (Chief Executive Officer and Corporate Secretary, respectively, with the third Corporate officer position, Chief Financial Officer being held by a STERA Board member, Robert Keis. These three Corporate officers comprise STERA’s senior management.

Following is a summary of STERA’s expectations of senior management, as used as an evaluative tool:

1. Job Knowledge and Skills

Evaluation: Staff members have requisite specialized knowledge and skills to enable them to perform their jobs effectively.

Deficiencies in job knowledge and skills: None.

2. Discharge of Responsibilities as Corporate Officers

CEO
CFO
Contract and Procurement Officer (also held by CEO)
Records Management Officer (also held by CEO)
Records Access Officer (also held by CEO)
Secretary

Evaluation: Compliance with Bylaws, regulatory requirements, and public official laws. Ongoing improvements in provision of information to Board regarding Board and organizational responsibilities.

Deficiencies in discharge of responsibilities as corporate officers: None.

3. Availability to Board Members for Assistance

Evaluation: Availability during business hours for provision of assistance to Board members. Ongoing improvements in provision of information to Board regarding Board and organizational responsibilities.

Deficiencies in availability to Board members: None.

4. Management of Projects

Evaluation:

- The (Southern Tier Extension) Falconer track realignment and bridge repair project was managed successfully and completed in 2016. As of the end of 2024, STERA is awaiting NYS DOT closeout of the project.
- The (Southern Tier Extension) Cattaraugus rail rehabilitation project was managed successfully and completed in 2016. As of the end of 2024, STERA is awaiting NYS DOT closeout of the project.
- The (Buffalo line) tie replacement and grade crossing repair project was managed successfully and completed in 2016. Subsequently, STERA received two no-cost time extension to complete additional work using unspent project funds and has completed this work. As of the end of 2024, STERA is awaiting NYS DOT closeout of the project.
- The (Southern Tier Extension) Track and Bridge Rehabilitation Project Was begun in 2017, with all work scheduled to be completed in 2019. As of the end of 2021, STERA is in the process of obtaining a scope of work change on the project, with work now scheduled to be completed in 2025 if the scope change is approved.
- The (Southern Tier Extension) Enginehouse and Olean Yard Improvements Project Was begun in 2017. STERA has begun the project, and as of the end of 2025, STERA is awaiting NYS DOT approval of a change order request in order to complete the project.
- The (Southern Tier Extension Line) Tie and Rail Replacement Project was approved by NYS DOT for funding in 2018. STERA began the project in 2020 and anticipates that the project should be completed in 2025.

Deficiencies in management of projects: None.

5. Compliance

Evaluation: Ongoing efforts are being made to comply with current regulatory requirements and additional regulatory requirements as they become effective. Management staff continue on an ongoing basis to bring new compliance obligations and any deficiencies to the Board's attention.

Deficiencies in overseeing organizational compliance: None.

6. Ethical Conduct, Transparency, Accountability, Fiduciary Responsibilities

Evaluation: Staff acts in a manner to adhere to these organizational principles.

Deficiencies in conduct: None.

7. Training

Evaluation: All senior management has received required NYS ABO training.

Deficiencies in training: None.

8. Summary Evaluation

Evaluation: Performance adequate.

Deficiencies Identified: None.

9. Recommendations

Continuation of administrative services contract. Continued oversight of management performance by Governance Committee and Board.

Submitted to STERA Governance Committee for review on March 31, 2025.

Richard T. Zink
STERA Corporate CEO

March 31, 2025
Date