

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING/PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

Monday, January 8, 2018 - 10:30 PM

Noel Merrihew, Chairperson
Roby Politi, Vice-Chairperson

Chairman Merrihew called this Economic Development/Planning/Publicity Meeting to order at 11:00 am with the following Supervisors in attendance: Archie Depo, Joseph Giordano, Charles Harrington, Ronald Jackson, Steve McNally, Michael Marnell, Noel Merrihew, Dean Montroy, James Monty, Jerry Morrow, Roby Politi, Tom Scozzafava, Michael Tyler, and Joe Pete Wilson. Shaun Gilliland, Ronald Moore and Randy Preston had been previously excused. Robin DeLoria was absent.

Department Heads present: Daniel Palmer and Anna Reynolds. Dan Manning was absent.

Also present: Dina Garvey, Jody Olcott, Rick LeVitre and Jasen Lawrence. Jim McKenna and Aurora McCaffery had been previously excused.

News Media present: Keith Lobdell - Sun News and Denise Raymo - Press Republican.

MERRIHEW: Good morning everyone, we will call the Economic Development Committee to order, first on the agenda today is the IDA and we have Ms. Jody Olcott with us this morning.

The first item on the agenda was Industrial Development with Jody Olcott reporting as follows:

OLCOTT: I have nothing additional to add unless you guys have questions?

MERRIHEW: Does anyone here have questions or comments for Jody? Jody could you come up please, real quick? Thank you very much

POLITI: Jody, Adirondack Meat Company has an outstanding balance of \$304,000.00 plus dollars, and Glens Falls National Bank is going to, according to what I have read, is going to call that note. Do you know how much their note is? Is it a first mortgage?

OLCOTT: It is a first mortgage. They did call the note, I think it was the week of Christmas we got served. I want to say it's \$700,000.00 and something.

POLITI: Wow

OLCOTT: But, in saying that, they have a USDA guarantee on that loan for 90%.

POLITI: Okay

OLCOTT: So, we'll see where it ends up panning up on that.

POLITI: Yeah

OLCOTT: We have a second position and we also have a first all equipment purchase with IDA funds.

POLITI: Are they non-operating?

OLCOTT: They are operating still.

POLITI: Okay

OLCOTT: Because we were, I am in the process of doing property tax exemption renewals for the year and they are still operating.

POLITI: Yeah, thank you

OLCOTT: A lot of interest in the building, though, a lot.

POLITI: Yeah, but for us to get any money it would have to be sold for more than \$700,000.00 and some.

MERRIHEW: Further questions or comments?

HARRINGTON: Is the meat company still under the same administration?

OLCOTT: Yes

HARRINGTON: Have they made changes that are more accommodating to farmers?

OLCOTT: Somewhat

HARRINGTON: I have heard a lot of terror stories from the agricultural community in regards to this company.

SCOZZAFAVA: Charlie pretty much said what I was going to. I hear that it could a growing business. The issue is management. I mean I don't know how to say it; which is unfortunate, because I think it's something that's needed in this county. It's something that could be, you know, a good business.

OLCOTT: No, and I think, I mean I'm not going to, I mean it is needed, I mean and I think with the amount of interest by other slaughterhouses that have looked at it, obviously it could be profitable.

SCOZZAFAVA: So, they own the building? I mean they have the mortgage on the building? That's a building that the IDA put up and leases to them?

OLCOTT: No

SCOZZAFAVA: So, they own the property also?

OLCOTT: Yup, well under the, well the IDA owns it underneath the PILOT agreement, but.

POLITI: I would hope that there would not release the insurance?

OLCOTT: No, no, no, no, we have been notified, I think of both insurance companies. I want to say maybe Bank picked up the Key man life insurance; which is really here nor there, since the key man life insurance covers an individual that no longer is managing the operating and we have the general liability insurance on the building, so we have coverage for that.

MERRHEW: Further questions or comments for Jody? Being none, thank you very much Jody.

OLCOTT: Yup

The next item on the agenda was Community Resources with Anna Reynolds reporting as follows:

REYNOLDS: Good morning, I just handed out a flyer, because I didn't get a report in. It's, I took all of the award amounts on the CFAs that were recently announced in December and I tallied them up for county and of the \$64 million allocation, these are the percentages awarded to each county. There's 7 counties and there's an other category. The other is tax credits and bonding, so that was about 34 million. So, as you can see Essex is doing pretty well in terms of project allocation. In order to make that a fair distribution we should see the award allocation over the population of each of the 7 counties and so as you see they're listed below. Hamilton, for their population they're getting a lot of awards. Essex, we're doing second best, so far, for our population. We're doing really excellent at gaining grants allocation through the CFAs. Does anyone have questions about that?

MERRIHEW: Questions or comments on the report? You should be proud of the results that you're able to show us here today.

REYNOLDS: Thanks

MERRIHEW: It's a tribute to you.

SCOZZAFAVA: Good job, I don't understand the CFA process that well. I have expressed this since the beginning of the program that it's hard to fathom that they put municipalities in competition with one another for infrastructure needs when you're under consent orders, be it wastewater, be it water treatment or so on and then somehow when they look at this, correct me if I'm wrong, you've got to somehow tie it into economic development?

REYNOLDS: Yes, with each grant that we write we have to tie it to job growth; whether it's a water line or fixing up a building.

SCOZZAFAVA: I mean that and in regards to fixing up buildings, we haven't had a whole lot of success at that level in this county with the CFAs, even with higher needs, trying to save some of these buildings. I mean I don't know how that process is reviewed or who reviews it and so on and maybe our Legislative Committee, we can talk to Senator Little and Dan Stec. I just think it's wrong that municipalities are put into a position where you've got to compete with one another when you're under consent order for water and sewer funds that usually use federal dollars to begin with; which is HUD funded, you know federal, through the feds, so you know, it's just wrong and there are a couple of other awards that I won't get into, that are totally wrong, I guess a good word for it would be corporate welfare, but other than that, I am sure I'm in enough trouble now.

MERRIHEW: Further questions or comments for Ms. Reynolds today? Being none, thank you very much Anna.

REYNOLDS: I just wanted to let you know that currently our posting for the grants position is out, it's been out for 4 weeks. It is due next Friday and I'll be setting up interviews as soon as possible to get someone in before next, this year's, 2018 CFA applications, that's sort of the goal.

And just day to day stuff. We've got 50+ quarterly reports that are actually due next week. Many of you have been receiving emails from the various organizations that say submit your annual progress report, those are being completed right now, so they're due on time.

And just basic project reimbursement questions that pop up all the time. Almost 99% of grants are reimbursable; which means you pay first and give us your cancelled checks and your invoices and you'll get reimbursed later by the grant program. The only ones that up front funds are CDBG and EFC that I know of, right now, that I can think of. So, if that ever comes up, obviously you can call me and ask questions anytime, but if you have an OPRHP, DASNY or DEC grant, those are usually, all the time reimbursable.

MERRIHEW: Thank you, questions, comments? We'll all set.

REYNOLDS: Okay

MERRIHEW: Thank you very much for your update.

REYNOLDS: Thanks

The next item on the agenda was the Essex County Historian with Aurora McCaffery having been previously excused.

MERRIHEW: Aurora McCaffrey has been excused this morning. Your report is contained in the committee flyer.

The next item on the agenda was the Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism (ROOST) with Jim McKenna having been previously excused and Jasen Lawrence reporting as follows:

MERRIHEW: For ROOST, Mr. McKenna had called and said we would have representation this morning, how are you today?

LAWRENCE: Good, good morning, I'm Jasen Lawrence and I'm the Director of Digital Strategy for those of you who I have not had the pleasure meeting over the last few years that I have been with ROOST. I will be really brief this morning, I just wanted to highlight a couple of projects that are going on, if you had any questions for me feel free to ask.

So one big thing that we've been working on with several of the Supervisors is the Upper Hudson Rec Hub/5 Town Initiative. This is joint effort between Newcomb, Minerva, North Hudson, Long Lake and Indian Lake. So, we've had several meetings over the last few months. We did a very exhaustive survey, got several thousand responds on that. We're starting to finish up the data analysis on that and tourism assessment right now and the next meeting for that will be in mid-February. It's been really good progress, it's a pretty exciting kind of co-op between Hamilton and Essex County for that core area along side of the North Hudson project that's hopefully coming shortly.

The Empire State Winter Games are of course in the first weekend in February. This will be the 38th games and right now we're on track to have the largest games in history, in terms of registrations and all, so very exciting. There's some really cool stuff. The multi-region approach that was started a few years ago with including even Malone and some of the other, Saranac Lake and Tupper Lake and some of those other facilities has been really positive and has created a whole other level of participation within Lake Placid and the Essex County communities, as well as other communities as well, so record breaking numbers, it looks like, this year.

We've also been working really closely with ORDA over the last two years and have made some really fantastic progress in terms of co-marketing. One thing of major note is this is now the second year that you can actually book ski and stay packages online through a central reservation system. That wasn't possible before last winter. So, there's some really good stuff there. Another good

example would be we're packaging an Empire State Winter Games/Olympic Passport. It will be branded Empire State Winter Games, so when you're here for the games you can get into these facilities, you can get that discount and it creates some hype and some buzz and helps sell some of those additional ORDA products and those venues.

Another big thing we're doing this year, you're going to see us very active in the southern end of Essex County this winter. You may have actually just seen, there's a video, a winter video about Newcomb and some winter rec there, it did really well on social media. There was a scheduled shoot for Lake Champlain that got pushed. It was a little cooler the last two weeks, a little tough to shoot, so we'll be doing that shortly and you're also going to see a video specifically around winter rec in Schroon come out in the next few weeks, which is pretty exciting too.

Also, new, schroonlakeregion.com, it's in desperate need of a refresh, it's been needed for a little while. That should actually be live in the next couple of weeks. We are cruising right along with that; which is great as well.

And the annual leisure travel study is being executed starting today, so basically we're starting to collect and solicit those survey responses. We actually encourage everyone here to participate as well, because that feedback gives us that local view of tourism and we'll have that data and that report towards the end of the 1st quarter.

MERRIHEW: Thank you Jasen, that was very informative. Do we have questions or comments?

POLITI: Jasen, do you want to comment on Governor Cuomo's commitment to the FISA Games?

LAWRENCE: Yeah, so I can a little bit. So, Jim of course is the guy on the details of this. So, ROOST has been involved with the Global Sports Committee. It's not just ROOST of course, it's a much larger initiate, including a lot of community members in Plattsburgh and beyond, because it's going to take the whole region to pull these games off, but essentially, there isn't a dollar amount, but the State has said that they're willing to back the games, you know to the financial level necessary, essentially, to get it done. It's very exciting, so again, there isn't a dollar figure to that, so what does that mean? You know nothing yet, but it was in the State...

POLITI: It does include the financial commitment to ORDA to upgrade venues and facilities.

LAWRENCE: Yeah, to tack onto that, why this is such a big deal is, the games themselves, probably, you know, will they make money or not? Probably not, however this is your catalyst to get these improvements done, to create these long term tourism assets. I think it's one of the things that we've all noted is how do you turn these venues into tourism drivers that are actually profitable and generate long term visitation and that's essentially what these games do, alongside of creating that global buzz around Lake Placid and that area, as well.

MERRIHEW: No, thank you, that's exciting that the State has committed for that update for those facilities. Are there other questions, comments?

HARRINGTON: Has the University Games been formally awarded?

LAWRENCE: They have not yet. There was a delay in the bid book. It was due by December 31st, I'm actually, I apologize, I'm not certain on the new submission date. We've been, the committee has been in very good contact with FISU and everything is moving along just fine, but I don't, it's not officially awarded yet, no.

HARRINGTON: At one time, Lake Placid was the only applicant, is that holding true?

LAWRENCE: That is true and so the way FISU does things is, they don't, they essentially don't want a bidding war, that's not how they like to operate, much like IOC is kind of moving now, so what they essentially do is they look at a city and say, hey is this something that we want to work together on and then they work through that with them and then if it doesn't work out then they look elsewhere.

MERRIHEW: Further questions, comments?

Being none, Jasen thank you very much, appreciate you coming down today.

The next item on the agenda was Cornell Cooperative Extension with Rick LeVitre reporting as follows:

MERRIHEW: Now, we can address Cooperative Extension, good morning Rick.

LEVITRE: Apologizes of running late, I could use the excuse of roads and a lot of other things, the reality was I went to the office.

MERRIHEW: That will do it.

LEVITRE: It does, every time.

In my report I mentioned this is a time of collecting all the data that is not only used for national reporting and some of the dollars that Cooperative Extension receives from Smith Lever, but also to put together our annual report for our public and also to start planning and analyzing what we need to do in the future.

One of the things that I was quite pleased to see was the numbers of people that have been touched by Cooperative Extension in one way or another, directly and indirectly through direct contacts and various media and also the fact that we are moving forward in a few other directions, new directions. The farm to school program, farm to table, there's various dollars out there, Carly, our Ag Educator is working very closely with some schools on that. I'm going to be meeting with Fort Ticonderoga and their heritage gardens and looking at collaborations there.

We're also looking at reaching out into some of our more populated areas and having some satellite offices where educators can be spending more time and not only doing the program, but recruiting

4-H leaders, volunteer leaders, volunteers for other programs, etc. So, it's a time of working with the staff, reviewing where we are, where do we want to go, what directions do we look for dollars to augment what the County supplies, along with the State and Federal. So, it is a good time of the year. Is it a slow time of the year? It never is, I used to think a long time ago that that break around Christmas was slow, I don't think there is a slow time in Extension anymore and I guess that's a very positive thing.

But, that's basically everything that I have here. Also, I put out the success stories that we put in, impact that we have on our youth, on our volunteers, on our public that we work with and these were, hopefully, if you received this digitally, are links that you can click on to see these success stories, but further they will be in an annual report format as well.

And that's basically it.

MERRIHEW: Thank you very much Rick. Any questions or comments for Rick at this time? Those are pretty significant numbers. I was just going to say the people that you reached out and touched are 20% of our total population.

LEVITRE: We're getting there, thank you.

MERRIHEW: Thank you very much Rick. Are there any other topics or business to be conducted today through the Committee? Any further business, being none, we stand adjourned. Thank you very much.

AS THERE WAS NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THIS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING/PUBLICITY COMMITTEE IT WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:50 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dina Garvey, Deputy
Clerk of the Board