

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING/PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

Monday, May 9, 2022 - 10:00 AM

Ike Tyler, Chairperson

Roy Holzer, Vice-Chairperson

Chairman Tyler called this Economic Development/Planning/Publicity Meeting to order at 10:00 am with the following Supervisors in attendance: Stephanie DeZalia, Shaun Gilliland, Charlie Harrington, Roy Holzer, Ken Hughes, Steve McNally, Noel Merrihew, Tom Scozzafava, Matt Stanley, Ike Tyler, Joe Pete Wilson, Davina Winemiller, Meg Wood and Mark Wright. Clayton Barber, Robin DeLoria, Derek Doty and Jim Monty had been previously excused.

Department Heads present: Dan Palmer, and Mike Mascarenas. Anna Reynolds had been previously excused. Dan Manning was absent.

Deputies present: Dina Garvey

Also present: Sylvie Nelson - North Country Workforce Development Board, Carol Calabrese - IDA, Aurora McCaffery - Essex County Historian, Laurie Davis - Cornell Cooperative Extension, and Bruce Misarski - HAPEC. Jim McKenna and Mary Jane Lawrence - ROOST, had been previously excused.

News Media Present: Tim Rowland - Sun News

TYLER: Economic Development Committee, we have a guest speaker, today, Sylvie Nelson, Executive Director of North Country Workforce Development.

NELSON: Good morning, thank you so much for having me this morning. I appreciate your time. I'm Sylvie Nelson, the Executive Director of the North Country Workforce Development Board and I'm here today to talk to you about a really great project that we're doing with our subsidiary, the North Country Workforce Partnership, Inc., and it actually, I am very proud to say, it involves the students at the Mineville Campus for CVTech and the New Visions Applied Engineering Program, which is pretty new. I think this is the second year of the program and we are working with them, CVTech, as well as the University of Siegen in Germany, is our partner and we have brought to the North Country, the Authentic STEM Connect Us Program and basically it allows the students to work hand in hand with industry and to solve one of their problems and so that's very exciting, because a lot of times when you're in high school, if you remember, I know I had that question, why do I need to learn this? Well, this gives them the opportunity to put two and two together and to put what they learn in the classroom and apply it in the real world situation and in this case we're very proud to say that Schluter Systems out of Plattsburgh, which happens to be and this is all coincidental, a German company, who is actually based about an hour away from the University of Siegen, so this is all, it all kind of came together and in a really positive way, but Schluter System put forth a program from the students in work, in actually partnership with

student's in Germany. So, both groups are working together on Zoom or another platform, electronically and they're consulting with each other. They have to deal with time zones, they have to deal with cultural and language barriers, just like any other company would that is internationally based and so this great, great program enables them to, like I said, take a problem from Schluter System, which happens to be and this is really interesting, there's a man at Schluter System that puts together drains, drain covers and they come in two parts and there's two holes with two screws and the guy screws these parts together, 150,000 times a year and so in this case, Schluter System had been looking at, what do we do? Because, the demand has increased and do we automate? Do we hire someone else? How are we going to apply this? And so they gave that problem to the students to solve and surprise, surprise, they're solving it and they actually developed a prototype and one of their first questions, before they even attempted this was, what happens to the man? Does he lose his job if we come up with a machine? And they're like, no. They're going to get training on that machine and they will operate it, if that's the case and if not, then we'll hire someone else. So, they developed through the IAM, at Clinton Community College, the Institute of Advanced Manufacturing, they developed this prototype, they're going to be unveiling, sometime this month and in cooperation, again, with their student counterparts in Germany and Schluter System will decide what they want to do with this prototype. Do they want to build it or not? Do they want to improve on it or whatever? So, this is what Authentic STEM is about. This is really about enabling industry to work with the schools in a really meaningful partnership and in this case it's the Mineville Campus. This is a pilot program. There's, I believe, there's 4 students in the Mineville program and there's 3 in Germany, so there's 7 students all together working on this and they developed a machine for Schluter System. So, and then Schluter System in the meanwhile get to work with the students and at an early age, before they even go to college and this gives them an opportunity to see what kind of template we have as a workforce development and this is more as a long term solution to workforce development in a sense that, you know, it doesn't address the, I need the people yesterday question. But, really about being involved and working directly with the schools, with the students and developing our future workforce and when we bring this program, you know, up at discussions and we've been very, very fortunate, our program was mentioned on the floor of the US Senate, during a testimonial, the Workforce Development Association of the United States, we were also asked to present it at the National Association of Workforce Board. People want to, they want to know more about it. How can I bring it to our area? And this pilot project is actually gaining momentum, right here in the North Country. We already have interest from other schools and other companies, including General Composites in Willsboro. We have interest from different schools, Saranac, we have Peru, the next cohort is actually at SUNY Plattsburgh, through their Upward Bound group that are going through the summer program there at SUNY Plattsburgh. The German students are going to be coming here and meeting our students here. Unfortunately, because this is the pilot project and this was kind of put together pretty rapidly, and we don't have the funds to send the students overseas, at this point, but we're working on getting some funding for the next five years, because this is not just a one-year thing. In September, the Malone middle school will be taking on Authentic STEM with their 8th graders. Also, CVTech will bring it to the other students at their Plattsburgh campus and we're also, probably, bringing it to the Dutchess County Workforce Development Board. They're also interested in taking advantage of this program over there. So, all this is happening here, in little Mineville, up the hill, over there and I just wanted to

see if you had any questions about this.

As far as we're concerned, this is really the future of workforce development in the long term approach, because the students, by getting to know, also the manufactures, they get to know the type of jobs that are available in their own backyard and sometimes, I am sure when we drive by the different industrial parks in the area, you see these buildings and what do they do behind their doors; right? And now the students are really having the opportunity to discover the type of things that are going on behind those doors and to also understand the type of career opportunities that we have here in the North Country and so I could go on and talk about this all day long, because it's very passionate, I'm very passionate about it, but I just wanted to maybe see if there's any questions or anything like that?

TYLER: It sounds very exciting, my first question would be, how much would these people be making once they get hired by this firm, the compensation?

NELSON: Well, it depends, so it depends on the type of jobs that they're going to go for, or the type of studying, for example, just give you an idea, one of the students in the program had no inclination of going and pursuing higher education and how he's going to Clarkson University and studying to be an engineer. So, that's just one of the things that happens and again, it's that two plus two. They're putting things together and they're really understanding the type of things that they can do and I think that they then become more passionate about their work and so it depends if it's in engineering, obviously, it's a lot more.

TYLER: Right

NELSON: But, that's the whole idea and it's not necessarily about engineering school, it's about credentials, it's any type of credentials that these students can get as they get out of high school, so that they can continue on their career pathway and also be recognized within the industry and there's a good chance that some of these students are going to be the first candidates, once they graduate to, you know, to be hired at Schluter Systems; why? Because, they know them. And so, why can't we do that with other companies and this can be applied to other industries. It can be applied to healthcare, agriculture, tourism, and so the model is there for a number of things and so that's what makes it so interesting, is because it's not just one little category. It's really, it could be across the board.

HUGHES: Good morning, thank you for your update. I have two questions. My first question is how was CVTech Mineville selected for this program?

NELSON: Because of their small classroom. One of the things that is very important to the program is not to have big groups of students working together and why is because sometimes you have shyer people, you've got people with less, they don't perform as well in school and things and it gives an opportunity to really participate in the process. And so that's one of the important things. So, the groups, at the most, are about 8 people; which is kind of small, but again, it gives everyone the opportunity to really participate and bring something to the table and that's very important. The other thing I would like to add is that, what Germany found and part of their

partnership with us is they're very good with their good at the research part and part of what they found, by accident, is that it's about a 50/50 parity between men and women engaging in these classes and why? Is because the women, usually it's hard to get them interested in STEM. There's that stigma, blah, blah, blah, but they like the whole cultural aspect of it. So, they like the exchange program part of it and once they get into it, they don't even realize they're doing STEM and engineering and solving really high end problems. They're just taking it and they're running with it.

HUGHES: So, that leads me to my second question, I used to be a foreign language teacher, so I'm curious if these students will have the opportunity to learn some German?

NELSON: Well, and see that's the other thing, too, that's part of it. It's we are hoping that it will lead the students to really try to kind of get outside their comfort zone and learn German, in this case, because in Germany, unlike here, it's a little bit different, but, they're already start English pretty early, in maybe even the 3rd or 4th language. So, it's a different approach, but here. So, just so you know, I started learning German, because I think, you know, it's important. So, I have my little, old-fashioned CDs in my car and I'm listening, but we're hoping that the students do the same thing.

HUGHES: Right

NELSON: What we found is, because they meet every couple of weeks together to work on the problem, but we know that they're texting, they're Facetimeing, they're doing it on Saturdays, they're doing it at night, of course there is a 6-hour timeframe between the two counties, but, yeah. So, they're working just like an employee of Schluter System would be working with an employee of Schluter of System in Germany. So, it recreates that whole global environment, as well, which is so important for them to understand and it's important to get them involved, as soon as possible, not when they're in college. So, this is really a good step for that.

HUGHES: I couldn't agree more, thank you.

NELSON: Yeah, thank you.

STANLEY: Now, I know we've been talking about labor storages and a lot of things in Recruitment and Retention and programs like this really help establish what they want to go to college for or not to go to college for, I mean, because it's trial and error before they have a big debt they want to take on. Are there more programs in the works coming from the success moving forward with other companies and other areas of expertise?

NELSON: Yes, so what we found is because there's a number of schools that are interested, not just here in the CVTech area, but also like FEH BOCES, for example. So, we're in the process of setting up a system on how to work with all these schools, because, obviously, I'm not an educator, but I work with the companies, so maybe the schools work with the schools, we work with the company to come and then we setup the strategy. But, at this point, we have about 7

companies interested in participating and so, and they don't have just one problem. Schluter System has 8 problems and so we already identified the problem for the 8th graders, because obviously it's not going to be the same level, as perhaps what the students in Mineville are working on. But, so, everything has to be adaptive to the class and then also, you know, who is going to be teamed up with Germany and things like that, but yeah and again, to your point, by them understanding the type of opportunities they have career-wise in the North Country, if they do go somewhere else and you know how it is when you get older, you start a family, you know, you want to go into the type of environment that you grew up with, so therefore it's a great opportunity to bring them back, even at a later time, if they've left and it's also a great opportunity for the companies to showcase what they're doing and how they're doing it and how high tech it is. Manufacturing is not your grandfather's manufacturing plant anymore, you know, it's pretty, it's a clean environment, it's extremely high tech, computer driven, things like that, which is very different than what it used to be. So, we have to get the students to also understand that and to be proud of this type of work. It's nothing to be, it's not like, because I didn't get the grades, I'm working at Schluter. No, no, no, on the contrary. So, it's very important and I also believe that the workforce development, really you're born, you're the future workforce and so we need to really foster that and into meaningful ways, because it's one thing for companies to come in and I am sure that you had back in the day, they come and talk about what they're doing, blah, blah, blah and the phones come out and the rolling of the eyes and you know how it is, they're not getting it and why? Because, they don't have anything tangible, now, this can send something tangible. They get to work with the toys, how fun is that? And then more importantly, can you imagine as a 17 years old, yeah, Schluter System, a global company that's the leader into plumbing and tiling type of products in the world, I built that for you, to solve one of your problems, put that on your resume. It's very, very powerful.

TYLER: Thank you, anything else.

NELSON: I do have a presentation that we made at the National Association Workforce Board and Carol's going to be sharing it with everyone. It's a little bit more detailed.

HARRINGTON: Yes, the paper company in Ticonderoga has had a very, very difficult time of finding employees that will last and I am assuming it's because the applicants truly aren't aware of the systems there and they have a hard time adapting. I am wondering if that paper company is a part of this project?

NELSON: Actually, Eugene Fox sits on the Board of the North Country Workforce Development Board and he has expressed interest to it, yes.

HARRINGTON: And it's very evident that they are continuing to have problems, as I observed a full-sized billboard, today, advertising the starting pay is \$23.00.

NELSON: Yes, and when you know when you're looking at, about 3 years ago, we were involved with like a group over there and they were also having some problems and then they were at the time, paying like \$15.00 or \$16.00 an hour, so just for them to have done that, that really speaks

volume to them, because sometimes that's what you need to do to be able to bring, but I think that one of the challenges that was discovered during that committee is that a lot of the people in that area have worked there or like I said, their grandfathers, but that whole work is no longer the same thing and people don't understand that, because they don't know and that's why this kind of project, I mean it brings and of course, it's a little bit by little bit, but it brings that knowledge back to our communities and creates those partnerships, as well.

TYLER: Thank you

NELSON: Thank you so much for having me. I appreciate it.

The next item on the agenda was Industrial Development was Carol Calabrese reporting as follows:

CALABRESE: Good morning, we submitted a report this month. Does anybody have any questions on it?

TYLER: Any questions? I don't see anything.

CALABRESE: Thank you.

TYLER: Thank you

The next item on the agenda was Community Resources with Anna Reynolds having been previously excused.

TYLER: Anna Reynolds is excused today, today is her birthday. I would like to have it in the minutes to wish her a happy birthday.

And the only thing on hers, is she's got a referral in Ticonderoga. National Grid has proposed to construct a gravel based access road for the maintenance of transmission mains to their existing ROW for transmission main replacement and future maintenance. They submitted all required materials, including design specs for review. They are getting the proper permits through the State agencies. The project requires site plan review due to the nature of the project and the written 500' from within County Route 3, AKA Black Point Road. The project will require a County Right-of-Way permit for the roadway, access

**ACTION OF THE ESSEX COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
ON REFERRAL RECEIVED FROM THE TOWN OF TICONDEROGA**

The following motion was made by Supervisor DeZalia.

Whereas, the Essex County Planning Board has considered the following GML 239 referrals at its regular meeting on May 9, 2022.

REFERRAL
Town of Ticonderoga - National Grid

PROPOSED ACTION
Right-of-Way Permit

Whereas, the referred, proposed action directly impacts a county road or county property.

Be It adopted by the Essex County Planning Board that the project requires site plan review and a right-of-way permit from the Essex County Department of Public Works for the roadway access, and then the respective referring bodies may take such final action as they deem appropriate.

This motion was seconded by Supervisor Merrihew and passed on a vote of 8 in favor, 1 absent and none opposed.

TYLER: Any more discussion? All in favor? Opposed? Okay

The next item on the agenda was the Essex County Historian, Aurora McCaffrey reporting as follows:

MCCAFFREY: Hi, good morning, you have my May report, just note a couple of things. First, the Museum opens at the end of this month, Memorial Day Weekend, May 28th specifically. So, we are very busy getting ready for that. In my report I have listed our new exhibits for you and also our programs and events calendar. Our first event will be the Antique and Classic Car Show on June 11th. We've had to postpone that event for the past two years, so we're excited to bring it back and crossing our fingers that all goes as we hope. We then jump into our film and lecture series, we have seven films and four lectures. Those are on Thursday evenings at 7:00 PM throughout the summer. There's a gallery celebration on July 15th and then the 1922 Centennial - Evolution of the Adirondack Wilderness on August 6th and that event is a full day of programs. We'll have five lectures and one film showing on that day. We're finalizing that schedule, but I'll have more details for you, next month, about that event. And then the last event is our Annual Historian's Day and that's on October 12th and for that we plan on doing an audio/visual conversion workshop. We are currently setting up a conversation station in our research library and that will be available to the public. So, we'll talk more about digitizing older forms of media. So, that is the schedule at a quick glance. We're really excited about the season. That's all I have for you.

TYLER: Are we associated with, do you guys help out with John Brown Day?

MCCAFFREY: Yeah

TYLER: That's going to be a big day, up there, also.

MCCAFFREY: And we do somethings for that and then Juneteenth, which they actually want to come and do a little thing here, like a reenactment. So, yeah, those are in the planning.

TYLER: Any questions?

HUGHES: Good morning, just a very quick question; I see you have a meeting of the membership on the 12th?

MCCAFFREY: That's right

HUGHES: How many members do you have? I mean how many members does the Museum have?

MCCAFFREY: About 200, yeah, I should have mentioned that. That's this week, Thursday and everybody's welcome. I mean it doesn't have to be members, public can always come to any of the meetings.

HUGHES: Thank you

MCCAFFREY: Yeah, no problem.

TYLER: Thank you Aurora.

MCCAFFREY: Thank you and have a good day.

The next item on the agenda was Cornell Cooperative Extension, with Laurie Davis reporting as follows:

DAVIS: Good morning, you have our report. I was just going to mention a couple of highlights on there. One, I wasn't sure if you were aware that the Adirondack Harvest Program has taken over the six Northern New York Cuisine Trails. They were established about 4-5 years ago. There was a non-profit that was formed to take them over, it kind of went nowhere, there wasn't a lot of action on it and they finally came to us and said, please, please, you know, it's a good fit for Adirondack Harvest. So, we have taken those over. There are several trails within Essex County, winding through Franklin and up through Clinton, six of them that connect and they're designed to also connect in Crown Point, across the Lake to the Vermont trails, up around, through Quebec and then come down and connect in Northern New York, here in Clinton and Franklin County to make

a big loop. There's an International Cuisine Trail Association that's working on this, sort of international promotion and there's a big, actual agri-tourism conference in Burlington at the end of August that they're going to be presenting at and be part of, to hopefully try to get these Cuisine Trails rolling. So, we're reaching out to all the members, there's about a 100 farms and businesses and restaurants on these trails. So, since it was established about 5 years ago, a lot has changed, so we're making personal calls to everyone and trying to get some new people on the trails, too, who were not included the first time around.

We're also updating our annual farmer's markets guides, which help people find all the farmer's market, but also promote where you can use SNAP benefits. Farmer's Market Nutrition Program who work through the WIC Office to make sure that everyone can find access to local foods with the nutrition incentive benefits that they have available.

And in our Quality of Life Programs, we're part of the OASIS Grant at the schools and I know there are some other community organizations working on that. We do some after-school programming and that's going really well. We've got a lot of youth engagement and it's really nice to see. We have two of our Quality of Life educators on that.

And I a little bit varying the lead here, we have hired an Executive Director and I just received word, literally a half hour ago that I could announce this today. We had to cross the final T and dot the final I, but we're very happy to announce that we've hired Elizabeth Lee, long time Westport resident. She's going to be joining the team mid to end of June. Currently, she's the Director of Education and Interruption at the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum. So, she really loves that job, as well, and she cares a lot about it. So, she's taking a few weeks to transition, help them find someone new, but also working with us and starting her training down in Ithaca, on the Cornell Campus, as an Executive Leader. So, you know, she's going to bring a lot of experience with programming, grant funding, collaborations between non-profits and government officials. We're just really excited about her professional skill set and she has a lot of network building capacity within Essex County. So, there will be a press release coming soon. As I said, I just got the word this morning. So, press release, photos will be coming out within the next week or two, I anticipate. So, any questions about any of that?

TYLER: Thank you, any questions?

HUGHES: Congratulations on the selection. I think Elizabeth is a top shelf human being and I hope she really dives right in.

DAVIS: She already has. We're getting emails about, hey, has the 4H Program seen this, hey and so, yeah, it's already started.

HUGHES: Yes, congratulations and I just want to note, I saw one of your bullets, ADK Day at the State Capitol, May 9th, that's today, so is that?

DAVIS: It was canceled.

HUGHES: Oh, it was.

DAVIS: In fact, it was after this went into the office, but right at the last minute, we found out, I think Friday that, because of Covid outbreaks, down there they canceled the whole thing, which was unfortunate.

HUGHES: So, not postponed, canceled?

DAVIS: Well, canceled as far as I know, but I, it was actually Carlie and Mary who were in charge of that, they were going down to this. So, we're waiting to find out, maybe they'll reschedule, because that was a really big deal for us. We showcased a lot of local products, local farms and it was something we loved going to. So, we'll let you know, we'll keep you posted.

HUGHES: Please, thank you.

TYLER: Anything else? I don't see anything, thank you Laurie.

DAVIS: Thank you.

The next item was the Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism (ROOST), with Jim McKenna and Mary Jane Lawrence having been previously excused and no report given.

The next item was the Housing Assistance Program with Bruce Misarski reporting as follows:

MISARSKI: Good morning, our report is attached, if anyone has any questions. There are a couple, as you're thumbing through that. So, our Section 8 Programs across the County have, last month folks had asked for some numbers on community, number of participants per community, our report spit it out through census tracks, so you'll see a couple of towns, like Jay, Elizabethtown, and Westport are in the same census track, so they end up and those numbers are combined, but you can see where the locations of most of our Section 8 participants are living and there is a note in here that approximately \$2.1 million go into the Essex County economy annually, through the Section 8 subsidies that the Federal Government provides.

Other than that, we mentioned some of other programs, Housing Rehab, our Mobile Home Replacement Program, Landlord Ambassador Program is going strong and we've got over \$200,000.00 put out to landlords to recover from the pandemic and that's been pretty much since the 1st of the year.

There is some housing construction in the plans and our ESG Program, which is our Homeless Assistance Program, also, is kind of going pretty strong right now. We've gotten out about, over \$90,000.00 this quarter from homeless assistance.

So, any questions?

SCOZZAFAVA; I noticed the bulk of the Section 8 is in Ti, Moriah, Crown Point, the southern portion of the County. Would it possible to, the Supervisor or the Codes Officers to get a list of landlords that receive this assistance for the tenants?

MISARSKI: Ah, I can give you, yeah, we could probably produce a list without addresses, but a list.

SCOZZAFAVA: Not addresses, but, just who do you cut the check to.

MISARSKI: Sure

SCOZZAFAVA: Do you still do the inspections of these, I know when I had apartments, once a year they came in and they'd inspect them and if they had any issues I had to repair them and so on. Are they still doing that?

MISARSKI: Yup, we're catching up. During the pandemic, we had stopped, mainly because of the spread of the virus or the concern and keeping people safe was the primary concern. So, we missed about a year during the pandemic and those are getting caught up this spring and summer. So, we'll be back on of everybody's been inspected within a year.

SCOZZAFAVA: Thank you

MISARSKI: Yup

HUGHES: The competitive side of me would like to know about the Town of Westport and the Town of North Elba recently being awarded funds, as you mentioned in the second bullet here. I am just curious, is that something that those towns applied for?

MISARKSI: Yes, yup, so any municipality can apply for Community Development Funds. If they're interested, both of those programs are housing rehab programs that municipalities came to HAPEC and were interested to starting a program in those community, so we assisted the community in submitting an application and then we're assisting with the administration of the programs.

HUGHES: Great, thank you.

SCOZZAFAVA: How much is that? We haven't done one in years, but for housing rehab. What's the amount, now?

MISARSKI: There's no minimum, for towns, I believe they're at like \$500,000.00, the County can apply for up to a million dollars.

SCOZZAFAVA: And you decide, HAPEC?

MISARSKI: Yeah, essentially, the first step for a town would be really to start collecting applications and developing a list and you generally, now that the rule of thumb is they want about 3 times as many applicants, as they would want, that they would expect to fund to get assisted, because often when you have a list, half of them are not eligible or they, you know, it doesn't work out for them. So, they want a substantial list for the amount of asks that you're going to do. But, on the other hand, our rehabs are so much more than, you know, we used to do \$10,000.00, but now they're \$50,000.00, you know it costs that much to do a roof and electric system and you know, bathroom modifications.

SCOZZAFAVA: We got out of the program, I am going back years ago, there were a lot of things that were going on, I mean, I saw people getting this money to rehab their homes and you know, as soon as all the rehabilitation was done they put in a paved driveway and built a two car garage, you know, that really just put a bad taste in my mouth. You know, what's going on here? Is this money really going to the people that it's supposed to be going to? But, hopefully that's all changed now, it's a great program, but there were times that it was really taken advantage of.

TYLER: Thank you. Anything else? Thank you, have a good day.
Anything else to come before this Committee? I see nothing. We're adjourned.

AS THERE WAS NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THIS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING/PUBLICITY COMMITTEE IT WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:35 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dina Garvey, Deputy
Clerk of the Board