

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: PARKS, RECREATION & RAILROAD

DATE: MARCH 28, 2006

Committee Members Present:

Supervisors	Haskell	Pat Beland, Director, Parks, Recreation & Railroad Division
	O'Connor	William Remington, DPW Superintendent
	Gabriels	William Thomas, Chairman
	VanNess	Joan Parsons, Commissioner, Administrative & Fiscal Services
	F. Thomas	Joan Sady, Clerk, Board of Supervisors
	Stec	Paul Dusek, County Attorney
	Geraghty	Paul Butler, Recreation Facilities Manager
	Merlino	Tim Record, Johnsburg

Committee Member Absent:

Supervisor	Belden	Katy Goodman, Secretary to the Clerk
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Mr. Haskell called the meeting to order at 2:36 p.m.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, subject to correction by the clerk.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mr. Beland and he distributed copies of his agenda packet to the committee members, a copy of which is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Beland reviewed the Rail Stations PIN #1755 H890-220 items on the agenda (Nos. 1 and 2 a, b, and c). He advised the federal authorization to acquire the properties for the rights-of-way for the railroad project was recently received. Mr. Beland reported the appraisals have been reviewed and completed. He stated approval of some resolutions was needed and the first request was to concur with the just compensation amounts for the proposed property acquisitions. Mr. Beland noted copies of correspondence pertinent to the request were included in the agenda packet and that Mr. W. Thomas, Board of Supervisors' Chairman, would sign the correspondence.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to approve a resolution to authorize Chairman Thomas to execute correspondence acknowledging just compensation amounts for parcels to be acquired for Rail Stations Project PIN #1755. The necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting and a copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Next, Mr. Beland requested approval of a resolution to authorize Chairman Thomas to execute correspondence acknowledging receipt of certified titles for the parcels to be acquired for Rail Stations Project PIN #1755.

Motion was made by Mr. Merlino, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented, and to authorize the necessary resolution for the next board meeting. A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Beland stated the third request relative to the Rail Stations Project was for approval of a resolution to authorize supplemental agreement #2 with the New York State Department of Transportation (DOT) for Right-of-way acquisitions costs. He apprised the agreement would release \$420,000 for these costs and he pointed out that copies of the costs' schedules were included in the agenda packet.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess, seconded by Mr. Gabriels and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request, as presented. The necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting. A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Beland spoke next on the Snowmobile Trail Program (agenda item No. 3). He explained the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPHP) administers the Snowmobile Maintenance Trail Program under which it funnels the (snowmobile) registration fees back to the local sponsor which is the County. As part of the process, Mr. Beland said he then provides the agency with a box of documents that they have to certify so the County can receive its share of the fees. However, he advised the agency has indicated it does not want to do the certification process any more because it is too time consuming as they have to handle papers from 150 clubs.

Mr. Beland noted as an example the clubs will submit \$300,000 of expenses and receive \$100,000 back. Thus, he said the State is saying if a club had a groomer payment, for example that met its expenses they did not need to have all the paperwork so they are asking that the club president certify the expenses and then submit the forms and documentation of the expenses to the local sponsor to certify them. Mr. Beland noted copies of the certification forms for both the clubs and the local sponsor were included in the agenda packet. In the interest of expediting the process, he said he would recommend that he be designated by the County as the person to certify the snowmobile clubs' expenses for the program.

Motion was made by Mr. Merlino, seconded by Mr. O'Connor and carried unanimously to approve a resolution to authorize Mr. Beland, Director of Parks and Recreation, to certify snowmobile clubs' payment requests to the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPHP) for the Snowmobile Trail Maintenance Program. The necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting. A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Haskell stated relative to snowmobiles, he had received a couple of complaints this year about the snowmobile trail maps that are given out in response to requests for information on the trails. He explained that instead of one map of the entire system three maps are sent out because there are three clubs and there is not a single map of the entire snowmobile trail system in the County.

Mr. Haskell stated if the committee members agreed he would like to pursue obtaining occupancy tax funds from the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee to see if one map of the entire snowmobile trail system could be printed for distribution. He noted then if snowmobilers wanted to purchase maps of a particular trail area in the county they could do that in the local areas which would be an enlargement of that particular area from the main map.

Mr. Beland concurred that would be a good idea. He stated other counties in the area such as Washington County have more clubs but just one map of their entire trail system. Mr. Beland advised he had discussed this issue with the clubs and they have looked at a couple of ways to accomplish that, but he would agree that one map was needed. He noted the County GIS Coordinator had done a good job with putting together a map of the entire trail system.

Mr. VanNess recommended that each club should have its trails in different colors on the map. Mr. Beland said that is not done on the other maps but the clubs are listed. Mr. Haskell said he thought the trails should be color coded and the clubs listed so snowmobilers could contact the clubs they wanted to.

Mr. Stec entered the meeting at 2:43 p.m.

Discussion ensued, and Mr. Beland stated the only problem was that the clubs sell advertising on the maps. However, he advised only one club wants to retain that privilege. Mr. Beland stated that issue has been discussed with the clubs in connection with having a single map. If, he said the clubs wanted to continue to produce their own local map that would be fine. Mr. VanNess asked Mr. Dusek if the occupancy tax funds were used for one map if the clubs could still sell advertising on the map. Mr. VanNess agreed with Mr. Haskell that the clubs could still sell their own map.

Mr. Dusek replied that was correct. However, he said if one club wanted to do the single map and the others did not, he would ask why they did not let that one club do the map for everybody and collect all the advertising revenue. Mr. Dusek noted that stipulation could be included in the County's contract with the club.

Mr. Beland stated Ms. Norton had already created a single map of the trail system so it would not be a problem to get maps printed from that one now. However, he said the question was the advertising. He explained one approach that was being considered with the clubs would be to have space for 60 ads on the back of the map which would be divided evenly among the three clubs. That meant the County would do the trail map and the clubs would sell their ads and they would pay to print the maps, he said. Mr. Beland asked if another meeting should be held with the clubs; and Mr. Haskell said he had not attended the other meetings.

Mr. VanNess suggested perhaps the map could be printed out with the occupancy tax funds and the clubs could be allowed to profit from the sale of the advertisements on the back. Mr. Dusek confirmed for Mr. Haskell the problem was that could not be done. In addition, Mr. Dusek stated

he was also concerned that someone has to be responsible for the accuracy of the map because if there were errors in it and snowmobilers were injured or killed because of the errors, the County could be liable. He noted that was why he was looking at having the clubs be responsible for the map if they were willing to do that.

Mr. Remington asked if they met again with the clubs was there still time to produce a map before summer. Mr. Beland replied there was. Mr. Remington commented the concept of one map was clear but the question would be to get the clubs to agree to it as they work very hard to do their maps. Mr. Beland noted not all the clubs want to do the maps themselves. Mr. Haskell asked Mr. Beland to set up a meeting with the clubs so he could attend; and Mr. Beland agreed to do so.

Pursuant to Railroad Rehabilitation PIN #1821 H890-219 (Agenda Item No. 4), Mr. Beland discussed the status of the Antone Mountain Road grade protection. He advised Mr. W. Thomas, Mr. Haskell and he had attended a meeting in Albany with the consultant and the contractor to discuss the possibility of completing this project this year either under the contractor's present contract or a change order or something like that. However, Mr. Beland commented he was not very optimistic that the work would be done this year. He stated the project which was for rehabilitation of the 16 miles of rail line would probably be bid in August. If, Mr. Beland said the bid was low and there were funds left over then some funds might come back here for the project. The Town of Corinth was also going to be asked for some funds, he said. However, Mr. Beland said he had met with Progress Rail, the contractor, today and they will be finished in two weeks. He advised the next chance to obtain funds for the project would be for 130 funds which are for intersection safety projects and this crossing could possibly be done in 2007. Mr. Beland advised until then they would put flags at the crossing.

Pursuant to the Referrals agenda items, Mr. Beland proceeded with review of the items. A copy of the referrals memo from the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors' Office was included in the agenda packet.

Mr. Beland noted the first item was that Mr. Dusek was waiting to hear from either the Commissioner of the Office of General Services (OGS) or the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC's) counsel on the county's request for permission to construct an additional building on the Warren County Fish Hatchery property. Mr. Dusek confirmed he was still waiting to hear from the State on this matter.

Mr. Beland advised relative to the property near the Glen Creek Bridge, the consultants and he had looked at it. (Referrals item No. 2). He noted that Tim Record had provided him with a picture of a hotel that had been on the property at one time. Mr. Record distributed copies of the picture to the committee members, a copy of which is on file with the minutes. Mr. Beland stated the consultant had determined that the property was not long enough to provide enough distance to stop a train and pick up passengers or to have a siding and a crossing there.

Mr. Beland noted the third referral concerned the details and costs for construction of a platform

at the Thousand Acres site on the rail line. He stated he had looked at the site but he had not yet spoken with the property owner about the platform. However, Mr. Beland said the engine is 80' long so the best place for the platform would be on the south side of the driveway. He said he would meet with the property owner to see if he would favor the project.

Mr. Beland noted Item No. 4 relative to the Antone Mountain Road grade protection work had already been discussed.

Concluding the referrals items (No. 5), Mr. Beland reported he had not yet received any drawings from the Soil & Water Conservation District people for the proposed new building for Parks & Recreation and the District at the (County) Fish Hatchery. Mr. Haskell advised the construction of the building had been switched over to the County Facilities Committee and Mr. Dusek.

Returning to New Business items on the agenda, Mr. Beland reported relative to the Hatchery the water level was the lowest and temperatures the warmest for this time of year that they had ever seen in the 24 years the Hatchery has been in operation. Thus, he advised they will begin to do some pre-season stocking this week.

Concluding the agenda, Mr. Beland asked if all the committee members had been to the Up Yonda nature facility. Mr. Haskell said he had not yet been there. Mr. Beland asked if either the next committee meeting or the one after that could be held in the latter part of the day at the facility. He said a long meeting was needed to review and discuss various issues about the facility such as long term investments and capital projects. Mr. Haskell agreed that could be done for the next meeting. He stated all the supervisors would be invited to the meeting and a tour of the facility. Mrs. Sady, Clerk of the Board, said the meeting would be scheduled for the next round of meetings.

Mr. Haskell recalled Mr. Beland had been asked to set up a date for the supervisors to ride the scenic train and that Governor Pataki, Congressman Sweeney and Senator Little were also to be invited. Mr. Beland stated it would have to be on a Tuesday in October due to the train's schedule. He said a couple of dates were being considered by the Governor's Office. Mr. Haskell stated as soon as they know the schedule for the ride he would let the supervisors know.

There being no further business, on motion by Mr. Stec and seconded by Mr. Geraghty, Mr. Haskell adjourned the meeting at 2:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katy Goodman, Secretary to the Clerk