

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: PARKS, RECREATION & RAILROAD

DATE: FEBRUARY 27, 2007

---

---

<b>COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	<b>OTHERS PRESENT:</b>
SUPERVISORS	REPRESENTING THE PARKS, RECREATION & RAILROAD
HASKELL	DEPARTMENT:
BELDEN	PAT BELAND, DIRECTOR
O'CONNOR	PAUL BUTLER, RECREATION FACILITIES MANAGER
VANNESS	WILLIAM LAMY, DPW SUPERINTENDENT
F. THOMAS	WILLIAM THOMAS, CHAIRMAN
STEC	JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
GERAGHTY	JOANN MCKINSTRY, CONFIDENTIAL SECRETARY TO THE
MERLINO	COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE & FISCAL
	SERVICES
<b>COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:</b>	AMANDA ALLEN, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST
GABRIELS	

---

---

Mr. Haskell called the meeting of the Parks, Recreation & Railroad Committee to order at 1:18 p.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec, seconded by Mr. VanNess and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the January 31<sup>st</sup> meeting subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Mr. Haskell apprised the Committee of a recent trip he and his granddaughter had taken to the Up Yonda Farm. Mr. Haskell stated that for a nominal fee, he had purchased the pre-formed materials for his granddaughter to build a birdhouse with other children in her age range. He encouraged any of the Supervisors with young children or grandchildren to attend future workshops as the experience was priceless.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Pat Beland, Director of Parks, Recreation & Railroad, who distributed copies of his agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Beland noted that he had received the voucher for 70% of the snowmobile trail development and maintenance assistance grant promised by New York State. He reminded the Committee that although they had already amended the 2007 Budget to reflect the acceptance of these funds they had not yet received the actual check for the monies promised. Mr. Beland stated that he had been advised that the funds were forthcoming and asked if he could proceed in forwarding vouchers for distribution of these funds to the various snowmobile clubs. Mr. Haskell replied that he may; however, he advised Mr. Beland to note that the vouchers could not be redeemed until Warren County had received the funds from the State.

Proceeding to the second agenda item, Mr. Beland noted that he had received the supplemental agreement from NYSDOT (New York State Department of Transportation) for the final design and bidding of the rail stations (project PIN# 1755-H890-220). He advised that although Resolution No. 132 of 2007 had been authorized at the prior meeting to facilitate this agreement, it had to be amended to reflect NYSDOT requirements.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to amend Resolution No.

132 of 2007 which authorized supplemental agreement #3 (pertaining to rail stations project PIN#1755-H890-220) to reflect NYSDOT requirements, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 16<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. A copy of the resolution request is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Beland noted that he had spoken with Clough, Harbour & Associates about the rail stations project and found that they were very anxious to begin. He said that he suspected that a meeting would be held in the near future with Clough, Harbour & Associates and NYSDOT to review the stations project and he suggested that Mr. Haskell and Mr. Merlino attend the meeting as stations were being built in their respective Towns.

Mr. Beland advised that the \$2 million promised by New York State for the railroad rehabilitation project was tied to the States budget, which would not be finalized until April, at which point they would receive the funding. He noted that a large hole at the southern end of the railroad tracks in Saratoga County had to be filled prior to any further rehabilitation of the railroad tracks; however, he added, this work was contingent upon the receipt of State funding promised to both Warren and Saratoga Counties.

With respect to the Biondi property located in the Town of Hadley, Mr. Beland apprised that the closing on the property was imminent and should occur within the next week. Mr. Merlino asked if any decisions had been made with respect to the large garage currently located on the property and Mr. Beland replied in the negative. He suggested that the Committee tour the building to see if it was useable to the County prior to bidding its removal to another entity. Mr. Beland stated that there had been several inquiries from the public with respect to the building including offers to purchase it; Mr. Merlino advised that the Town of Lake Luzerne might also be interested in the building.

Mr. Beland apprised that agenda item number four pertained to a contract renewal option with Upper Hudson River Railroad for January 1, 2007 through June 30, 2007 and he advised that a workshop would be held at the close of the meeting to discuss this matter.

Mr. Beland reminded the Committee that at the prior Committee meeting Upper Hudson River Railroad had submitted several requests for improvements to the Kellogg Property. Upon reviewing the list of requests it had been determined that their total cost would be approximately \$22,000, he apprised. Mr. Beland said that although some monies had been budgeted for improvements to the Kellogg Property, they had narrowly avoided a deficit in 2006 when making the requested upgrades. He said that his Department currently held \$30,000 in their materials budget and these repairs would require the majority of those funds.

Mr. Belden asked who the current owners of the Kellogg Property were and Mr. Beland replied that the property was owned by OSI (Open Space Institute); however, he said, the County had signed a four year management agreement with them. Mr. Beland said that it was the County's hope that once the property had been rehabilitated, it would be remanded to the County at the end of the four year management term. Mr. Belden stated that he was opposed to spending large amounts for the rehabilitation of the Kellogg property if they could not be absolutely sure that the County would acquire it in the future.

Mr. Haskell advised that initially they had determined \$8,000 could be taken from the Parks, Recreation and Railroad budget for improvements to the Kellogg Property, leaving sufficient funds for the Departments operation through the rest of the year; however, that amount was far less than the cost of the improvements requested. He stated that the Upper Hudson River Railroad group should have approached the Committee

during Budget negotiations with their request. Unless additional funds could be found in another area, Mr. Haskell stated that \$8,000 would be the extent of the improvements made.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Beland advised that at a minimum, the requests for the T-Building should be appeased as the foundation was good and the building could be saved. He noted that although it would be nice to put metal roofing on all buildings the quotation accounted only for the main building as that was the one most frequently used; Mr. Beland added that this was the building heavily used for the Thomas the Tank Engine attraction.

Mr. Geraghty asked if the buildings could be used for storage and Mr. Beland replied that they were used to shelter the snowmobile trail groomer.

Mr. VanNess asked if the \$5,000 worth of electrical improvements listed in the estimate were absolutely necessary and Paul Butler, Recreation Facilities Manager, replied that they were. Mr. Butler apprised that the funds were intended to install lighting, illuminated exit signs and outlets as required by building code so that it could also be used during the Thomas the Tank Engine event.

Mr. Geraghty asked who received the proceeds from the Thomas the Tank Engine event and Mr. Beland replied that the Upper Hudson River Railroad received the majority of the funds while Warren County received \$1 for each train ticket sold. He added that approximately 17,000 tickets had been sold during the event and, as such, the County had received funds in the area of \$17,000.

Discussion ensued.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Stec and carried unanimously to authorize Mr. Beland to use \$7,000 from the Parks, Recreation and Railroad Department Budget to make improvements to the Kellogg Property.

Resuming the agenda review, Mr. Beland apprised that the sixth item listed pertained to the Sheriff's dock located on Lake George. He stated that his Department had always maintained the dock and it was now deteriorating; Mr. Beland added that in speaking with Larry Cleveland, Sheriff, he had been advised that the funds used to rebuild the dock could be reimbursed by New York State.

Discussion ensued.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraghty, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried, with Mr. VanNess abstaining from the vote, to authorize the Parks, Recreation and Railroad Department to proceed in re-building the Sheriff's dock located on Lake George with funds to be taken from the Parks, Recreation & Railroad Budget and refunded by New York State funding as applied for by the Sheriff's Office.

In closing, Mr. Beland addressed the list of items pending from prior Committee meetings, which was included in the agenda. He reminded the Committee that in prior meetings they had discussed the use of grant funds anticipated by Cornell Cooperative Extension for the construction of a new pavilion at the County Fairgrounds; however, it had been discovered that the funds could not be used for a pavilion and the project had been cancelled. Mr. Beland noted that tours of the Kellogg property and North Creek Train

Station would be scheduled for the spring when the weather was more conducive.

Mr. Haskell asked the Committee for permission to contact the Planning & Community Development Department and request that they assist the Thurman Connection Snowmobile Club in completing a grant application for a new groomer.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to approve Mr. Haskell's request as outlined above.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraghty, seconded by Mr. VanNess and carried unanimously to enter into executive session, pursuant to section 105(f) of the Public Officers Law to discuss matters leading to the employment of a particular person.

Executive session was declared from 1:42 p.m. to 1:58 p.m.

Upon reconvening, motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Stec and carried unanimously to approve the request to fill the vacant position of Sr. Building Maintenance Mechanic #4 with a base salary of \$34,975 and refer same to the Personnel Committee. A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.

Additionally, motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Stec and carried unanimously to retain Mr. Beland as a part-time consultant on an as-needed basis subsequent to his retirement at an hourly wage of \$35.00, not to exceed \$20,000 annually. *Please note: this item was referred to Paul Dusek, County Attorney, for discussion at the March 7<sup>th</sup> Personnel Committee meeting.*

As there was no further business to come before the Parks, Recreation & Railroad Committee, on motion made by Mr. Stec and seconded by Mr. Belden, Mr. Haskell adjourned the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Amanda Allen, Legislative Office Specialist