

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: **PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

DATE: March 1, 2007

Committee Members Present: Others Present:

Supervisors	Stec	Representing Planning & Community Development
	Belden	Department:
	Monroe	Patricia Tatich, Director
	Tessier	Wayne LaMothe, Assistant Director
	Champagne	Laura Moore, Planning Associate
	Mason	Joan Parsons, Commissioner of Administrative & Fiscal Services

Committee Members Absent:

Supervisor	Gabriels	Hal Payne, Administrator, Westmount Health Facility
		Patricia C. Nenninger, 2 nd Assistant County Attorney
		Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board
		G. Todd Lunt, Director, Human Resources
		Robert M. Blais, Mayor, Village of Lake George
		Daniel Davies, Representing Warren County Association of Realtors
		Nicholas Caimano, Budget Officer
		Supervisor Geraghty
		Supervisor Kenny
		Supervisor Haskell
		Supervisor VanNess
		Supervisor Sheehan
		Debra L. Schreiber, Legislative Office Specialist

Mr. Stec called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier, seconded by Mr. Mason, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the January 29, 2007 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Patricia A. Tatich, Director, Planning & Community Development, who distributed copies of her agenda to the Committee members, and a copy of same is on file with the minutes.

Ms. Tatich requested permission to reappoint Wayne LaMothe, Assistant Director, Planning & Community Development, as the County Liaison for the 2010 Census, effective March 1, 2007.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously approving the request as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 16, 2007 Board Meeting. A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Ms. Tatich requested permission to appoint Christopher Kilmartin to the Warren County Planning Board, effective April 11, 2007, replacing Bennet Driscoll, who resigned effective February 16, 2007.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. Mason and carried unanimously approving the request as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 16, 2007 Board Meeting. A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Ms. Tatich apprised the third resolution requested authorizing the Lakes to Locks Passage, Inc. to be the coordinating agency for Warren County with the Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial Commission for the 400th Anniversary Celebration.

Motion was made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously approving the request as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 16, 2007 Board Meeting. A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Monroe entered the meeting at 10:41 a.m.

Mr. LaMothe began by explaining a meeting was held with Mayor Robert Blais, Village of Lake George, to discuss the terms of some Village-owned property. He stated that Mayor Blais was present to discuss these terms.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mayor Blais, who indicated there was a question whether the Outdoor Drama Theater (ODT) Project would go forward. He reported the Village of Lake George received two grants from the Warren County Parks, Recreation & Railroad Department, which designated the Village-owned area (outlined in green) as parklands. In addition, Mayor Blais stated, the Village of Lake George agreed to the following:

- 1) in lieu of the grant received by New York State (NYS), the recreational area created by the Village of Lake George would be carried forward in perpetuity; and
- 2) if the Village of Lake George destroyed or diminished the recreational aspects of the parkland, they would be required to replace it with another recreational area of equal value.

He indicated the approved Master Plan included the construction of an amphitheater located behind the reservoir, as well as some attached buildings. After numerous discussions with the County Attorney and Rick Hoffman, Counsel with the Department of State and representative with the Adirondack Park Agency, he said, he had been apprised they did not foresee any issues.

Mayor Blais stated if the Outdoor Drama Theater were built on this particular parcel of land, he emphasized the County and Village would share the road, parking areas,

public restrooms, water system, security system and they all impacted either the recreational uses or the outdoor drama uses. In addition, he said, he could foresee an enormous amount of intermingling of activities between the uses of the outdoor drama theater as well as the uses currently required by the park. The Mayor acknowledged that the Village of Lake George did not want to relinquish any assets, nor did they want to compare it to East Field; therefore, he suggested the County consider leasing the entire recreational turnkey operation in Warren County. He added there were in excess of 1,000 visitors that utilized the area during the winter school recess. He reported their budget was approximately \$60,000 to \$70,000 per year and all capital projects, which included the ball fields, lighting in the parking lots, as well as the paved roads, would be completed. Furthermore, he said, he could foresee scheduling conflicts and recommended the management be performed by one entity rather than two.

Mr. Champagne asked whether Mayor Blais was suggesting Warren County take over the entire operation and allow *all* County residents access to the park. Mayor Blais responded the Village previously had an agreement whereby the County contributed \$25,000 per year to the recreation area for a two-year period; however, he said, that agreement was not renewed for 2007. In lieu of the County taking ownership, he stated, the facility would become available to all Warren County residents. He commented in a recent census report, 66% of the visitors were non-village/town residents, noting that many were from the Town of Queensbury and City of Glens Falls. During winter recess, the Mayor reported that 852 people utilized the tubing hill and 160 people accessed the cross-country ski trails. With respect to any potential revenue, Mayor Blais acknowledged the Town of Lake George contributed \$29,000 per year as well as some revenue received by people utilizing the softball/Little League fields.

Mr. VanNess entered the meeting at 10:57 a.m.

Mr. Tessier commented numerous people outside the Village and Town of Lake George utilized the recreational area quite frequently. He said the landfill was open during the winter but closed during soccer season. Mayor Blais noted the soccer teams were another source of revenue.

Mr. Champagne exited the meeting at 10:55 a.m.

Mr. Tessier related that the Town of Lake George owned approximately 100 acres of land while the Village owned 300 acres and they could be utilized for additional parking.

In summation, Mayor Blais indicated the following resources had been accomplished:

- the water system was installed;
- public restrooms were installed;
- all roads were handicapped accessible and paved to the baseball fields;

- three parking lots were included; and
- all phases of electricity (including security cameras) had been installed in all areas.

Mr. Stec apprised the Parks, Recreation and Railroad Committee would need to consider recommending Warren County take over the operation; however, he said, he was unsure about the desire of this Committee. As far as turning this proposed operation over to the County, he queried whether ownership of the land had been discussed. Mayor Blais responded their intention was to lease the land as they currently harvested lumber and required someone from the Village of Lake George to serve on the Park, Recreation & Railroad Committee relative to any capital improvements. Mr. Tessier added that the South Warren Snowmobile Club constructed a building on the property to house their groomers for the Warren County Snowmobile trails that pass through this area.

Ms. Nenninger informed the Committee that the transfer of ownership or a lease that was not revocable would require an alienation statute enacted by the legislature under the Alienation of Parkland. She apprised one requirement might be a land swap. In discussions with New York State (NYS), she said they must move forward if they were expecting to accomplish the task this year. Mr. Monroe asked if the County were setting a precedent by taking over the operation of a village recreational area. Mayor Blais stated if the County was unable to take over ownership, he asked the County to consider supporting the recreational center like it had in previous years. Mr. VanNess concurred with Mr. Monroe by apprising that the Little League organization was given two years to locate somewhere other than the Queensbury School property. At a recent Municipal Shared Services Committee meeting, Mr. Stec said a County-wide Parks & Recreational Department was mentioned. While the Queensbury Recreational program was extremely proactive, he said, he was uncertain they would be willing to consolidate their programs under a County-wide Parks & Recreational Department. Mr. Stec stated he had a meeting with the Little League organization, the Parks and Recreation Commission and Mayor Akins, City of Glens Falls, relative to a 90 acre parcel on Potter Road in the Town of Queensbury.

Mr. Caimano commented the 2007 County budget brought forth many sacrifices but reminded the Committee the Village of Lake George were the recipients of Occupancy Tax funds, as well as funds received from the purchase of property that now occupied the Welcome Center. Given the list of 2007 pending projects, Mr. Stec asked where on the County priority list of spending did the Outdoor Drama Theater fall. He said they did not have a cost analyses reflecting a breakdown of the taxpayer share as opposed to State/non profit/private funding. Mr. Mason asked whether the County could lease the property occupied by the Outdoor Drama Theater and Mayor Blais replied that was another option but he said, he was convinced they would reach a compromise.

Motion was made by Mr. Monroe and seconded by Mr. Belden authorizing the County Attorney and the Village of Lake George to introduce a bill that granted the property as a parkland, as well as share in the cost of operations of the recreation area. He further recommended this matter be referred to the Parks, Recreation & Railroad Committee.

After discussion, Mr. Stec called the question and the motion was carried unanimously as previously outlined; and the necessary resolution was authorized for the March 16, 2007 Committee meeting.

Mayor Blais exited the meeting 11:10 a.m.

Continuing on with the list of pending items, Ms. Tatich stated she heard the report from the LDC relative to participation by the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and the joining of the two organizations. She added a plan was being developed to have a reduced size board with some members from the Warren County Board of Supervisors as well as a recommendation that Peter Wohl and Len Fosbrook serve as CEO (Chief Executive Officer) and CFO (Chief Financial Officer) respectively, she added.

With respect to 4(b) on the list of pending items, Mr. Tessier apprised they were looking for a potential candidate from Lake George to serve on the Planning Board.

Ms. Tatich asked Mr. LaMothe to update the Committee relative to Item 5 on the list of pending items. Mr. LaMothe apprised there was an offer of \$4,000 by the Realtors Association to enter into a contract with SDG for an Image Mate Online System as the current contract had expired and was not renewed. At a prior Committee meeting, he said, there was some discussion relative to whether the \$4,000 offer was fair because it involved an amendment to the County structure.

Ms. Tatich added that without the assessment information being included in the data online service, the County felt they had not reaped the revenue and, therefore, was pointless.

Daniel Davies, representing the Warren County Association of Realtors and the Warren County Multiple Listing Service (MLS), stated they currently contracted with two land subscriptions from Rochester. He said the services offered by SDG were updated more frequently, thereby producing an increase in the revenue stream to Warren County and they felt the contract price of \$4,000 was similar to the contracts with the other land subscribers. Mr. Monroe queried how much revenue the system currently generated and Mr. LaMothe replied it was approximately \$1,500 to \$2,000 but the system was not available at the present time due to a lack of technical support. In order for the system to be in full operation, he stated the protocols and hardware must be transferred from one network language to another, as well as upgrading the contract, all of which required the services of SDG.

Mr. LaMothe recommended amending the price structure and extending the contracts with SDG, which he said was approximately \$3,600, and accepting the offer of \$4,000 from the Warren County Association of Realtors.

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier and seconded by Mr. Monroe approving the requests as outlined above.

Mr. Monroe suggested obtaining subscription costs for other users as well as doing a costs analyses making it affordable to more users. Ms. Tatich related the County paid \$30,000 for software anticipating an increase in revenues that would offset the cost of building the system. In addition, she stated the contract was based on a full array of information that was attractive to realtor groups, bar associations and whoever else but due to the level of information on comparables, the number of users decreased. Mr. Mason stated there was a block on certain information. Mr. Monroe commented having this information available was a benefit to the towns, villages and cities and he did not believe this was a commercial service. Mr. LaMothe explained the basic service offered the Image Mate Online while the enhanced version linked additional information that necessitated the contract with SDG. Mr. Mason asked if the Warren County Association of Realtors would be interested in the information supplied by SDG if the comparables were not made available online and Mr. Davies replied the information was similar to the other systems but that was why they were not willing to spend additional funds. He stated if the County came up with a more sophisticated system, then they would revisit the contract offer.

After discussion, Mr. Stec called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to:

- contract with SDG for an Image Mate Online System, in the amount of \$3,600;
- enter into an agreement with the Warren County Realtors Association, in the amount of \$4,000; and
- pursuing additional agreements with the Warren County Bar Association as well as abstractors.

Mr. Stec stated further action by this Committee may be required in order to execute the proposed documents but the Committee had given their Department direction.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Monroe relative to the assessment information, Mr. LaMothe acknowledged that some fields in the system were blocked because the assessors did not want the information online.

Motion was made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mr. Tessier and carried unanimously requesting that the blocked information be made available online.

With respect to the request that the County Attorney research the alienation legislation, Ms. Nenninger asked for a referral to the Legislative Committee.

Motion was made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mr. Tessier and carried unanimously approving the request by Ms. Nenninger be referred to the Legislative Committee.

Continuing on with Item 6, Ms. Tatich explained that the Town of Horicon was the recipient of a Restore New York grant award. She apprised that the Town lost their applicant so efforts were made to secure the funding for a different project; however, she said, the agency in charge would not transfer the grant funds to another project and encouraged the Town of Horicon to come back another time.

Ms. Tatich stated there were discussions related to providing grant services to the various County Departments and that a commission-based grant writer position be established. She recommended that each department that had knowledge of programs and projects that required grant funding would work in conjunction with this grant writer. After a meeting with Congresswoman Gillibrand, Mrs. Parsons explained there were funds available to the County but they required an individual with diversity and experience to research the various grants to obtain additional revenue for the County.

At the last Parks, Recreation & Railroad Committee meeting, Mr. Haskell apprised a motion was made requesting assistance from the Planning Department for a snowmobile club grant for a new groomer and he queried who the contact person would be. Ms. Tatich suggested scheduling a meeting with the County Attorney to clarify the responsibilities of the Planning Department as it related to grant assistance. She said they had been advised that if communities were not eligible recipients for these funds, then their Department could not assist them in applying and fulfilling any potential administrative obligations.

There being no further business to come before the committee, on motion by Mr. Mason and seconded by Mr. Tessier, Mr. Stec adjourned the meeting at 10:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra L. Schreiber, Legislative Office Specialist