

**WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**COMMITTEE: MUNICIPAL SHARED SERVICES**

**DATE: FEBRUARY 23, 2007**

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**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Supervisors O'Connor  
Mason  
Belden  
Merlino

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Supervisors VanNess  
Sheehan  
Tessier

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

William Thomas, Chairman  
Joan Parsons, Commissioner of  
Administrative and Fiscal Services  
Joan Sady, Clerk  
LeRoy Akins, Mayor, City of Glens Falls  
Supervisor Caimano  
Supervisor Haskell  
Supervisor Kenny  
Supervisor Stec  
Supervisor F. Thomas  
William Lamy, Superintendent, DPW  
Paul Butler, Recreation Facilities Manager  
Cameron Tessier, City of Glens Falls  
JoAnn McKinstry, Confidential Secretary to  
the Commissioner of Administrative  
and Fiscal Services  
Maury Thompson, *The Post Star*  
David Cederstrom, *The Chronicle*  
Nicole Livingston, Deputy Clerk

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Mr. O'Connor called the meeting of the Municipal Shared Services Committee to order at 11:06 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Mason and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the February 1, 2007 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk.

Mr. O'Connor apprised that on Tuesday, February 20, 2007, a meeting was held at the City Hall in Glens Falls between the City of Glens Falls Supervisors, the Glens Falls Common Council and the City of Glens Falls Mayor, LeRoy Akins. He stated there were conversations with regard to many issues, one of the main issues being the lack of funds in the City of Glens Falls budget. In relation to that, he said, the discussions were centered around East Field.

Mr. O'Connor recognized Paul Butler, Recreation Facilities Manager, who was present to discuss how the Warren County Parks, Recreation and Railroad Department could assist in the rehabilitation of East Field.

Mr. O'Connor noted they had asked the City of Glens Falls to provide the amount of funds that were spent each year on East Field in order for Warren County to determine what the costs would be and the impact it would have on the Parks, Recreation and Railroad budget.

Mr. Butler stated he did not have any numbers at this time, as far as equipment and such; however, his concern, as well as Pat Beland's, Director of Parks, Recreation and Railroad, was that he did not believe they had temporary help allocated within their budget. He explained that the schedule for Parks, Recreation and Railroad was booked solid and throughout their season, they played catch-up each year to complete the projects that were scheduled. He added that they had five maintenance workers on staff that were assigned to specific tasks.

Mr. Kenny mentioned that during the meeting held at the City Hall in Glens Falls, it was discussed that an assessment should be done on the East Field property, a review of what up-grades would be needed in order to make the property viable for use by sports teams, a statement of revenues received by East Field, as well as a cost estimate of funds spent on maintenance, to give the County a better idea of what would be involved to maintain East Field.

Privilege of the floor was extended to LeRoy Akins, Mayor of the City of Glens Falls. Mayor Akins explained in the past, the City of Glens Falls had contracted out for services for the maintenance of East Field and primary up-keep of the stadium. He said that the buildings and the bleachers located at East Field were in need of upgrades. He stated that there were various groups and programs that utilized East Field and contracted it out. Mayor Akins expounded that if Warren County could take over East Field, then the County could back assess the costs to the respective organizations that were contracted with the City of Glens Falls for use of the field. For example, he said, the Glens Falls Little League had contracted four or five of the fields which they maintained on their own, making them self-paying, and he would like to see that type of cooperation continue. He concluded that with regard to upgrades and rehabilitation to the buildings, he suggested contacting BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services) and their class programs to do the work for their own field experiences. Mr. Belden added that another possibility may be the Youth Court, which was involved in Community Service type projects also.

Mr. Caimano said he thought the discussions that were held at the meeting in City Hall regarding East Field and Warren County's collaboration, were limited to the ball fields only. Mayor Akins replied that the Glens Falls Common Council thought it would be very difficult to draw a line between what the City would own and maintain and what the County would own and maintain.

Mr. Kenny expounded East Field comprised approximately eight to ten acres, which included a parking lot, baseball field, concession stands, basketball courts, swimming pool, picnic area and Little League Fields.

Mr. O'Connor questioned if the Little League paid the City for use of the fields and Mayor Akins responded the Little League maintained the fields under their own budget.

Mr. O'Connor apprised that the focus was whether or not it was feasible to even begin conversations or negotiations with regard to Warren County taking over responsibility of East Field. He stated that if the County owned the property, there would be an opportunity to apply for grants and assistance. He noted that he had questioned if the residents in the east end of the City of Glens Falls were receptive to the County taking over the property and the response he received from the three representatives of the east end was a definite yes.

William Lamy, Superintendent of DPW, asked Mayor Akins if the City provided staff for crowd control, parking, clean-up, et cetera, during special events held at East Field. Mayor Akins replied that with certain events the City had developed partnerships with various businesses to provide individuals to assist with specific needs, such as security.

Mr. Mason said it was his impression that the question was whether the City of Glens Falls wanted to sell or lease the East Field property. He further noted that the County had offered assistance to the City in the past with regard to the water problem they were experiencing on the fields. He stated that the Soil and Water Conservation District had examined the property and had done grid work to determine how to keep the grounds drier; however, the previous engineer from the City was not interested in attempting the project.

Mr. O'Connor suggested that a smaller group of individuals, comprised of a couple people from the Common Council and a couple people from the Municipal Shared Services Committee, should be established to begin meeting more frequently to expand these discussions. He added that the Glens Falls Common Council members would receive copies of the minutes from the Municipal Shared Services Committee meetings each month via email.

With regard to the County owning East Field, Mr. Caimano expounded a decision could not be made until the costs associated with ownership were known. He agreed that a smaller group of individuals from each of the parties involved should be established in order for decisions to be made.

Mr. Kenny recommended a tour of the East Field property be conducted in mid-April, in order for the County to know what they were looking at. Mr. Mason mentioned the first step should be to have Paul Dusek, County Attorney, research whether or not this purchase would be legal.

Mr. Haskell said it was not clear to him if the Glens Falls Common Council was in favor of the County assuming responsibility of East Field, and Mr. O'Connor responded the entire Common Council was in favor of this idea.

Mr. Merlino noted that each of the twelve towns in the County had their own Parks and

Recreation or Highway Departments, and he suggested that one week a month each town could send two of their staff members from those Departments to assist in the rehabilitation of East Field, as a shared service to the County. He further mentioned the possibility of the Occupancy Tax Funds being used for one year to boost East Field's finances, given the field did bring tourism into the area. Mr. Kenny replied that was a question that Mr. Dusek would need to answer.

Mr. O'Connor clarified the first step in this process would be to have Mr. Dusek research the legality of this concept, as well as the possibility of the Occupancy Tax funds being dedicated to East Field for one year. The next step, he said, would be to form a smaller group of members from the Common Council and the Municipal Shared Services Committee that would meet frequently, as opposed to once a month, to expand discussions.

Mr. O'Connor requested that Mayor Akins ask Michael Mender, Assistant to the Mayor, to compile figures with regard to the purchase of East Field, as well as maintenance costs, that the County could review to determine the effects it would have on the County's Parks, Recreation and Railroad budget. He reiterated that the Common Council was 100% in favor of the County taking over responsibility of East Field, as were the residents of the East End Association.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion by Mr. Mason and seconded by Mr. Belden, Mr. O'Connor adjourned the meeting at 12:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole Livingston, Deputy Clerk