

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: ECONOMIC GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

DATE: MAY 30, 2014

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS TAYLOR
MONROE
WOOD
STROUGH

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR BEATY

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION:
ED BARTHOLOMEW, PRESIDENT
JENNIFER SWITZER, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
WAYNE LAMOTHE, COUNTY PLANNER
PATRICIA TATICH, ASSOCIATE PLANNER
KEVIN B. GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
AMANDA ALLEN, DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD
FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISORS BROCK
DICKINSON
MCDEVITT
MERLINO
SEEBER
SIMPSON
THOM RANDALL, *ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*
CHARLENE DIRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Taylor called the meeting of the Economic Growth & Development Committee to order at 10:20 a.m.

Motion was made by Ms. Wood, seconded by Mr. Strough and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Wayne LaMothe, County Planner, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Commencing the agenda review, Mr. LaMothe requested the pending item concerning proposed State Legislation to include the Schroon River as part of the Intercoastal Waterway System be deleted from the pending item list, as he had been informed by the New York State Department of State (NYS DOS) that Senator Little had introduced a bill to that effect. It was the consensus of the Committee that this item be removed from the pending item list.

Mr. LaMothe requested authorization to establish a Capital Project, H349.9550 280, First Wilderness 2013, in an amount not to exceed \$1,107,000, in order to administer the 2013 Local Waterfront Revitalization Program grant award.

Motion was made by Ms. Wood, seconded by Mr. Monroe and carried unanimously to approve the request to establish a Capital Project, H349.9550 280, First Wilderness 2013, as outlined above and to forward same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. LaMothe pointed out that information pertaining to the amount of work necessary to initiate the Next Generation (Next-Gen) 911 System was included in the agenda packet. He said this enhanced 911 System should be in place within the next two to three years. He explained the current E-911

System utilized address ranges and there had not been consistent numbering completed over the years which created problems. He added there were a number of homes which did not have an E-911 address. Under the Next-Gen 911 System, he continued, the County would be required to provide a database which had a GPS (Global Positioning System) Point for every building and if the building was a commercial or apartment complex, then a GPS Point would be required for every exterior door or apartment. He stated in order to meet these requirements, the Department would need to build a whole new database. Mr. LaMothe informed the State would provide a point data layer and the staff would need to manually sort through approximately 62,000 points to conduct quality control checks and verifications. He apprised the Next-Gen 911 System would be able to determine the position of a 911 caller who was out on Lake George, eliminating the need for the caller to inform of their approximate location. He stated the Sheriff's Office would purchase the necessary equipment and create a Regional Dispatch Center, in collaboration with Washington County. He noted it would be the duty of the Planning & Community Development Department to provide the necessary data.

Mr. LaMothe apprised the Department currently employed a Part-Time GIS (Geographic Information Systems) Administrator and he requested the creation of a Temporary GIS Technician at a rate of \$15 per hour, not to exceed 200 hours per year, effective July 1, 2014. He also requested to amend the 2014 County Budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$3,554, with the revenue code(s) to be determined by the Finance Committee, to reflect the funds necessary to fund the position. He said he would like to retain the Temporary GIS Technician position for 200 hours in 2014 and 200 hours in 2015 in order to complete the Next-Gen 911 database. Mr. LaMothe stated the last page of the agenda packet contained a cost comparison of utilizing existing personnel to complete the necessary work versus the use of a Temporary GIS Technician and there would be a savings of approximately \$11,000. He noted the Part-Time GIS Administrator position was a half-time position and it would not be possible to complete the necessary work with existing personnel without sacrificing other duties. Mr. Taylor asked if the funds were available within the Departmental Budget and Mr. LaMothe replied in the negative.

Motion was made by Mr. Monroe and seconded by Ms. Wood to approve the request to create and fill the position of Temporary GIS Technician as outlined above and to forward same to the Personnel Committee; and to approve the request to amend the 2014 County Budget as outlined above and to forward same to the Finance Committee.

Pertaining to the Next-Gen 911 System's ability to determine the location of a 911 caller on Lake George, Mr. Monroe asked if it would be necessary for the caller to turn on the GPS feature of their cell phone in order to be located and Mr. LaMothe responded that it was not, as the Next-Gen 911 System would determine the location based on the cell tower which was in use. Mr. Strough asked the total additional cost to implement the Next-Gen 911 System and Mr. LaMothe responded the cost would be approximately \$33,000 over two years, not including the Temporary GIS Technician position, and there was no available revenue source. Pertaining to the Temporary GIS Technician position, Mr. LaMothe stated he would need 200 hours in 2014 and could possibly require an additional 200 hours in 2015. Mr. Strough asked the possibility of applying for an Office of Homeland Security Grant and Mr. LaMothe responded he had spoken with the Sheriff's Office and the Office of Emergency Services and confirmed there was currently no grant funding available for implementation of the Next-Gen 911 System. Paul Dusek, County Administrator, commented the funding source for the Temporary GIS Technician position would be determined by the Finance Committee.

Mr. Taylor called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to approve the request to create and fill the position of Temporary GIS Technician as outlined above and to forward same to the Personnel Committee; and to approve the request to amend the 2014 County Budget as outlined above and to forward same to the Finance Committee. *Copies of the resolution request forms are on file with the minutes.*

Mr. LaMothe said that at a recent Public Works Committee Meeting there had been discussion pertaining to the possibility of applying for grant funding to purchase a wood chipper to be shared by the municipalities in Warren County. He advised of a discussion with Shawn Maguire, of NYS DOS, who administered the Local Government Efficiencies Program. He stated he would be able to submit a grant application for the purchase of the wood chipper as long as he was provided with the technical data. Mr. LaMothe apprised that Mr. Maguire had informed there was \$4 million in grant funding available State-wide; however, he added, Mr. Maguire indicated the State was looking for reductions in services and not additional services. He said Mr. Maguire informed the likelihood of receiving funding would depend on the number of applications received and the amounts requested. Ms. Wood mentioned she had spoken with James Lieberum, District Manager of the Warren County Soil & Water Conservation District, who had informed that the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) had grant funding available which could be used for the purchase of a wood chipper. She said Mr. Lieberum had suggested the County apply for grant funding which could be administered by the Warren County Soil & Water Conservation District. She recommended Mr. Lieberum be contacted to determine if grant funding was still available. Mr. Monroe stated he felt it was important for the County to pursue grant funding for the purchase of a wood chipper if it was available. If grant funding was not available, he continued, the County should consider bonding the cost of the wood chipper and having the municipalities repay the full cost of the bond. He noted the alternative to the purchase of the wood chipper would be burning which could be problematic. He stated the municipalities needed to provide some means for the residents to dispose of brush and he mentioned the purchase of a tub grinder would allow for the disposal of stumps, as well.

Mr. Dusek said he would email Mr. Lieberum and Jeffery Tennyson, Superintendent of the Department of Public Works, following the meeting and ask them to include this item in a grant application to the NYS DEC. He noted if there was a problem or further discussion was necessary, then a Special Committee Meeting could be called. Mr. Monroe said a wood chipper had been mentioned but he felt the purchase of a tub grinder would be more appropriate. Mr. Strough informed the Town of Queensbury was collaborating with the City of Glens Falls to negotiate with private companies for an arrangement in which the Town would provide the area for the grinding in a non-residential neighborhood and the company would provide the service while retaining the wood chippings (mulch). Mr. Strough opined the costs would be negligible and Mr. Dusek suggested that both avenues be pursued. It was the consensus of the Committee to authorize Mr. Dusek to contact Mr. Lieberum and Mr. Tennyson concerning the submission of a grant application for the purchase of a tub grinder to be shared by the municipalities within Warren County.

Mr. LaMothe informed the Planning Department had participated with ANCA (Adirondack North Country Association) on a Scenic Byways Study to rename the Dude Ranch Trail to the First Wilderness Scenic Byway. He said he was unsure if the County was currently a member of ANCA although he recalled they used to be. Mr. Taylor asked Patricia Tatich, Associate Planner, if she had been involved with ANCA when she was the County Planner and Ms. Tatich replied she continued to be a member of the ANCA Board. Ms. Tatich stated that municipalities and local governments were members of ANCA and at one point in time, the County had contributed approximately \$1,700 towards membership. She recalled the last time the County had contributed financially to ANCA was a year or two ago in the amount of \$700. *(Note: The annual funding provided by Warren County to*

ANCA is \$750.) Mr. LaMothe said he was unsure if the County currently participated in ANCA; however, he added, if they did not he encouraged them to resume participation. Mr. Dusek stated this was something which would have been discussed during the Budget Process; however, he continued, if the County wanted to participate and the funds were not available in the Departmental Budget, he could present this matter to the Finance Committee. Mr. Monroe opined that participation with ANCA was beneficial and he pointed out ANCA had been one of the sponsors of the original Adirondack Park Regional Assessment Project. He added ANCA had been the first to bring to his and the Review Board's attention, the new developments in bio-mass and solar photovoltaic energy which led to several Towns switching to solar power.

This concluded the Planning & Community Development portion of the Committee Meeting and the Economic Development Corporation portion of the meeting commenced at 10:39 a.m.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Ed Bartholomew, President of the Economic Development Corporation (EDC), who distributed copies of the program from the May 16, 2014 EDC Annual Luncheon to the Committee members; *a copy of the program is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Bartholomew apprised there would be three topics of discussion for the meeting: a review of the May 16, 2014 EDC Annual Luncheon; a new survey dealing with economic development in our region; and a proposed piece of legislation which the EDC opposed.

Mr. Bartholomew advised the focus of the EDC Annual Luncheon had been the forest products industry. He said a video entitled "Where Would We Be Without Wood" had been created to show the impact of the entire process from logging to paper products. He thanked Amanda Allen, Deputy Clerk of the Board, for setting up the equipment to play the video entitled "Where Would We Be Without Wood" for the Committee members.

Mr. Bartholomew opined the video showed Warren County's involvement in the forest products industry. He advised there was a lot of focus today on nano-technology but it was important to not overlook one of the major industries, forest products, which had been around for hundreds of years. He stated the EDC's mission was to focus on bringing new businesses and industry to the area but also to ensure that existing businesses and industries had the opportunity to grow. He mentioned they had attempted to include as many of the forest products industry businesses as possible in the production of the video. He stated next year the EDC would focus on another area industry in order to highlight their contribution to the economy.

Mr. Monroe mentioned a report pertaining to the Adirondack Park Regional Assessment which had been released a few weeks prior and showed that since the State had started purchasing land in the mid 1800's, they had purchased a total of 2.6 million acres of woodland (of the 5.8 million acres of woodland in New York State) which had formerly been in production. He said in 1972, the State Land Master Plan was adopted by Governor Rockefeller and provided that highly productive forest land should not be purchased by the State in fee because it was important to the economy. Since that time, he continued, the State had ignored the State Land Master Plan and had purchased an additional 300 acres. He mentioned a meeting with Finch Paper, LLC a couple of years prior in which the company had indicated their need to travel 375 miles or more, to Maine and Canada in order to obtain the wood necessary for production. He stated the people managing most of the forest lands indicated they were being hampered by the regulations of the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) on clear cutting because they prohibited generally accepted forestry practices. He commented these were issues which needed to be focused on and he informed of a meeting of the APA on June 5, 2014 to discuss new regulations. A brief discussion ensued.

Mr. Bartholomew advised that when trying to retain and recruit businesses to the area, the local economy, the local and State tax policies and the quality of the local workforce were important aspects. He added at times the issue of the quality of life factor had been brought up. He noted some businesses placed the quality of life factor as low on the priority list while others place it high on the list. He distributed copies of a handout entitled "The Regional Impact of Quality of Life on Entrepreneurial Decisions" to the Committee members and explained this was the result of a recent survey by Moody Analytics; *a copy of the handout is on file with the minutes*. He commented that Moody Analytics had listed quality of life as a significant factor in entrepreneurial decisions. Mr. Bartholomew opined the pure beauty of our recreation from Lake George and other area lakes were included in the Warren County quality of life factor. He noted the quality of life factor also included aspects, such as education, health care and public safety. Pertaining to the table included in the handout, Mr. Bartholomew pointed out Glens Falls, New York had been ranked fourth on the list as far as quality of life. He noted that for the purposes of the survey, Glens Falls, New York referred to the metropolitan area which included: Saratoga, parts of Washington County and all of Warren County. He commented this was another tool that the EDC could utilize in the recruitment of new businesses to Warren County.

Finally, Mr. Bartholomew informed of proposed State Legislation sponsored by Senator Diane Sevino which would require that all IDA (Industrial Development Agency) projects, from their respective County, be submitted to the Capital Region Economic Development Council (CREDC) for review and approval. He explained this would mean the eight Counties on the CREDC would judge projects in Warren County. He opined this proposed State Legislation did not make any sense whatsoever and had divided support at the State level. He suggested this be addressed by drafting a letter to State Legislators. He noted the proposed State Legislation included an item which stated any violation of State or local rules or regulations would automatically disqualify or suspend the benefits of the company. He added there was no definition or qualification for the term "any rule or regulation".

Mr. Taylor suggested this matter be referred to the Legislative & Rules Committee and Mr. Monroe countered that he was unsure of the timing for the proposed State Legislation and suggested the Committee authorize a letter of opposition. Mr. Monroe asked Mr. Bartholomew if he could draft a letter to be signed by the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and Mr. Bartholomew replied affirmatively. A brief discussion ensued.

Motion was made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Ms. Wood and carried unanimously to authorize the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors to sign a letter drafted by Mr. Bartholomew to State Legislators opposing the proposed State Legislation sponsored by Senator Diane Sevino which would require that all IDA projects be submitted to the Capital Region Economic Development Council for review and approval.

Mr. LaMothe stated the Committee was aware of the restrictions which required the County to award 10% of the contracts for grant funded projects to minority-owned businesses and 10% to women-owned businesses; however, he informed, under the new grant round, the County would also be required to award 6% of the contracts to veteran-owned businesses. He surmised this meant that 26% of the contracts for grant funded projects were already predetermined as to who the bids would be awarded to. He acknowledged the State would issue waivers if a good faith effort was shown but it was just one more restriction placed upon the Counties. Mr. Bartholomew agreed there was a waiver process which required proof of a good faith effort. He stated that with technical areas, such as broadband, there were not a lot of minority-owned or women-owned businesses with the necessary technical skills. In general construction, he continued, there were a lot of minority-owned and women-owned businesses which made it fairly easy to comply with the restrictions but for projects that required technical skills it would be more difficult.

Mr. Taylor stated that when Mr. Bartholomew first assumed his position as President of the EDC there had been a lot of talk about cooperation and he was pleased this had come to light. He said he had a lot more information now than he had received under previous administrations. He noted Mr. Bartholomew included him when he pitched site locations to prospective businesses.

As there was no further business to come before the Economic Growth & Development Committee, on motion made by Ms. Wood and seconded by Mr. Strough, Mr. Taylor adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist