

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: JOINT ECONOMIC GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT AND HIGHER EDUCATION/FINANCE

DATE: JULY 1, 2020

ECONOMIC GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT OTHERS PRESENT:

AND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPRESENTING SUNY ADIRONDACK:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS WILD

BRAYMER

DICKINSON

MAGOWAN

MCDEVITT

SEEBER

DR. KRISTINE DUFFY, PRESIDENT

ANN MARIE SCHEIDEGGER, VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES/TREASURER

FRANK E. THOMAS, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

RYAN MOORE, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD

SUPERVISORS BRUNO

DRISCOLL

ECONOMIC GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT TAMMIE DELORENZO, ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

AND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE MIKE SWAN, WARREN COUNTY TREASURER

MEMBERS ABSENT:

SUPERVISORS HOGAN

LEGGETT

DIAMOND

MEMBERS OF THE WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND STAFF

SARAH MCLENITHAN, DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS FRASIER

BEATY

BRAYMER

MCDEVITT

SIMPSON

STROUGH

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

ABSENT:

SUPERVISORS CONOVER

GERAGHTY

MERLINO

Please note, the following contains a summarization of the July 1, 2020 joint meeting of the Economic Growth & Development and Higher Education and Finance Committees; the meeting in its entirety can be heard on the Warren County website using the following links:

<https://warrencountyny.gov/gov/comm/Archive/2020/economic/>

<https://warrencountyny.gov/gov/comm/Archive/2020/finance/>

Note: As per Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 202.1: "Article 7 of the Public Officers Law, to the extent necessary to permit any public body to meet and take such actions authorized by the law without permitting in public in-person access to meetings and authorizing such meetings to be held remotely by conference call or similar service, provided that the public has the ability to view or listen to such proceeding and that such meetings are recorded and later transcribed". All of the Committee members participated via video or teleconference, aside from Mr. McDevitt who was physically present.

Mrs. Frasier called the Finance Committee to order at 9:07 a.m. and Ms. Braymer called the Economic Growth & Development and Higher Education Committee to order immediately after. *Note: Committee Chairman Wild was present and listening throughout the meeting; however, due to an unstable connection he asked Ms. Braymer to Chair the meeting for him.*

Copies of the meeting agenda were distributed to those Committee members in attendance, those participating virtually accessed the agenda via the Warren County website; a copy of the agenda is on file with the meeting minutes.

Dr. Kristine Duffy, *President of SUNY (State University of New York) Adirondack*, advised she would like to take this opportunity to share the status of the Fall restart planning with one of the steps they needed to accomplish being to submit a plan that consisted of all parts of the institution that included their health and safety planning and how they intended on delivering instructions for the Fall. She stated this plan was submitted one week ago to SUNY and the Governor had designated the authority to SUNY to approve the Fall SUNY campus plans. She informed they had been notified last night that their plan was approved which she was pleased with because they could now more publicly pronounce their plans and although they still had a significant amount of details to work out, at a minimum their overall framework was approved. She mentioned they were working expeditiously with all of their faculty to finalize their plans for individual courses for the Fall semester with the notion of preparing for a remote environment, as well as small in-person classes in particular for those that required a more hands on approach, such as nursing, culinary arts and some of their technical programs where the faculty was compiling their plans on how to bring students on campus for small instructional labs. She said they would have a mix of what was traditionally offered online using what they referred to as an “asynchronous model” where students could log into the class on their time as well as courses on more of a synchronous model through remote technology similar to Zoom or other platforms so that students were attending class at a designated time similar to how they would in-person and depending on the need to meet learning outcomes some of those students may come in on alternating schedules to attend smaller classes. She advised that this would be a mixed environment for instruction which is what they felt they had as the best option to keep their campus community and the region safe. She mentioned she was anticipating all of these plans would be ready to be released to their student population by July 21st to allow them to make their final decisions about registration for the Fall. She added they also anticipated having student housing open at 50% capacity and would allow for single bedrooms and bathrooms which had been the standard recommendation from health officials while also continuing to develop all of the space needs that they had and safety protocols in time for the Fall semester which was scheduled to begin on their traditional start date of September 9th.

Dr. Duffy remarked she was pleased to report their proposal to create a program referred to as “Journey Workers Technical Trades Management” was approved to start offering during the Fall semester. She advised this was a unique opportunity that originated from many discussions with the Local Plumbers and Steamfitters Union to create a pathway for those who completed a Journeyman Program who may be seeking to extend their education into an Associates Degree in particular in business management recognizing that many individuals that go into the trades also may be starting their own business. She informed they had combined and allowed for this program to grant up to thirty college credits for their journey worker experience in recognition of the fact that it was rigorous work that warranted academic credit and then the student would only need to complete an additional thirty credits to earn this technical trades management degree. She stated they believed this program would not only benefitted the members of the Plumbers and Steamfitters Union, but also anyone working in a technical trade that qualified throughout the community, as well as the nation because they did offer online courses in those areas.

Dr. Duffy apprised they continued to move forward with planning for the Fall semester and Summer enrollment had been steadily increasing which she was pleased by with the second Summer semester starting this upcoming Monday. She mentioned although there were was a decline in the number of students enrolled, the ones enrolled

were taking more credits which was helpful to both the students and the College. She indicated the Fall semester enrollment was at a standstill with many students delaying their decision until the College could more clearly identify for them the specific courses and how they would be delivered. She stated they were anticipating that as soon as that information could be published they would notice a tremendous amount of activity in their Fall semester enrollment.

Dr. Duffy offered privilege of the floor to Ann Marie Scheidegger, *Vice President for Administrative Services/Treasurer*, to provide an update on the status of the 2020-21 SUNY Adirondack budgeting process. Ms. Scheidegger advised it was unfortunate she did not have any new information pertaining to SUNY Adirondack's Budget and their funding sources since the last meeting. She said as a reminder what was up in the air was the amount they would be cut in State aid which they did have a dollar amount that was agreed upon for the Budget, but they had been notified this would be reduced in the future and were unsure what the reduction would be. She apprised the other item not included in their Budget was the Federal Cares Act and how they would be spending those funds because they needed to determine what was permissible to spend that money on and what it could fund. She informed once they were aware of how much State aid they would receive and what the Federal Cares Act funds could be used for they would be able to make those adjustments, but at this time they had no new information and were requesting that Warren and Washington Counties move forward with the Budget they reviewed with them at the last meeting.

Brian Campbell, *Washington County Budget Officer*, stated he believed the College had asked for a 2% increase in their contribution from both Counties and he asked Ms. Scheidegger what this increase amounted to. Ms. Scheidegger replied they were asking their sponsors for a 2% increase in their sponsor share which equated to an additional \$41,000 for Warren County and for Washington County it amounted to a \$30,000 increase for a total sponsor share increase budget to budget of \$71,360. She informed as a reminder that split was based off of the two County's prior Fall FTE (*Full-Time Equivalent*). Supervisor Braymer requested a copy of the proposed Budget be emailed to her and Ms. Scheidegger responded she would send her a copy following the meeting.

Supervisor Braymer asked Ms. Scheidegger if she could explain how Warren and Washington Counties contribution compared to what other sponsor Counties were providing to their community colleges, apprising she was aware typically their contribution had been lower than what other Counties provided, but due to the state of the economy she was wondering if other Counties were keeping their contribution steady or decreasing budgets. Ms. Scheidegger replied in regard to total sponsor contribution SUNY Adirondack was still lagging behind their peers rather significantly; however, she noted, as far as the percent increase for budget to budget she believed they were in line with their peers. Dr. Duffy added some of their peer college sponsors were holding their contribution flat; she reminded them if Counties reduced their funding to the community college they were not maintaining their maintenance of effort which was required by State regulations resulting in the college having to deal with a significant challenge. She said because of this she did not believe any County would be reducing their sponsorship, but she was not assured of this.

Supervisor Magowan voiced his concerns about increasing the County's share to SUNY Adirondack due to the unknown with regard to the State funding, as well as the financial ramifications the County would be dealing with as a result of this pandemic. He stated he was pleased last year when they decided not to increase the amount budgeted to the College, as this would assist them with getting through this difficult financial climate. Supervisor Beaty advised as Chairman of the Shared Services Committee he had been requesting that the County Department Heads look into areas they could consolidate and/or merge to cut costs due to the County sales tax revenue falling short of the budgeted amount around \$1 million. He stated as much of a supporter he was of SUNY Adirondack he could not in good conscience ask all the County Department Heads and employees to find ways to cut back expenses significantly while providing SUNY Adirondack with additional funding which was why he would be voting in

opposition of the proposed Budget. He mentioned his opposition had nothing to do with Dr. Duffy and her staff, adding he was fully supportive of the NSTEM (*Nursing, Science, Technology, Engineer, Mathematics*) project, but during the current economic climate he could not support an increase to anyone's funding whether it was SUNY Adirondack, County Roads, etc.

A discussion ensued during which Dr. Duffy explained there was a process for their Budget which required them to submit it to SUNY by August in order to have a Budget in place for the Fall which was their fiscal year. She said they had extended their request into this meeting hoping that they would have more information, but they felt at this point they needed to keep the process moving forward because now they were in a position where a public hearing would be held in July and the Budget would be voted on in August which placed them at the last minute they had to submit the Budget in time to get it in place for the Fall. Ms. Scheidegger added there was an opportunity at a later date to bring a revised Budget forward if needed; however, she noted, what was imperative today was that they had a Budget to move forward with and if they did not it would have some severe consequences. She informed if for some reason they did not have support of the Budget today, she would request that they moved forward with it now with an agreement that it would be revised at a later date as early as the end of August or early September.

Ms. Braymer called for a motion to provide Economic Growth & Development and Higher Education approval on the proposed 2020-2021 Adirondack Community College Operating Budget. The necessary motion was made by Mr. McDevitt and seconded by Ms. Braymer.

Ms. Seeber advised while she was a strong supporter of SUNY Adirondack she was concerned the County was asking each of its departments to make cuts and yet they would need to explain to them, as well as the taxpayers why they were increasing the SUNY Adirondack contribution by 2%. She said she would like a better understanding why the \$41,000 could not be found elsewhere in their Budget or by making cuts to their departments within the College.

A discussion ensued during which Dr. Duffy noted they had cut \$2 million of expenses which equated to about \$1.5 million net by combing through every single department and eliminating every single discretionary item that they could and they were currently in the process of negotiating with their labor unions on other actions to take. She said she wanted to ensure everyone was aware they were doing everything they could to ensure that their Budget was as bare bones as possible which was not sustainable, but it was a short-term action and they were looking long-term. She remarked the individuals who would be impacted the most in terms of an increase would once again be students which occurred every time because with the State aid reduction and less County contribution where it was made up was through tuition. She apprised she felt compelled to point that out while they were considering their contribution.

Ms. Braymer called the question and the motion to provide Economic Growth & Development and Higher Education approval on the proposed 2020-2021 Adirondack Community College Operating Budget was carried unanimously.

Ms. Braymer asked if there were any public comments and Amanda Allen, *Clerk of the Board*, replied she would check in with Don Lehman, *Public Relations Manager*, and report back.

Ms. Seeber requested that Dr. Duffy email the full Board a copy of the proposed 2020-2021 Adirondack Community College Operating Budget to review. Ms. Braymer asked Dr. Duffy to notify them if the College did receive guidance from the State regarding their contribution amount and Dr. Duffy replied she would provide copies of the Budget to the Supervisors and would also notify them if she received any updates from the State.

A motion was made by Mr. McDevitt, seconded by Mr. Simpson and carried by majority vote, with Mr. Beaty

voting in opposition and Mr. Strough recusing himself from the vote, to provide Finance Committee approval of the proposed 2020-2021 Adirondack Community College Operating Budget and provided for the necessary public hearing, thereby authorizing a resolution for the July 17th Board meeting.

Ms. Braymer asked Mrs. Allen if there were any public comments and Mrs. Allen replied in the negative.

There being no further business to come before the Committees, Mrs. Frasier adjourned the meeting of the Finance Committee at 9:39 a.m. and Ms. Braymer adjourned the meeting of the Economic Growth & Development and Higher Education Committee immediately after.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah McLenithan, Deputy Clerk of the Board