

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: ECONOMIC GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT AND HIGHER EDUCATION

DATE: NOVEMBER 24, 2020

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS WILD
HOGAN
LEGGETT
BRAYMER
DIAMOND
DICKINSON
MAGOWAN
MCDEVITT
SEEBER

OTHERS PRESENT:

DR. KRISTINE DUFFY, PRESIDENT, SUNY ADIRONDACK
REPRESENTING PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:
WAYNE LAMOTHE, COUNTY PLANNER
CHRIS BELDEN, ASSISTANT COUNTY PLANNER
SARA FRANKENFELD, GIS COORDINATOR
LIZA OCHSENDORF, DIRECTOR, EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING
ADMINISTRATION
JIM SIPLON, INTERIM PRESIDENT, WARREN COUNTY ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
FRANK E. THOMAS, CHAIRMAN
RYAN MOORE, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
MARY ELIZABETH KISSANE, COUNTY ATTORNEY
AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD
KEVIN B. GERAGHTY, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISORS BEATY
CONOVER
DRISCOLL
MERLINO
SIMPSON
STROUGH
TAMMIE DeLORENZO, ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
DON LEHMAN, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
TOSHA BROWNELL, COMPUTER HELP DESK TECHNICIAN
LESLIE LOVELACE, SECRETARY TO THE CLERK OF THE BOARD

Please note, the following contains a summarization of the November 24, 2020 meeting of the Economic Growth & Development and Higher Education Committee; the meeting in its entirety can be viewed on the Warren County website using the following link: <https://warrencountyny.gov/gov/comm/Archive/2020/economic/>

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". Supervisors Wild, Hogan, Braymer and Dickinson participated in the meeting virtually, while Supervisors Leggett, Diamond, Magowan, McDevitt and Seeber were physically present.

Mr. Wild called the meeting of the Economic Growth & Development and Higher Education Committee to order at 9:03 a.m.

Copies of the Planning & Community Development and Employment and Training agendas were distributed to those in attendance and those participating virtually accessed them via the Warren County website; copies of the agendas are on file with the meeting minutes.

Motion was made by Mr. Magowan, seconded by Mr. McDevitt 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 Dr. Kristine Duffy, *President, SUNY Adirondack*, who extended her appreciation to those who attended the recent Investor's Summit event. She noted the fall semester was winding down and as per the SUNY Chancellor's request, all students who had attended in person instruction had been tested for COVID-19 prior to Thanksgiving break; she explained this required 750 testings, including students and employees. Dr. Duffy advised that overall for the semester, 2,300 individuals were tested with no positive cases being determined until the two identified this past week and she noted that both students were isolating at home. She said classes would be breaking for Thanksgiving and continuing with in-person instruction after Thanksgiving for three weeks with a continued surveillance testing protocol. She said the official restart plan for spring was submitted to SUNY and they were awaiting approval. She stated despite awaiting the approval of the plan the spring semester start was being pushed back to February 1st, eliminating the week long spring break, similar to other SUNY campuses. Dr. Duffy apprised the spring semester would primarily be a remote environment with 25% of courses offered with an in-person option for applied learning classes and nursing clinicals. She said there was an increase in enrollment for the winter session which would commence right after the Christmas holiday and would consist of four weeks of online classes in the general education category which could appeal to students from other universities who were on break and looking to pick up an extra program. She said they were continuing to actively enroll students for the spring semester and applications were trending upwards. She stated the college had partnered with the Employment & Training Administration to apply for the Rural Health Grant to help training healthcare workers and they were working closely with SUNY to respond to workforce development needs both credit and non-credit and how to provide financial assistance to students both employed and non-employed. Finally, she said last week three new Trailblazers were inducted virtually to their distinguished alumni program.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Wayne LaMothe, *County Planner*, who commenced the Planning & Community Development agenda review by presenting the following requests:

- 1) To authorize the closeout of both community development block grants CD74 (*Countryside Adult Home Sewer*) and CD75 (*Countryside Adult Home Building Assessment*) as both projects had been completed.

Motion was made by Mr. Magowan, seconded by Mr. Leggett and carried unanimously to approve the request and refer same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

- 2) To authorize an agreement with the Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board to provide assistance to them with tasks intermittently on an as-needed basis for quarterly reimbursement.

Motion was made by Ms. Hogan, seconded by Mr. Magowan and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the December 18th Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Privilege of the floor was extended to Sara Frankenfeld, *GIS Coordinator*, who provided an update in regard to the 20 online applications the Department maintained, explaining 19 were GIS based and 1 was ImageMate. She said the most widely used hub was the COVID-19 application which had 900 individual views last week and 101,000 views since it went live in April. She added other popular applications in order of most used were Community Map and ImageMate, the Tourism Department's Story Map for Fall Foliage, the Mobile Parcel Viewer, the Recreation Mapper and the Greater Glens Falls Transit Mapper, and other miscellaneous applications which could be found on the County GIS website.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Chris Belden, *Assistant County Planner*, who stated he was requesting a

referral to the Environmental Concerns & Real Property Tax Services Committee regarding member appointments to the Climate Smart Task Force.

A lengthy discussion ensued in regards to the appointments requested and the fact that no members of the Board of Supervisors had been appointed, following which a motion was made by Ms. Hogan, seconded by Ms. Seeber and carried unanimously to refer the matter to the Environmental Concerns & Real Property Tax Services Committee.

Mr. Wild apprised one of the matters discussed at the recent Economic Recovery Task Force meeting was the algae bloom of Lake George; he said he was in support of an action to help control the bloom and asked for feedback from the Committee members on the subject because one of the County's economic driving forces was Lake George. Mr. Dickinson apprised there was a problem locally with the algae bloom, explaining that hemlock trees were the majority of the vegetation around the Lake and were slow blooming; he said the algae invasion was very serious and difficult to control and should be on the agenda to take action right away because if the hemlocks were lost it would be hard to get them back as pine trees were quick to replace them. A lengthy discussion ensued in regards to the algae bloom before it was determined by the Committee to refer the matter to the Environmental Concerns & Real Property Tax Services Committee.

Privilege of the floor was then extended to Liza Ochsendorf, *Director, Employment & Training Administration*, who presented a request to authorize the renewal of a contract with NY Wired (*Metrix Online Learning*) in an amount not to exceed \$7,492.50 annually for a term commencing July 1, 2020 and terminating June 30, 2023.

Motion was made by Mr. Leggett, seconded by Ms. Braymer and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the December 18th Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Continuing to the Information for Discussion/Review portion of the agenda, Ms. Ochsendorf stated her Office was closed to the public but was averaging seven calls per day which she anticipated would increase as a result of unemployment benefits running out. She advised the Rural Workforce Healthcare Grant had been submitted a few weeks ago to the US Department of Labor and she extended her appreciation to Ms. Hogan for her help with getting in contact with Hudson Headwaters Healthcare and Elderwood to obtain partnering letters which she believed would increase their chances of obtaining approval. She informed a childcare survey would be sent out next week for the childcare initiative. She said the October unemployment data was expected to be released later in the day, but unemployment numbers were expected to rise in winter like it traditionally had. She apprised she had viewed the numbers from September 2019 which were 31,300 and the number was currently 30,200. She mentioned she had done a press release yesterday about the virtual workshops taking place in December in an effort to obtain more participants. Ms. Ochsendorf stated while recognizing essential workers, it was important to include childcare workers and they had planned a thank you in December to child care workers and she inquired whether the Chairman of the Board would be willing to submit a letter of support or appreciation and Mr. Thomas replied affirmatively.

Mr. Wild apologized for scheduling so much time for the meeting, noting that the presenters he had invited were unable to attend to provide updates on the Economic Recovery Task Force as he had planned and he stated the purpose and goals of the group. He added the calls took place every Thursday at 10:00 a.m. and invited any Supervisors who were interested to join. He stated he was looking for feedback and insight if there was any. Ms. Braymer stated as most businesses were re-opened one which was not were arcades. Ryan Moore, *County Administrator*, replied the Governor did not have plans to re-open arcades as it was a forthcoming guideline. Mr. Wild requested Mr. Moore give an update on the COVID-19 metrics and Mr. Moore replied the County needed to have a 3.5% positive testing rate for seven days and maintain it for ten days in order to be recognized as a cluster zone and the County was only at 1.1%. He said there was one county (*Thompkins County*) which was at 0.2%, but

Warren County was the next best with 1.1%.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Jim Siplon, *Interim President, Warren County EDC*, who provided a brief update on what the Warren County EDC was working on, noting the broadband project would be starting and he would be providing more information on that in the next coming weeks. He stated Congresswoman Elise Stefanik would be addressing the EDC members on Tuesday December 8th and invited anyone interested in attending to contact him.

Mr. Wild offered privilege of the floor to anyone wishing to speak and Mr. McDevitt suggested an energy audit take place for the Municipal building as there were a number of windows and he was concerned with heat loss. A discussion ensued in regards to the energy bench marking report that Mr. Belden was working on for the Environmental Concerns & Real Property Tax Services Committee meeting, following which a motion was made by Mr. McDevitt, seconded by Mr. Magowan and carried unanimously to approve an energy audit on the windows in the Municipal building and refer the matter to the County Facilities Committee.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion made by Ms. Braymer, seconded by Mr. Diamond and carried unanimously, Mr. Wild adjourned the meeting at 10:38 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Leslie Lovelace, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board