

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: PARKS, RECREATION & RAILROAD

DATE: OCTOBER 2, 2007

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:	OTHERS PRESENT:
SUPERVISORS HASKELL	REPRESENTING THE PARKS, RECREATION & RAILROAD
VANNESS	DEPARTMENT:
F. THOMAS	PAUL BUTLER, DIRECTOR
STEC	REPRESENTING UPPER HUDSON RIVER RAILROAD:
GERAGHTY	CLIF WELZ
MERLINO	JOHN C. RIEGEL
	WILLIAM THOMAS, CHAIRMAN
COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:	WILLIAM LAMY, DPW SUPERINTENDENT
SUPERVISORS BELDEN	HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND
O'CONNOR	FISCAL SERVICES
GABRIELS	JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
	SUPERVISOR MASON
	SUPERVISOR GIRARD
	SUPERVISOR SOKOL
	PATRICIA TATICH, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING &
	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
	MARTIN FITZGERALD, CONSTRUCTION COST
	COORDINATOR OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY
	DEVELOPMENT
	MAURY THOMPSON, <i>THE POST STAR</i>
	CHARLENE DiRESTA, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Haskell called the meeting of the Parks, Recreation & Railroad Committee to order at 10:24 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. F. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Stec and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the August 21, 2007 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Paul Butler, Director of Parks, Recreation & Railroad Department, who distributed copies of the Agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the Agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Butler expounded that Item No. 1 on the Agenda pertained to the New York State Snowmobile Trails Grant in Aid Program Funds. He said that the County

had received 30% of the grant funding. He added that he was requesting to amend the 2007 County budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$17,872.50 to reflect the receipt of the funding.

Motion was made by Mr. Merlino, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the request to amend the 2007 County budget as outlined above and to refer same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Butler apprised that Item No. 2 on the Agenda pertained to a request for a new contract between Warren County and each of the four snowmobile clubs for the pass through of the New York State Snowmobile Grant in Aid Program funds. He said that the County currently had an agreement with the Warren County Association of Snowmobile Clubs, which was made up of four clubs. He explained that if the Association profited more than \$100,000 per year they would be audited with a fee of \$1,000. He further added that the clubs were requesting a new contract that listed them separately and not as an Association.

Motion was made by Mr. Merlino, seconded by Mr. Stec and carried unanimously authorizing a new contract with the Thurman Connection, the North Warren Trail Blazers, the South Warren and the Hague Sno-goers Snowmobile Clubs for the pass through of the New York State Snowmobile Grant in Aid Program funds. *A copy of the resolution request is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 19, 2007 Board meeting.*

Mr. Butler stated that Item No. 3 on the Agenda pertained to a request for a resolution authorizing Chairman Thomas or his designated representative to sign the Adirondack Park Agency's Application for Major Projects General Information Request and Application for Commercial Uses as they related to the Thurman Station Project.

Motion was made by Mr. Merlino, seconded by Mr. VanNess and carried unanimously authorizing the request as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 19, 2007 Board meeting.*

Mr. Butler apprised that Item No. 4 on the Agenda pertained to a request for a resolution authorizing Chairman Thomas or his designated representative to sign the Adirondack Park Agency's Jurisdictional Inquiry Form to build a picnic pavilion north of the historic barn and on the Kellogg property and also to sign a separate Jurisdictional Inquiry Form to build a picnic pavilion south of the Kellogg

property and on Warren County property.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously authorizing the request as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 19, 2007 Board meeting.*

Mr. Butler stated that Item No. 5 on the Agenda pertained to a request for a new contract with Warrensburg School District to participate in the Project Save Grant through the New York State Education Department. He added that this grant would be used for fourteen after-school programs to be run at Up Yonda Farm.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously authorizing a new contract with Warrensburg School District to participate in the Project Save Grant through the New York State Education Department. *A copy of the resolution request is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 19, 2007 Board meeting.*

Referring to Items 3 and 4 on the Agenda, William Lamy, Superintendent of DPW (Department of Public Works), advised that the Committee should authorize someone other than Chairman Thomas to sign the Adirondack Park Agency's Jurisdictional Inquiry Forms to avoid a conflict of interest. Mr. Haskell questioned who else would be authorized to sign the forms and Mr. Lamy replied that in the past he had signed those type of forms for DPW projects. Mr. Haskell suggested that the issue be deferred to the County Attorney.

Mr. Butler apprised that Item No. 6 on the Agenda pertained to the cost estimate on a generator for the Warren County Fish Hatchery. He stated that the estimate was more than he had reported at the previous Committee meeting. He added that the original request had been for \$21,682; however, he had discovered that the generator that would be needed for the Fish Hatchery would cost \$22,273, which was an increase of \$591. He said that the funds were available within the Department's budget under code A.7110 260 (Other Equipment). Mr. Lamy questioned if the opinion of the DPW electrician had been obtained as to which generator was adequate and Mr. Butler replied affirmatively. Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative and Fiscal Services, asked if this piece of equipment had been budgeted for 2007 and Mr. Butler affirmed. Mr. Butler noted that he would be purchasing the generator next month.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess, seconded by Mr. Stec and carried unanimously to authorize the purchase of a new generator for the Warren County Fish Hatchery

at an approximate cost of \$22,273.

Mr. Butler said Item No. 7 on the Agenda was a usage report of the Warren County Fish Hatchery Pavilions which was included within the Agenda packet. He added that the report covered the usage from June to October 6, 2007.

Mr. Butler expounded that Item No. 8 on the Agenda pertained to a request from the City of Glens Falls Department of Parks & Recreation for the Warren County Parks & Recreation Department to brush cut along the ski trails in the City of Glens Falls using Warren County equipment and personnel. He added that this had been done in 2005 and 2006 and added that it was a three or four-day job.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraghty, seconded by Mr. Stec and carried unanimously to authorize the Warren County Department of Parks & Recreation to brush cut along the ski trails in the City of Glens Falls at the request of the City of Glens Falls Department of Parks & Recreation.

Mr. Butler apprised that Item No. 9 on the Agenda was a request from the Warren/Washington County Mental Health Association to plant approximately six trees and fourteen shrubs along the Warren County Bikeway. He added that the planting would be done between Orchard and McDonald Streets to enhance the appearance of the area, which was currently barren. Mr. VanNess questioned if the plantings would interfere with the bikeway and Mr. Butler replied that they would be far enough from the bikeway to avoid interference. Mr. Lamy questioned where the funding was coming from and Mr. Butler responded that this would be a B.O.C.E.S (Board of Cooperative Education Services) project at no cost to the County. He added that he would need to issue a permit to work on County property.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec, seconded by Mr. Geraghty and carried unanimously to authorize the Warren/Washington County Mental Health Association to plant approximately six trees and fourteen shrubs along the Warren County Bikeway as outlined above.

Mr. Butler said Item No. 10 on the Agenda pertained to a letter that was received from the Johnsbury Historical Society which was included in the Agenda packet. He noted that they were continuing to develop ideas and make contacts relating to the future of the Kellogg property.

Mr. Butler stated that Item No. 11 on the Agenda pertained to herbicide applications for the Railroad right-of-way. He said that the permit had been

extended for five years until September 27, 2012. Chairman Thomas questioned if herbicide application should be the responsibility of the UHRR (Upper Hudson River Railroad) and Mr. Butler replied that it was Warren County's responsibility. He expounded that the funds had been requested for the 2008 County budget and added that the herbicide application should be done yearly to prevent regrowth. He said that he would take pictures for the Committee to show the amount of regrowth that had occurred.

Mr. Butler apprised that Item No. 12 on the Agenda pertained to a letter from Congresswoman Kirsten Gillibrand addressed to Governor Eliot Spitzer of which he had received a copy. He said the letter pertained to funding from the New York State Rail Freight and Passenger Assistance Program of which Warren County was supposed to receive \$2 million and Saratoga County was supposed to receive \$1 million for improvements to the rail line. He added that a copy of the letter was included in the Agenda packet for the Committee's review.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Lamy stated that Item No. 13 on the Agenda pertained to a personnel request. He added that Dean Moore, Naturalist at Up Yonda Farm, had submitted a letter of resignation to accept another position. He further added that this would reduce the staff at Up Yonda Farm to two Naturalists and an Environmental Education Administrator. He said that he accepted Mr. Moore's resignation with regret and added that Mr. Moore had been an asset to Up Yonda Farm. He stated that he was requesting to fill the vacant position of Naturalist at Up Yonda Farm, base salary of \$31,327.

Mr. Haskell noted that he regretted the resignation of Mr. Moore as well; however, he added, Mr. Moore had requested an increase in salary for the last two years and had been denied. He further added that he felt Up Yonda Farm would need all three Naturalists in order to function properly.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec and seconded by Mr. F. Thomas authorizing the request to fill the vacant position of Naturalist be forwarded to the Personnel Committee.

Clif Welz and John Riegel of Upper Hudson River Railroad, and Mr. Monroe entered the meeting at 10:40 a.m.

Mr. Payne apprised that he had met with the Budget Officer last week regarding the Trust fund at Glens Falls National Bank which was being held for Up Yonda Farm. He noted that Glens Falls National Bank was willing and able to pay the entire 2008 budget for Up Yonda Farm, not including the filling of this position.

Mr. Haskell noted that the Committee had agreed not to use the money from the Trust for the next three years. Chairman Thomas stated that they had made that agreement; however, he added, the performance of the Trust had been such that Glens Falls National Bank felt that the Trust could fund the 2008 budget for Up Yonda Farm, using the interest that had been earned. Mr. Payne stated that the Trust would be able to pay the entire 2008 budget and \$140,000 a year for the next two years. He added that he and the Budget Officer both recommended not filling the vacant position with the hope that the Trust could entirely fund Up Yonda for the next few years. Mr. Haskell noted that the County would be doing a discredit to the schools within the Community if they refused to fund the salary for this position.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Stec withdrew his motion and Mr. F. Thomas withdrew his second to the motion.

Mr. Payne apprised that he was still working with the Budget Officer on the 2008 budget and he questioned the two vehicles that were requested for Up Yonda Farm for next year. Mr. Lamy stated that the vehicles were currently located at Up Yonda Farm; however, he said, that did not mean that those vehicles would be assigned to Up Yonda Farm.

Mr. Sokol entered the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec and seconded by Mr. VanNess to accept Glens Falls National Bank's proposal to utilize the interest earned on the Trust account to fund the entire 2008 Up Yonda Farm budget up to \$175,000, with \$140,000 to be allocated for 2009 and 2010.

Chairman Thomas asked for clarification on the issue of the vehicles. Mr. Lamy stated that at the DPW budget briefing there had been an exchange of information that had not been entirely clear and as a result conclusions had been drawn that were incorrect. Mr. Haskell questioned if the two vehicles that would be paid for by the Trust account were different from the two vehicles that needed replacement. Mr. Lamy stated that he would need to speak with DPW's Equipment Manager to clarify which vehicles had been earmarked to go to Up Yonda Farm. He added that conclusions had been drawn from the summary sheet that had listed which equipment needed replacement but did not necessarily reflect where the equipment would be parked or operated. Mr. Payne noted that the assumption had been that the County would be able to derive sufficient funds from the Trust account to cover the cost of those two vehicles included in the 2008 Budget Request. Mr. F. Thomas questioned if it was the Committee's preference

to purchase vehicles rather than pay the salary of a third Naturalist. Mr. Payne clarified that because the summary sheet had listed Up Yonda Farm next to the vehicles, it had been assumed that they would be part of the 2008 budget. He added that the bank had stated that the Trust could provide a maximum of \$175,000 for the 2008 budget.

Mr. Butler apprised that Up Yonda Farm would lose business and would not be able to run the same quantity or quality of programs with only two Naturalists. He added that Up Yonda Farm was already struggling without Mr. Moore and part-time help was difficult to find. Mr. VanNess questioned if students in the Naturalist programs at area colleges were approached for possible internships. Mr. Butler replied that Up Yonda Farm did draw interns from colleges; however, he added, the problem was that once the students were trained for the programs during the summer months, they then had to return to college in the fall.

Mr. F. Thomas asked if this issue was a one year situation and Mr. Haskell responded that the last notification he had received was that the trust would not be utilized for the next five years. Chairman Thomas questioned how the \$175,000 was to be spent and Mr. Payne responded that the \$175,000 budget was without the Naturalist position but included the two vehicles. Chairman Thomas questioned if the budget could be reduced in other areas so that a third Naturalist could be hired. Mr. Lamy suggested that he and Mr. Butler would discuss the budget to decide what areas could be reduced to work this out.

Mr. Stec withdrew his motion and Mr. VanNess withdrew his second to the motion.

Mr. Lamy stated that Item No. 14 on the Agenda pertained to a one day management seminar. He noted that Mr. Haskell had already signed the paperwork. He added that one seminar would be in Glens Falls, New York on October 19, 2007 and would be attended by Paul Butler and the other would be in Albany, New York on October 17, 2007 and would be attended by Tim Benway. He said that the deadline to register had been prior to the Committee meeting which was why he had already obtained Mr. Haskell's signature.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to authorize Paul Butler and Tim Benway to attend the one day management seminars as outlined above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Butler apprised that Item No. 15 on the Agenda pertained to a letter from James Warren, Historic Sites Restoration Coordinator of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), that had been addressed

to Wayne LaMothe and was included in the Agenda packet.

Pat Tatich, Director of Planning & Community Development, apprised that the OPRHP had recommended that building #1 (horse barn) and building #3 (future site of the North Creek Depot Museum) be stabilized and secured from further deterioration. She added that the OPRHP had also stated that installation of metal roofing for both buildings was approved and could proceed without further consultation. She noted that the OPRHP had also recommended that building #2 be stabilized until an assessment of its possible reuse could be made, as well as jacking the fallen beam back into place and temporarily covering the roof until the feasibility of stabilizing and reusing the building could be explored further. Ms. Tatich further explained that the OPRHP had stated that demolition of building #2 without a full assessment of possible reuse may constitute an adverse impact on historic resources and may jeopardize state agency involvement in the project.

Ms. Tatich stated that the OPRHP was giving the County their recommendations for the project and she felt the County's relationship with the OPRHP would end if the County failed to abide by those recommendations. Mr. VanNess noted that the Committee's main concern with building #2 had been the safety of the public. Mr. Butler apprised that the plan was to stabilize the building over the winter and to board it up to prevent access.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. VanNess noted that the Committee had previously discussed what could and could not be done with these buildings using the grant funding. Mr. Haskell suggested referring to the minutes from that Committee meeting and following what had been decided at that time.

Mr. Butler said Item No. 16 of the Agenda was a request by the representatives of Upper Hudson River Railroad (UHRR) to address the Committee with an update. John Riegel, UHRR, stated that the brush cutting was ongoing and was currently being completed at the Glen Hudson Campgrounds. He added that the project was approximately 1/3 complete and should be finished within two weeks.

Mr. Riegel said that he had provided Mr. Butler with additional names and numbers for the emergency call list. He added that there had been numerous storms and lightning strikes this year which had caused problems with the signals.

Mr. Riegel noted that the buildings at the Kellogg property were looking good and that the UHRR was proud to be associated with the project.

Mr. Riegel questioned the progress on the two-year extension of the contract between the UHRR and Warren County. Mr. Butler responded that the County Attorney's Office had informed him that the issue was still on the docket. Mr. Riegel said that it was his understanding that the reason the UHRR was only being granted a two-year extension had to do with the Railway Authority and he asked if anyone could bring him up to date on that topic. Chairman Thomas responded that the County was still waiting on a section of rail to be installed in Saratoga County.

Mr. Reigel apprised that he understood that Mr. Butler had several meetings with the North Creek Railway Depot Preservation Association and that he was still having an issue with the use of the platform. Mr. Haskell noted that there would be another meeting with the North Creek Railway Depot Preservation Association next week and the Committee would get back to the UHRR with details of that meeting. Chairman Thomas stated that the Association would rather enter into a lease agreement for the platform.

Mr. Riegel questioned if there was updated information available on the Thurman or Hadley-Luzerne Stations. Mr. Butler responded that he had spoken to the State the other day and discovered that the bid documents had been approved and the projects would be moving forward. Mr. Haskell stated that the projects would be put out to bid this year. Mr. Riegel questioned if the UHRR would have use of run-arounds at both stations in 2008 and clarified that they needed to have run-arounds at both stations prior to the construction of the stations. Mr. Haskell stated that no guarantees could be made at this time. He added that there was another meeting scheduled with Congresswoman Gillibrand on October 25, 2007 and he was optimistic that she would be helpful. Mr. Riegel noted that at one time the Committee had intended to spend the \$2 million from Governor Pataki's Office to construct the run-arounds and Mr. Haskell responded that the County was unsure if that funding was going to come through.

Mr. Riegel stated that the ridership for the Thomas the Tank Engine Event this year had been down by 4,000. He added that he would like to petition the County for relief on the \$1 per ticket during the Thomas the Tank Engine Event next year, so that the UHRR would be able to make a profit from the event. Chairman Thomas questioned if ridership was down because the event had been held in the previous year and Mr. Riegel replied that this was a possibility. He added that the event was costly to the UHRR and he added that next year Memorial Day would be cut from the event. He said that the additional cost of \$1 per ticket, which was paid to the County, put the UHRR in the negative profit margin.

Mr. Mason entered the meeting at 11:12 a.m.

Mr. Haskell stated that the Committee would have to look at the financial reports of the UHRR before it could consider this request. Mr. Riegel said that he would be happy to supply those reports.

Clif Welz, UHRR, presented pictures of newly painted coaches, which are on file with the minutes. He noted that the County had purchased a speeder (railroad work car) that was sitting at the Warren County Fish Hatchery. He added that the UHRR had needed an extra speeder and he asked if the UHRR could house, maintain and have use of the County's speeder. Mr. VanNess suggested that a document should be drawn up by the County Attorney to enter into this type of agreement.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to allow the UHRR to house, maintain and have use of the County's speeder, with the County having use as needed. *(Subsequent to the meeting, Upper Hudson River Railroad decided to postpone taking possession of the speeder until their mechanic could assess its condition.)*

Mr. Butler apprised that the last item on the Agenda was the pending items. He said that Pending Item No. 3, which was for Mr. Butler to check with the New York State Department of Transportation to see if the Biondi building would need to be put to public use immediately or if it could be stored by the Town of Hadley, could be removed from the list. He added that he had been told that as long as the Town of Hadley owned the building it could be stored as long as they wished.

Mr. Butler stated that Pending Item No. 6 was for him to discuss the correction of codes for the Up Yonda Farm Salaries budget with the Personnel Department. He added that he had talked with Rick Murphy, Deputy Commissioner of Fiscal Services, and was advised the codes would be corrected in the 2008 budget process.

Mr. Butler said that Pending Item Numbers 3, 5 and 6 should be removed from the pending items list.

As there was no further business to come before the Parks, Recreation & Railroad Committee, on motion made by Mr. Stec and seconded by Mr. Geraghty, Mr. Haskell adjourned the meeting at 11:18 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene DiResta, Legislative Office Specialist