

**WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**COMMITTEE: MUNICIPAL SHARED SERVICES**

**DATE: JUNE 21, 2007**

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<b>COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	<b>OTHERS PRESENT:</b>
SUPERVISORS O'CONNOR	HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND
MASON	FISCAL SERVICES
VANNESS	JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
TESSIER	SUPERVISORS CAIMANO
MERLINO	KENNY
	STEC
<b>COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:</b>	JOANN MCKINSTRY, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF
SUPERVISORS SHEEHAN	ADMINISTRATIVE AND FISCAL SERVICES
BELDEN	TODD LUNT, DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES
	CHARLENE DIRESTA, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

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Mr. O' Connor called the meeting of the Municipal Shared Services Committee to order at 10:35 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the February 23, 2007 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Mr. O'Connor noted that there were no representatives from the City of Glens Falls in attendance. He stated that he would like to review the Pending Items and added that the first item was the suggestion made at the February 1, 2007 Committee meeting, to set up a tour of East Field. He apprised that although the City of Glens Falls was requesting the Committee to make suggestions for the future of the Glens Falls Civic Center at that meeting, the Committee had decided to devote time to discuss options for East Field instead.

Mr. O'Connor expounded that at the June 6, 2007 Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee meeting, the County had decided to earmark \$200,000 (\$50,000 a year for four years) for capital improvements to the Glens Falls Civic Center. He added that he was unsure if there would be any remaining funds in the 2007 County budget that could be dedicated to improvements at East Field. He further added that he would discuss the matter with the Budget Officer at budget time to determine if funds would be available for East Field.

Mr. O'Connor referred to the tour of East Field that was suggested at the February 1, 2007 Committee meeting and he added that Mr. Tessier, Mr. Kenny and he had all previously toured East Field and the Clubhouse. He suggested that a tour by the Committee be delayed until it was determined whether or not funds would be available to make improvements.

Mr. VanNess reminded the Committee that the County had budgeted \$7,500 in the 2006 County budget to replace boards in a section of the bleachers at East Field that were unusable, due to disrepair. He added that the boards had not been replaced yet. Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, stated that the City of Glens Falls did not submit bills for these repairs. Mr. VanNess replied that the funds were earmarked for those repairs and Mrs. Sady said that the funds were appropriated in 2006 and because they were not used the funds had been returned to the County's General Fund.

Mr. Caimano apprised that this was not the first time that funds had been earmarked for the City of Glens Falls, and not spent.

Mr. Tessier expounded there had been complaints from baseball teams who played at East Field that there were no lockers in the Clubhouse in which they could lock up their personal belongings while playing. Mr. Tessier stated that he had toured the Clubhouse, noting where repairs were needed. He added that the Committee had earmarked \$50,000 for repairs to the Clubhouse, which were never done and the funds never spent.

Mr. VanNess advised that the Committee was held responsible for work not being done. He added that the funds were earmarked; however, improvements were not completed. Mrs. Sady stated that there had been a total of \$157,500 allocated in the 2006 County budget for the City of Glens Falls. She added that approximately \$23,000 had been returned to the General Fund because the funds were not expended.

Mr. Mason expounded that he had asked the Warren County Soil & Water Conservation District to survey the practice field and prepare a proposal to make that area less marshy. He added that currently that field was too wet for football practice; therefore, the baseball field was being used. He further added that the Soil & Water Conservation District had suggested laying out a gridwork of drainage pipes and that the cost to the City of Glens Falls would have been \$2,000 to \$3,000 to accomplish this. He stated that the rest of the cost was to be donated by the Department of Public Works and the Soil & Water Conservation District. He noted that the former City Engineer had stated that the project would disturb underground lines for the sewer system; however, he added that he felt it would

be worthwhile to pursue this idea again.

Mr. O'Connor questioned how the Committee felt about dedicating more funds to the City of Glens Falls for the improvements to East Field. Mr. VanNess asked how the Committee could be expected to authorize funds that were not being used. Mr. O'Connor stated that he did not feel that \$7,500 had been enough for the repairs to the bleachers. Mr. VanNess apprised that \$7,500 was the amount that had been requested by the City of Glens Falls.

Mr. Tessier stated that it had been recommended in the past that the County take over ownership of East Field; however, the County had been accused of trying to "steal" Glens Falls property. He noted that all property owned by the County was well maintained, and suggested that any future projects that the County was involved in for the City of Glens Falls should be contracted out and the County would deal directly with the contractor.

Mr. Caimano stated for the record, that the reason that \$7,500 had been earmarked for repairs to the bleachers was because that was the amount that the City of Glens Falls had requested. He apprised that the government in the City of Glens Falls was not interested in Municipal Shared Services; however, they were interested in the County taking over projects that the City of Glens Falls could no longer afford.

Mr. Caimano said that the \$200,000 granted for capital improvements to the Glens Falls Civic Center would be allocated from the Occupancy Tax revenues and would not affect the County's General Fund. He added that he was reluctant to allocate any more funds to the City of Glens Falls until it was confirmed that they did indeed want to participate in Municipal Shared Services.

Mr. O'Connor stated that two positions, one in Purchasing and one in Personnel, had become available in the City of Glens Falls and had been filled. He said that this would have been an ideal situation in which to use Municipal Shared Services and added that both purchasing and personnel services for the City of Glens Falls could be taken care of at the County level.

Mr. Caimano advised that a similar issue had arisen when a Tourism Director had been hired for the City of Glens Falls, using Occupancy Tax funds.

Mr. VanNess suggested that if any funds were to be granted for improvements to East Field, the Supervisors that represent the City of Glens Falls should be responsible to oversee how, where and when the funds were spent.

Mr. O'Connor apprised that all of the issues being discussed were problems caused by the previous administration. He added that some things had been accomplished at East Field under the previous administration; however, they had not made the improvements that had been requested by this Committee.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. O'Connor expounded that the next Pending Item was that Paul Dusek, County Attorney, was asked to research the legality of Warren County taking ownership of East Field from the City of Glens Falls. He added that Mr. Dusek had sent a letter to him on March 23, 2007 and the letter was available for anyone who would like to view it. He further added that the County could take possession of East Field as long as it was mutually agreed upon by both the Warren County Board of Supervisors and the City of Glens Falls Common Council.

Mr. O'Connor stated that the last Pending Item was the possibility that Occupancy Tax funds could be used for necessary improvements at East Field. He added that this item should stay on the Pending Items list for the time being.

Mr. Caimano advised that the feeling of the general public was that the County was not doing enough to make improvements in the City of Glens Falls. He added that in 2006 almost \$750,000 was spent on the City of Glens Falls. Mr. Mason asked if it would be possible to get a breakdown of how that \$750,000 was spent and Mr. Caimano replied affirmatively.

Mr. Payne expounded that in the next two weeks there would be two major events held at East Field. He said that the Drum and Bugle Corps Competition would be held on July 2, 2007 and Summer Jam was on July 3, 2007. He further added that the bleachers were not safe for use and he was worried about a possible law suit. Mr. VanNess questioned where the liability for the bleachers laid. Mr. Payne stated that some of the bleachers were roped off. He noted that the Drum and Bugle Corps Competition was usually a sold out event; however, 100 to 200 seats were roped off and not usable.

Mr. Caimano suggested that a letter be sent to the City of Glens Falls Common Council asking why the repairs were not made to the bleachers and why the funds supplied by the County were not spent.

Mr. O'Connor apprised that the reason that the members of the City of Glens Falls Common Council were not in attendance at these Committee meetings was

because they all had day jobs.

Mr. Mason expounded that the City of Glens Falls was the hub of Warren County and that several different approaches were tried for Municipal Shared Services. He further added that the City of Glens Falls and the Common Council were supposed to formulate ideas and the Committee was to be a conduit to listen to those ideas and pass them onto the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. O'Connor apprised that the Committee had originally been a sub-committee, which later became a Standing Committee. He added that originally it was agreed that the Committee would meet only at the request of the Mayor of the City of Glens Falls.

Todd Lunt exited the meeting at 11:03 a.m.

Mr. O'Connor reiterated that the purpose of the Committee was for the City of Glens Falls to bring suggestions to the Committee.

Discussion ensued.

Hal Payne exited the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

JoAnn McKinstry entered the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Mr. Caimano said that the American Yankee Association would be holding their convention at the Queensbury Hotel, on June 25<sup>th</sup> through June 28<sup>th</sup>. He added that the Warren County Tourism Department had worked for over a year on this event and had planned to issue a press release. However, he noted, Mike Mender, Assistant to the Mayor of the City of Glens Falls, had put out a press release first. He stated that although the convention was held at the Queensbury Hotel, the planes landed at the Warren County Airport. He noted that he did not object to the City of Glens Falls issuing the press release, but he wished it had been previously communicated. He apprised that the Mayor's Office had said publically that if Warren County Tourism had paid more attention to the conventions that there would have been no problems.

Mr. Tessier stated that there had been a number of meetings about the American Yankee Association convention. He added that the cost for insurance for the event had been \$1,600, which the County had hoped to split with the Queensbury Hotel. He further added that the Queensbury Hotel had stated that if the

convention were to cancel, it would cost the hotel \$50,000 in lost revenue. He apprised that Warren County paid the full amount of the additional insurance for the convention.

Mr. VanNess stated that he was surprised that Mike Busch, City of Glens Falls Common Council Member for the 1<sup>st</sup> Ward, had not made sure that all of the funds allocated to the City of Glens Falls had been spent and he added that he wondered if Mr. Busch was aware of the issue. Mr. Kenny stated that the unused funds could have been spent for any of the City's recreational facilities, not just East Field. Mrs. Sady stated the reason the funds had been increased to \$157,500 from \$150,000 had been specifically for East Field for the repairs to the bleachers. Mr. Kenny said that the discussion had been good; however, without representation by the City of Glens Falls, the discussion had not been beneficial. Mr. Caimano noted that the discussion would be on the record.

Mr. VanNess suggested that the Committee ask Mayor Akins if he would be willing to appoint Mike Busch to this Committee, specifically to discuss improvements to East Field. Mr. O'Connor stated that Mr. Busch would not be able to attend Committee meetings because he worked during the day. Mr. Caimano apprised that the Committee could have an evening meeting; however, Mr. Caimano reiterated, the Committee had reached out to the City of Glens Falls repeatedly, to no avail.

Mr. Mason questioned if it was possible to reiterate to the Mayor and the Common Council, that it was their responsibility to formulate ideas for the City of Glens Falls. Mr. O'Connor stated that as Chairman of the Committee, he could write a letter to the Mayor and the Common Council. Mr. VanNess agreed that a letter should be written and Mr. O'Connor said that he would include a letter with the Committee minutes that would be emailed to the City of Glens Falls Common Council.

As there was no further business to come before the Municipal Shared Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. VanNess and seconded by Mr. Mason, Mr. O'Connor adjourned the meeting at 11:12 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene DiResta, Legislative Office Specialist