

**WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**COMMITTEE: PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**DATE: APRIL 27, 2009**

---

---

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

SUPERVISORS TAYLOR  
BELDEN  
CHAMPAGNE  
MERLINO  
STEC  
SOKOL  
PITKIN

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

REPRESENTING PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:  
LAURA MOORE, PLANNING ASSOCIATE  
JAMIE WHITE, SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR  
REPRESENTING WARREN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
CORPORATION:  
LEONARD FOSBROOK, PRESIDENT  
JOHN WHEATLEY, PROJECT MANAGER, QUEENSBURY  
INDUSTRIAL PARK  
ELAINE BEHLMER, OFFICE MANAGER  
JOANN MCKINSTRY, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE &  
FISCAL SERVICES  
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD  
KEVIN GERAGHTY, BUDGET OFFICER  
SUPERVISOR STRAINER  
SUPERVISOR THOMAS  
THOM RANDALL, *THE ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*  
SKIP STRANAHAN, WARREN COUNTY RESIDENT  
CHARLENE DiRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

---

---

Mr. Taylor called the meeting of the Planning & Community Development Committee to order at 9:31 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Stec 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 Laura Moore, Planning Associate for the Planning & Community Development Department, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Moore began by reviewing the pending items, as follows:

1. She stated that discussions with the Adirondack Community Housing Trust were still ongoing and there was nothing to report at this time;
2. She noted that there were still two vacancies on the Warren County Planning Board, one from the Town of Bolton and one from the Town of Queensbury; and
3. She said that discussions with the County Attorney's Office were ongoing, pertaining to the need to rescind Resolution No. 89 of 2009 and amend Resolution No. 695 of 2008, both of which pertained to the Quadricentennial Grant. Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, advised that the original contract called for matching funds and the County resolutions had stated that matching funds were not required; therefore, she said, the County Attorney's Office was researching the necessity of rescinding or amending the resolutions. Ms. Moore advised that the New York State Department of

Environmental Conservation had said that the words 'local match' could be redacted and initialed. Mrs. Sady noted that the resolution had been withdrawn at the previous Board meeting.

Ms. Moore reported that agenda item one was to inform the Committee of the submission of a Small Cities grant application for the Queensbury Health Center.

Ms. Moore requested to close Capital Project No. H268.9550 280-GIS Software, and transfer any remaining funds to the General Fund. She noted that the Capital Project had been for the New York State Archives GIS (Geographic Information Systems) Software project which had been completed.

Motion was made by Mr. Pitkin, seconded by Mr. Stec and carried unanimously to close Capital Project No. H268.9550 280-GIS Software and to forward same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Moore requested to close Capital Project No. H267.9500 280-Quality Communities Phase II, and transfer any remaining funds to the General Fund. Mr. Merlino questioned the amount of funds remaining in both Capital Projects and Ms. Moore responded that there was approximately \$15 in the GIS Software Capital Project and she was unsure of the amount remaining in the Quality Communities Phase II Capital Project.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to close Capital Project No. H267.9500 280-Quality Communities Phase II and to forward same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Moore requested to enter into an agreement with the North Creek Railway Depot, owners of the Owen House Museum, to make necessary repairs and upgrades to the Museum building. She said that the funds would be expended from an existing Capital Project and the amount would not exceed \$15,000.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden to enter into an agreement with the North Creek Railway Depot, owners of the Owen House Museum, to make necessary repairs and upgrades to the Museum building. Mr. Belden withdrew his motion as there was no second.

Mr. Belden asked the amount of local funds that would be necessary and Ms. Moore responded that the funds would be expended from the remaining First Wilderness Heritage Corridor (FWHC) Making a Connection Capital Project, No. H292.9550 280. She added that the grant had been in excess of \$595,000, to complete a variety of railway projects throughout the FWHC. Mr. Belden asked if the request was to use the remaining funds for improvements to the Owens House Museum and Ms. Moore responded affirmatively and added that the Owens House Museum was on the property of the North Creek Railway Depot. Mr. Taylor questioned what would happen to the remaining funds if they were not expended on the Owens House Museum and Ms. Moore replied that they would attempt to expend the funds elsewhere or the funds would be returned to the Department of State.

Mr. Champagne suggested that the item be tabled until the next Committee meeting. He added that there had been a previous resolution stating no further funds would be expended on improvements to the railroad. Mr. Taylor advised that the resolution had stated that no further

County funds would be expended; however, he added, he did not think that grant funding had been included. Mr. Pitkin requested a breakdown of how the \$595,000 was expended, as well as any other options for expending the remaining funds. Mr. Geraghty noted that the Owens House Museum was on the Kellogg Property and Mr. Merlino disagreed. Ms. Moore clarified that the Kellogg Property surrounded the Owens House Museum which was located on the property of the North Creek Railway Depot. Mr. Thomas stated that the grant funding was intended to be expended on the FWHC which included the Museum. Mr. Champagne questioned if the \$15,000 could be used towards the platforms at the Hadley and Thurman Stations.

Following a brief discussion, motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to table the issue of entering into an agreement with the North Creek Railway Depot, owners of the Owen House Museum, to make necessary repairs and upgrades to the Museum building until the next Committee meeting.

Mr. Pitkin questioned the progress of the Broadband Initiative. Mr. Taylor responded that Hamilton County had expressed interest in the joint venture; however, he added, Washington County had not decided. Mrs. Sady noted that Washington County would present the recommendation at their next Board meeting. Mr. Champagne explained that Rob Metthe, Director of Information Technology, had expressed reservations about utilizing CBN Connect for the study. He added that Mr. Metthe had suggested that the firm for the study be decided via the Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Mr. Belden noted that the application needed to be submitted by September in order to qualify for the Economic Stimulus funding that would be awarded in February 2010. He added that there was no time to enter into the RFP process. Mrs. Sady stated that the resolution had been to enter into an agreement with Hamilton and Washington Counties to authorize CBN Connect to do a Broadband study.

Brief discussion ensued.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Len Fosbrook, President of the Warren County Economic Development Corporation (EDC), who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Fosbrook said that the first item on the agenda was to discuss the possibility of the EDC commissioning a County-wide independent study of the success of tourism marketing and collaborative efforts. He said that the EDC had inquired whether the County was interested in looking into tourism as an industry and added that he wanted to receive clear direction to determine the Committee's interest. Mr. Champagne stated that the County had repeatedly studied the tourism industry in Warren County and he asked for clarification on the EDC's suggestion. He advised that due to the current state of the economy it was necessary for the County to justify expenditures by the amount of revenue that could be generated. Mr. Fosbrook said that the tourism industry generated in excess of \$34 million per year for Warren County and added that the EDC wanted to ensure that the tourism industry was protected, as well as research additional opportunities to increase tourism. Mr. Pitkin asked if the EDC worked directly with the Warren County Tourism Department and Mr. Fosbrook responded that a tourism initiative had been included on the EDC priority list for eight years, which included the goal of increasing four season tourism in Warren County. He said that a number of hotel owners were members of the EDC and they provided feedback on how the EDC could be of assistance. He noted that the EDC collaborated with the Warren County Tourism Department

and both had designed their website to include a link to the other's website. He expressed his opinion that the advertising that was completed by Warren County Tourism was as good as any other in the industry. He advised that the EDC's suggestion was merely that the tourism industry be studied like any other business to determine if there was a better strategic plan.

Mr. Champagne explained that there were two new contracted positions in Warren County that pertained to tourism; one of which was the FWHC Event Coordinator and the second was a Special Events Coordinator that would work closely with the Lake George Chamber of Commerce. He added that these two positions would be responsible for increasing the number of special events that were held in Warren County, thereby increasing tourism. Mr. Taylor suggested that this item be tabled until the next Committee meeting and questioned if the EDC was planning on commissioning the study in 2009 and what the anticipated cost would be. Mr. Fosbrook responded that a study would cost \$60,000 to \$75,000 and he added that the EDC had sufficient funds in their budget to cover approximately half of the expense. He added that New York University had a graduate program for hospitality, tourism and sports management that provided graduate students who could work as interns to complete a study such as this. Mr. Pitkin noted that the information from the study would be useful assuming that it could be funded with no impact on the County budget. Mr. Fosbrook stated that it had not been the intention of the EDC to commission the study with a cost to the County. He suggested that he should meet with Kate Johnson, Director of Tourism and Mr. Tessier, Chairman of the Tourism Committee, to determine the best way to proceed.

Brief discussion ensued.

Elaine Behlmer, Office Manager of the EDC, apprised the Committee that the EDC membership campaign had been held in March 2009 and to date they had 130 members. She said that all current members had received a letter with an invoice requesting renewal of their membership and approximately 50% of the memberships had been renewed thus far. She stated that 80 perspective businesses had been contacted with a total invoice of \$60,316 and the total EDC budget was \$54,700. She added that the total revenue for 2008 had been \$54,700 and the goal was to recruit approximately 20 new members, increasing the revenue by approximately \$6,000. She added that all of the current members were listed in the Annual Report; *a copy of which is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Behlmer stated that the EDC's Annual Luncheon would be held on Friday, May 1, 2009 at the Great Escape Lodge at 11:30 a.m. She noted that two representatives from Global Foundries would be in attendance. She said that there was a 7% increase in sponsorship this year. Mr. Fosbrook stated that the EDC was pleased with the sponsorship for 2009 and added that there were more sponsors this year, many of which had sponsored at a lower rate than in previous years. He added that he was pleased with this year's Annual Report which he noted had included a section on tourism.

Mr. Fosbrook apprised the Committee that the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) was a three-county agency that administered Federal funds for the purpose of job training. He advised that the WIB had asked to partner with the EDC to host a scoping session relative to

training needs for the technology industry. He added that the EDC had organized a session with the medical device companies which had been held in the EDC offices last week. He said that the purpose was to determine which employee groups were difficult to recruit and what kind of connection could be made in training to fulfill the need. He added that whatever was done to assist the medical device industry would carry over to assist the nano technology and other high tech industries. Mr. Champagne asked who had contacted the EDC with regard to this matter and Mr. Fosbrook responded that the WIB had contacted him and had hired a consulting group to analyze needs and develop training programs. Mr. Champagne stated that he was a member of the Community Action Agency for Employment and Opportunity and they had received \$500,000 for weatherization and job training; however, he added, very little had been expended on true job training. He said that they had received funds for job training in Warren County and were unsure of how to proceed with the expenditure of the funds. Mr. Taylor interjected that an additional \$800,000 would be received by the Community Action Agency for further job training. He advised that the economic stimulus funds were being distributed quickly and he feared that the funds would not be expended wisely.

Brief discussion ensued.

Mr. Fosbrook said that Finch Paper LLC had approached the EDC for assistance with their needs. He advised that they had integrated new systems and were looking for some training assistance for their employees. He added that they were also looking for assistance with energy reduction and internship programs through the colleges. He stated that they had included the Mayor of the City of Glens Falls and his staff in the meeting and representatives from Empire State Development and NYSERDA (New York State Energy Research and Development Authority).

Mr. Fosbrook apprised the Committee that John Wheatley, Project Manager for the Queensbury Industrial Park, had attended a medical device meeting in Boston, Massachusetts last week. He stated that the EDC tried to reach out to the medical device and nano technology industry two to three times a year to determine the possibility of locating new businesses to the County.

Mr. Fosbrook stated that the last item on the agenda pertained to the Olympic Regional Development Authority (ORDA)/ Gore Interconnect. He said that he had attended an ORDA Board meeting in Lake Placid, New York last week, which they had thought would be a confirmation meeting to complete the plans to construct the Interconnect. He added that there had been a proposed resolution that would have allowed Gore Mountain to expend the final \$2 million to complete the construction on Town land. He advised that this would have completed the EDC's initiative to connect the mountain with the Town. He said that this was a \$16 million project which had begun in 2002 and prior to the end of Governor Pataki's term he had added \$9 million to the ORDA budget for the purpose of constructing Burnt Ridge which connected to the Ski Bowl. He noted that Senator Little had received \$5 million through the New York State Senate to fund the infrastructure for the Ski Bowl and that the EDC had committed approximately \$2 million through their funds and Federal grants.

Mr. Fosbrook said that he had been surprised at the ORDA Board meeting by debate over

whether or not to table the plans to construct the Interconnect. He added that the concern was that ORDA was unsure if they would be able to cover the operating costs of the Ski Bowl upon completion of the Interconnect. He advised that at this point ORDA had tabled the construction while they analyzed the operating costs and possible revenue streams to offset the costs. Mr. Belden noted that there could be a loss of funding if the construction was not completed in a timely manner and Mr. Fosbrook responded that \$9 million had been expended on Burnt Ridge and all but \$2 million of the funding supplied through Senator Little had been expended. He added that they would spend \$135,000 that was obtained from National Grid to upgrade the Ski Hut.

Mr. Fosbrook requested a resolution of support of the ORDA/Gore Mountain Interconnect Project, as well as a letter of support for the project signed by the Chairman. Mr. Champagne voiced his opinion that ORDA's study of the operating costs and possible revenues streams could have been completed over the last two years.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to authorize a resolution of support for the ORDA/Gore Mountain Interconnect Project and further authorizing the Chairman of the Board to draft a letter of support to the ORDA Board. *The necessary resolution was authorized for the May 15, 2009 Board meeting.*

Mr. Taylor advised that the Planning & Community Development Committee also included Municipal Shared Services and he asked the Committee to consider possible shared services. He said that the City of Glens Falls had suggested that the County could assume responsibility for assessment of City properties. Mr. Pitkin mentioned that there was not enough space for the court system and he suggested that the County should talk to the Towns about shared infrastructure for the court system. Mr. Taylor asked Mr. Pitkin if he would contact the Towns to determine if there was interest and possible ways to proceed and Mr. Pitkin replied that he would. Mr. Champagne stated that at one point they had reviewed the departments in the individual Towns and the County to determine where departments could be consolidated. He added that there were many areas in which services could be shared which would be cost effective to the County and the City.

Brief discussion ensued.

There being no further business to come before the Planning & Community Development Committee, on motion by Mr. Merlino and seconded by Mr. Belden, Mr. Taylor adjourned the meeting at 10:34 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist