

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC WORKS - AIRPORT, DPW AND PARKS, RECREATION & RAILROAD

DATE: SEPTEMBER 1, 2011

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS BELDEN
BENTLEY
MERLINO
CHAMPAGNE
MONROE
MCCOY
CONOVER
WOOD
TAYLOR

OTHERS PRESENT:

JEFFERY TENNYSON, SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
DON DEGRAW, AIRPORT MANAGER
PAUL BUTLER, DIRECTOR OF PARKS, RECREATION & RAILROAD
DANIEL G. STEC, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ATTORNEY/ADMINISTRATOR
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
SUPERVISORS LOEB
STRAINER
THOMAS
BRIAN LAFLURE, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES
REPRESENTING THE NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF STATE:
DEDE SCOZZAFAVA, DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT
SEAN MAGUIRE
JULIE PACYNA, PURCHASING AGENT
STEVE TORRICO, GENERAL MANAGER, SARATOGA NORTH CREEK RAILWAY
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
THOM RANDALL, *ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*
AMANDA ALLEN, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Belden called the meeting of the Public Works Committee to order at 9:30 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the prior Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Copies of the Airport agenda were distributed to the Committee members, a copy of which is also on file with the minutes.

Prior to extending privilege of the floor, Mr. Belden announced that Don DeGraw, Airport Manager, had tendered his resignation in favor of another opportunity at an airport in Montana. He said he was sorry to lose Mr. DeGraw, as he had done an excellent job serving as Airport Manager, but he wished him the best of luck in his new position. Mr. DeGraw thanked Mr. Belden for his acknowledgment, adding that it had been a pleasure to work with the Committee and for Warren County.

Commencing with the agenda review, Mr. DeGraw presented a request to submit an application for FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) grant funding in the amount of \$50,000 which would be used to support a contract with C&S Engineers to provide technical support services for an aviation easement/land acquisition concerning two parcels located in the Runway 12 and Runway 19 approach areas. He explained that one of the parcels sought was necessary to introduce the desired access point from the Airport property to Ridge Road, while the other was a parcel located at the corner of Hicks Road and Queensbury Avenue in the primary runway protection area for Runway 19.

Mr. Champagne questioned if the purchase price for the two parcels was known and Mr. DeGraw responded in the negative, noting the grant funding would support the costs of the necessary technical services to determine the

value. Following an inquiry made by Mr. Belden, Mr. DeGraw advised that the associated Local Share would be 2.5%.

Motion was made by Mr. McCoy, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to approve the previously mentioned request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 16th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Returning to the topic of Mr. DeGraw's departure, Jeffery Tennyson, Superintendent of Public Works, stated he was very sorry to see Mr. DeGraw leave the Airport Manager position and commended his exemplary efforts and managing abilities, which had made the Airport one of his smallest areas of concern. He said Mr. DeGraw's ability to manage staff, special events and public relations while dealing with position reductions and assisting with the introduction of a new FBO (Fixed Base Operator), was tremendous. Mr. Tennyson advised the Airport was in the best running condition that it had been since he had begun working for the County and he hoped the next person to fill the position would be a shadow of Mr. DeGraw.

Mr. Tennyson reminded the Committee members that at the August Personnel and Board meetings he had advised of Mr. DeGraw's impending departure and was given the authority to advertise the Airport Manager position. He estimated that 12 applications had been received for the position and announced that Mr. DeGraw had offered to assist with the resume review process, which would begin in the coming weeks, and assist in selecting his successor.

Mr. Champagne referred to his lengthy tenure with the Board of Supervisors and said that in his experience, Mr. DeGraw had surfaced as being the most successful Airport Manager, without exception. He stated the growth at the Airport during Mr. DeGraw's term was incredible and noted Mr. DeGraw had been very successful in handling situations with the Airport's residential neighbors, which were at times tense. Mr. Champagne stated his appreciation for Mr. DeGraw's efforts and said it was critical that they find the same positive characteristics in his replacement.

Motion was made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to fill the Airport Manager position and refer same to the Personnel Committee. *A copy of the Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position form is on file with the minutes.*

Concluding the agenda review, Mr. DeGraw addressed the Referrals section as follows:

1. Mr. DeGraw advised the meeting with Victor Macri, owner of the Forest Enterprises parcel, had been postponed at Mr. Macri's request as he was in the process of meeting with Town of Queensbury Planning Board to determine the requirements for the property and would re-schedule the meeting once these determinations were made; and
2. The Committee planned to hold their November 1st meeting at the Airport facility in order to see the new fire truck and snowblower equipment, Mr. DeGraw stated. He advised the delivery of the snowblower had been delayed due to NYSDOT (New York State Department of Transportation) weight posting limitations placed after the Tropical Storm Irene event, but said he expected the equipment to be delivered on that day. As for the fire truck, Mr. DeGraw stated one small issue had been detected on the fire truck and delivery would not be accepted until it was fixed.

Before moving on to the Parks, Recreation & Railroad portion of the meeting, Mr. Belden announced Brian LaFlure, Director of the Office of Emergency Services, was in attendance along with representatives from the New York State Department of State (NYSDOS) and he asked Mr. LaFlure to introduce them to the Committee. Mr. LaFlure advised that Dede Scozzafava, Deputy Secretary for Local Governments, and Sean Maguire had come to the meeting

to introduce themselves and discuss their role in the recovery efforts in the wake of Tropical Storm Irene.

Ms. Scozzafava said she had been assigned to serve as Governor Cuomo's representative to Warren, Washington, Essex and Clinton Counties during the recovery process and she hoped the Committee would contact her with any questions or concerns they might have. She advised that although she was not an expert in these matters, she had some personal experience in dealing with storm damage recovery in her previous position as Mayor of a small town in upstate New York where they had been without power for about ten days during an ice storm in 1998; she added that she had been in public service for a long time and understood the importance of continuing to deliver services at a time when resources were stretched and demand continued to increase. Ms. Scozzafava said she would be accessible at any time she was needed, taking early morning and late night calls, and would try to provide appropriate phone numbers. She advised the NYSDOS wanted the area to recover, revitalize and reinvent in any way possible and she encouraged anyone with questions or concerns to contact her.

Mr. Maguire, who worked within the NYSDOS Local Government Efficiency Program, said he and Ms. Scozzafava were looking forward to helping with the recovery efforts and said he hoped the Supervisors would look to the NYSDOS as a partner in moving forward with this work. Ms. Scozzafava apprised that eventually a team made up of every State agency would be established to respond to Warren County and she was sure all of that information would be provided when it became available.

Mr. Belden questioned when financial aid would be received to assist with the disaster recovery and Ms. Scozzafava responded she was unable to provide any information on funding time lines. She said they were being asked to analyze all State resources that might be available to assist communities and she anticipated the review would be completed by the end of that day. Ms. Scozzafava advised they were also working to compile a snapshot of the damages to the area for the Governor's review.

Mr. Merlino joined the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

Mr. LaFlure apprised that due to the size of the event, a disaster declaration had already been assigned to Warren County on a number of levels. He said that once an assessment of damages was completed, an indication could be given on what would be covered. Mr. LaFlure noted that for a storm of this magnitude, the FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) funding rate was 75%, leaving a 25% Local Share. Mr. Belden noted that historically, the State would provide 12.5% funding, leaving a 12.5% Local Share, to which Mr. LaFlure responded that he was unsure of the level of State funding that would be received.

Mr. McCoy questioned whether individual property owners would be covered under the FEMA disaster declaration and Mr. LaFlure advised in his personal opinion, there would. Mr. LaFlure said it was regrettable that individual assistance had not been made available for those affected by the spring storms; however, he said, the loss totals for the prior events had been much smaller, and the damages more localized. He apprised the Individual Assessment Team was reviewing damages and would make a definitive decision on the issue in the near future.

Mr. Monroe said the Governor had announced he was suspending APA (Adirondack Park Agency) and NYSDEC (New York State Department of Environmental Conservation) regulations for flooded communities to allow for rebuilding and he questioned whether the same suspensions would be offered for wind damaged communities. Ms. Scozzafava said she would get clarification on this issue and get back to him directly.

Mr. Tennyson announced a link had been established on the Office of Emergency Services website to assist in data collection which allowed homeowners to report on individual home damages. Mr. LaFlure said the link was also

helpful in answering other questions, such as how to dispose of brush. He advised many members of the public thought they were able to burn the brush; however, he said, this was not the case as some towns did not allow it. Mr. LaFlure said they had worked with area Fire Marshals to develop a list of appropriate rules and regulations which had been posted on their website. Mr. Belden advised the Town of Hague had directed residents to collect brush and place it on the Town right-of-way for chipping and Mr. LaFlure advised this type of information should be forwarded to his Office for inclusion on their website. Mr. Bentley questioned whether the towns would receive reimbursement for brush clean-up expenses and Mr. LaFlure said he believed they would and he encouraged the towns to document the amount of time and money spent. Ms. Scozzafava interjected that any not-for-profit entities that had provided assistance should also be encouraged to document their expenses; she added that well documented responses would have a better chance of accessing available resources. Mr. Belden asked Ms. Scozzafava to question the Governor on the availability of 12.5% State funding of storm repairs and Ms. Scozzafava said she would.

Mr. Thomas said there were residents in the Town of Stony Creek that had suffered considerable losses from flooding during the May 28th storm who were now wondering why they had been unable to receive any type of assistance for that storm, but were now eligible for this one. He said he did not understand why the prior declarations would not cover damages for three or four homes, but the current declaration would cover approximately 25, nor did he know how to explain the situation to his constituents. Ms. Scozzafava advised that she could not address these concerns as she was not knowledgeable on the subject, but said she would relay them to Governor Cuomo. Mr. Thomas noted the threshold for a Federal disaster declaration was \$24.6 million in damages and he suggested the State consider covering up to that total to ensure assistance for victims of smaller or more localized storms. Ms. Scozzafava responded that while gathering information and performing the assessment for the damages caused by Tropical Storm Irene, they would also attempt to document and take into consideration the damages incurred earlier in the year, but said she could not assure that reimbursements would be provided.

Mrs. Wood stated that hazard mitigation was not provided until after a disaster declaration was provided. She said that the Town of Thurman had worked diligently to provide sufficient documentation to obtain a declaration and had received commendations for their work, but had not quite achieved the necessary threshold. Because of this, Mrs. Wood advised, the Town of Thurman had to deplete their budget to make the roads washed out by flooding earlier in the year passable, all to no avail as the same roads were washed out once again by Tropical Storm Irene. She said that if the declaration had been given when they had initially sought it they would have been able to properly replace the roads and residents on life sustaining equipment would not have been without power for several days. Mrs. Wood strongly urged the Governor to speak with the President and take whatever steps necessary to address the matter because if the spring storm had been covered and the appropriate repairs made, they would not be having as many problems as they were currently. Ms. Scozzafava said that she understood Mrs. Wood's concerns and would relay them to the Governor.

Mr. Belden thanked Ms. Scozzafava and Mr. Maguire for attending the meeting and noted their assistance was greatly appreciated as many small towns did not have funding available to independently recover from the extensive storm damages. Ms. Scozzafava said she and Mr. Maguire were there to make sure every town recovered and to serve as a point person for the current Governor's administration that could be reached to address comments and concerns.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Paul Butler, Director of Parks, Recreation & Railroad, who distributed copies of his agenda, a copy of which is also on file with the minutes.

Proceeding with the first agenda item, Mr. Butler presented a request to amend the existing operator agreement with Saratoga North Creek Railway (SNCR) to include the Stony Creek boarding platform effective upon completion. He said construction on the platform had recently been delayed due to necessary storm cleanup, but he anticipated it would be completed within the following three weeks. Mr. Butler then distributed photos reflecting the progressive construction of the platform structure; *copies of the photos are on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Belden stated the structure was very nice looking and he commended the DPW and Parks, Recreation and Railroad staff for their efforts in relation to the platform which had been constructed entirely by County employees. Following an inquiry as to the cost associated with the platform construction, Mr. Butler advised he would make a full report including total expenditures and in-kind services.

Motion was made by Mr. McCoy, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the aforementioned request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 16th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Butler advised the next agenda item pertained to discussion on SNCR's interest in using the County's high rail equipment which consisted of a six-man dump truck and a pick-up truck, neither of which were currently certified for use on the railroad. Steve Torrico, SNCR General Manager, said in speaking with Mr. Tennyson on the matter it had been determined the DPW had the need for the six-man dump truck, leaving the high rail pick-up truck available. He advised that in return for use of the equipment, SNCR would be willing to facilitate the necessary inspection and certifications, as well as maintenance services.

Paul Dusek, County Attorney/Administrator, advised there was a legal issue with County equipment being used by a private organization. He said while he appreciated that they enjoyed an excellent working relationship with SNCR, the County had to be mindful of the laws they were forced to operate under. Mr. Dusek said the general rule for use of County equipment required them to charge rental fees, even to other municipalities, as dictated by Law; he added the Law also stated that government equipment was not for private use. He concluded there were some unique facets in the County's contract with SNCR which might provide some latitude allowing equipment use, but he would need to research the matter further before a decision could be made. Mr. Dusek then questioned whether the intent was to essentially transfer the equipment to SNCR and end any County responsibility or liability and Mr. Tennyson responded affirmatively, stating that due to legal limitations this seemed to be a viable option. Mr. Tennyson added that the equipment could be listed in a public auction, but he was unsure whether this would help SNCR as they would be forced to competitively bid on the equipment. He advised the County had no use for the equipment so long as SNCR served as operator and noted that there weren't any DPW staff certified to operate the high-rail equipment on the railway.

Mr. Conover suggested that the issue be tabled pending further review by Mr. Dusek to determine the options available. Mr. Champagne said he agreed with Mr. Conover's suggestion, adding another option might be to certify one County employee to operate the high-rail equipment which would alleviate the need to transfer it to SNCR. Mr. Tennyson advised the problem with certifying a County employee was that any time SNCR wished to use the equipment they would have to wait for that employee to arrive before proceeding.

As the Committee was in agreement, it was determined the issue would be tabled for discussion at a future meeting, subsequent to Mr. Dusek's further review of the matter.

Continuing with the agenda review, Mr. Tennyson apprised he had recently met with the Up Yonda trustees to

discuss the possibility of establishing a maintenance fund to address larger infrastructure issues, such as major building repairs and improvements or upgrades to the existing facilities. He said the trustees were agreeable to the idea, but noted he had not contacted the Treasurer's Office to determine the type of fund that would need to be established and was presenting the idea as an informational item. Mr. Dusek interjected the monies intended for transfer to the maintenance fund would be those unexpended in each annual budget; he added the trustees determined the amount to be provided in the budget each year based on the amount expended. Mr. Dusek explained at the end of each year, they would essentially be putting any unexpended funds into a savings account to use for future expenses, as dictated by resolution. He said in his opinion this was an excellent idea which would move the County in a direction he would like to see on many fronts, while not imposing any additional costs, and he highly recommended the concept.

Mr. Monroe reminded the Committee the Up Yonda facility had been established with the idea that it would be funded solely by the trust; however, he said, there had been years when the trust had not covered all operational expenses and County support had been required. Mr. Monroe expressed his concern that monies transferred from the trust to a locked fund for capital improvements might cause a lack of funding, and subsequently an impact to the County taxpayer. Mr. Champagne said he recalled a number of years when County funding support had been required, but could not remember many when there were significant surplus funds that could have been transferred. Mr. Dusek responded there had been surplus and Mr. Butler advised there had been \$16,500 in 2009 and some in 2010, as well.

Following further discussion on the matter, motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mr. Monroe and carried unanimously to establish a maintenance fund using unexpended monies from the Up Yonda operating budget to support unanticipated expenses at the facility and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 16th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Belden questioned whether the 2012 Budget had been addressed with the Up Yonda trustees and Mr. Tennyson replied that it had been briefly discussed and a shortfall of approximately \$26,000 identified; however, he said, no possible contributions from other towns had been included. Mr. Dusek interjected that these figures could not be included because they had yet to speak with past contributors on the subject of future donations.

Mr. Butler reminded the Committee that during a prior meeting Tanya Tobias-Tomas had distributed a letter stating her concerns relative to increased traffic along the rail line and requesting a written response from the Railroad Operator. He said the next agenda item referred to this request and noted that the response prepared by Ed Ellis, President and CEO of Iowa Pacific Holdings, LLC, was included in the agenda packet for the Committee's review. Mr. Butler advised he had not had the opportunity to contact Ms. Tobias-Tomas to determine whether the letter addressed her concerns, but said he would do so and provide an update at the next Committee meeting.

There had been electrical fire at the railroad office building in North Creek on August 28th, Mr. Butler apprised, and pictures of the building damages were circulated; *copies of the photographs are on file with the minutes.* He explained tree branches had touched an exterior weather head, somehow back-feeding the electrical current into the building and starting the fire. Mr. Butler said he was unsure whether any actual flames had resulted from the event, but noted there was charring and smoke damage. At Mr. Butler's request, Mr. Torrico expounded upon the damages to the office building the SNCR was in the process of updating, advising that most of the fire damage had been to the insulation in the attic. He added that during the process of extinguishing the fire, the attic had been filled with water which had caused the ceiling of the lower floor to sag quite a bit. Mr. Torrico advised that a local contractor had been called upon by SNCR to provide an estimate for repairs to include new wiring, carpeting and a more

modern heating system and an initial estimate of \$26,000 was received. He noted that this was only an initial estimate and that SNCR planned to gather others, as well as to determine what work could be done by their own staff to further reduce the repair costs. Mr. Torrico said although he was aware certain procedures were necessary to determine whether insurance coverage was available for the loss, he wondered whether there was a way for SNCR to fund the repair costs and receive reimbursement at a later date in order to complete the work as quickly as possible so the office could be occupied.

Mr. Butler apprised the building was jointly owned by the County and Town of Johnsburg and noted that the insurance carried had already been notified of the loss. Mr. Dusek interjected that, assuming the incident was determined to be a covered loss, the County and Town would be obligated to follow bidding laws to determine who would perform the repair work, which could not be done immediately. He added that it would not be necessary for SNCR to wait until the next Committee meeting as they could receive updates in the intervening time and a special Committee meeting could be called if necessary to move the process along as quickly as possible. However, Mr. Dusek concluded, they could not proceed to develop a strategy until the insurance adjusters determinations were made.

Mr. Belden questioned whether the damages could be repaired under an emergency statute which would allow them to circumvent the bidding process and Mr. Dusek replied in the negative, advising that these would not qualify as emergency repairs. Mr. Taylor questioned how prevailing wage rates applied in situations such as these and Mr. Dusek responded that as a governmental entity, the County was required to pay prevailing wage rates for any type of work necessitating manpower in the form of laborers, electricians, mechanics and the like. Mr. Taylor then asked if SNCR would have the same wage requirements if they were to hire a contractor for the repairs and Mr. Dusek advised they would not because they were considered to be a private employer and did not face the same restrictions. Mr. Bentley inquired whether the building could be leased to SNCR and the repairs completed independent of the County and Mr. Dusek replied he would need to review the insurance and contract provisions to determine whether this was a possibility and then the issue could be discussed further. Mr. Torrico said he understood the constraints faced by the County but wanted them to be aware SNCR was willing to expend funds immediately to facilitate the repairs as quickly as possible. Mr. Dusek noted his concern that SNCR might fund the repairs under the impression that the monies would be returned to them and this could not be guaranteed. Mr. Tennyson asked if the inability to use the office building posed an immediate operational impact for SNCR and Mr. Torrico replied in the negative, but said it was an important space to them.

Mr. Butler noted that the damage had occurred during the Tropical Storm Irene event and said it might qualify for FEMA assistance. Mr. Tennyson apprised he had spoken with Amy Drexel, Deputy Superintendent of the Office of Emergency Services, respective to this matter and found there was some confusion as to whether FEMA would take a primary role in funding the damage when there was insurance coverage available. Mr. Dusek stated that as of yet, FEMA had not provided any indication that individual assistance would be available for Tropical Storm Irene related damages; however, he noted, the general rule was that any available insurance coverage should be exhausted before FEMA assistance was sought. Mr. Tennyson pointed out that the individual assistance coverage might not apply to a municipally owned building, and Mr. Dusek agreed, noting this was an administrative matter that they would continue to work on and provide Mr. Torrico with a response as quickly as possible.

Resuming the agenda review, Mr. Belden announced the next item pertained to an update on SNCR operations which he asked Mr. Torrico to provide. Mr. Torrico said he was very happy to report that the train had left the North Creek Station on time at 7:00 a.m. that morning with six passengers, picking up two more along their way to the Saratoga Station where they had arrived on time. He advised that as a result of Tropical Storm Irene, 165

to 170 trees had fallen across the tracks requiring cutting and removal, two culverts had overflowed and a minor washout at the Wolf Creek Bridge crossing had occurred; however, he noted, all of these issues had been addressed to allow train operations to resume. Mr. Torrico added that SNCR felt these to be minor damages and counted themselves as very lucky in comparison to the damages resulting from the storm in other parts of the area.

Mr. Belden asked if SNCR was happy with the ridership figures reported thus far in their operational contract and Mr. Torrico replied affirmatively, advising they had transported approximately 4,000 riders in their first 30 days of operation, which they were very proud to report. Mr. Torrico noted that a number of riders were boarding at the Saratoga Station and traveling to the North Creek Station with intermittent stops along the way. He further noted SNCR was currently negotiating with Amtrak for "through-ticketing" which would allow a rider to purchase tickets to a certain destination which might include both train and bus tickets to reach that location. Mr. Torrico reported that the two weekend "Day out with Thomas" event had begun on the prior Saturday with 1,553 attendees, but had been cancelled for Sunday due to the stormy weather. He said their goal for the Thomas event was to service 8,000 passengers, which was the total ridership figure for the prior year. In response to a question as to how long the current railroad schedule would be maintained, Mr. Torrico advised it would continue until October 30th.

As for other, more general updates, Mr. Torrico apprised SNCR had hired a Road Master who would serve as the person in charge of the tracks and noted the individual had an intimate knowledge of the tracks and they expected him to do a great job for the SNCR. Additionally, he announced they had recently signed a lease for property located near the North Creek Station which currently housed an old and unsightly sawdust burner which would be removed by the lessor to improve the aesthetic value of the area. Mr. Torrico said the visage would be further improved by the removal of an old garnet shed on County-owned property, which they hoped the County would agree to remove; Mr. Tennyson interjected that the County was researching the matter to determine whether the structure was actually their responsibility, as it was part of a lease from the 1960's. Mr. Torrico advised that the shed might pose a liability since it was in ramshackle condition; he added that SNCR intended to fix up the property they had leased and install additional tracks for their yard. Concluding his report, Mr. Torrico said he was pleased to announce SNCR was preparing to begin a capital improvement project for the entire rail line and had set aside \$500,000 to be expended in 2011 for track surfacing, upgrades and tie installations.

Mr. Merlino commended SNCR on their operations, saying they were doing a very good job and had made the rail line a success; however, he added, he had received one complaint from a group that had been in the restroom when the train had stopped and it had left without them. Mr. Torrico said he had been advised of this complaint and explained their current procedure was for the Conductor to disembark from the train at each stop to look for riders, and if there were none, to re-board and proceed in order to maintain their operating schedule. He advised they would be posting signs at each platform location to indicate that riders should be prepared to wait for the train on the platform if they wished to ride.

Mr. Belden questioned whether a ski train was planned for the upcoming winter season and Mr. Torrico replied affirmatively, noting these operations would begin on December 30th. In response to an inquiry made by Mr. Champagne, Mr. Torrico asserted that SNCR had experienced no difficulties entering or leaving the Saratoga Station and noted that the Canadian Pacific Railroad had been very cooperative and their dispatchers had actually held freight trains and put SNCR out in front of Amtrak runs to get them in and out of the station. Relative to a question posed about the possible acquisition of the Sanford Lake branch extending to the north of the North Creek Station, Mr. Torrico advised there was a continued interest in possibly acquiring the line at some point in the future but he had no specific information to report on the matter. Mr. Monroe referenced a rail line operating from Lake Placid, NY to Remsen, NY, noting that the Adirondack North Country Association had recently received a \$1.2

million grant to install a trail alongside the tracks and questioned the feasibility of installing a similar trail in connection with the Warren County rail line. Mr. Torrico replied that he had no personal experience in dealing with this type of program, although he was aware of other rail lines that had installed similar trails which had been very successful, especially when sufficient right-of-way had been available.

Mr. Belden thanked Mr. Torrico for his report and asked Mr. Butler to proceed with the agenda review. Mr. Butler advised the agenda included a copy of the complimentary letter received from a resident relative to stocking of the Schroon River which had led to better fishing in the area. He then pointed out a photograph from *The Post Star* website, also included in the agenda, of a young fisherwoman and the foot-long rainbow trout she had caught in the Crandall Park Pond in Glens Falls, NY on August 3rd. Mr. Butler said this catch was especially interesting considering the temperature of the relatively small pond which rose to inhospitable levels for trout during the summer months and proved that the fish stocking done in the spring carried over into the summer months.

Mr. Merlino questioned whether any discussion had been held relative to 2011-2012 funding for the snowmobile clubs, noting that he had gathered some information he felt it was important for the budget group to review before making any decisions on funding levels. Referring specifically to information provided by the South Warren Snowmobile Club, Mr. Merlino apprised their largest annual expenses were for two grooming service contracts, costing \$33,619 and \$27,318 respectively. He advised that over the past years the amounts of State grant funding received had fluctuated widely based on the number of snowmobile registrations received, ranging from \$17,000 to \$36,000 per year. Mr. Merlino stated that although this might seem to be a considerable amount of funding for a snowmobile club to receive, most actually operated at a deficit and he cited that during the prior season, the South Warren Snowmobile Club had generated \$98,459 in revenues between grant funding, raffle sales, donations, etc., but had expended \$120,000, leaving a shortfall of approximately \$21,000, which they had been able to cover using unexpended funds from prior years. He concluded he was worried funding for the snowmobile clubs might be reduced due to the tenuous budgetary status of the County and he felt the Committee should be aware of how they would be adversely affected before making such a decision.

Mr. Belden advised the matter should be discussed at the next meeting of the budget group and he invited Mr. Merlino to attend and express his feelings. Mr. Tennyson said they intended to invite all members of the Board of Supervisors to the next meeting of the snowmobile clubs in an effort to better express the clubs' funding needs and expenses; he added he was unsure when the next meeting would be held, but advised they were typically held at the Fish Hatchery. Mr. Butler interjected the annual snowmobile club meeting was typically held on April 1st, but said he could organize a special meeting within the next two to three weeks. Mr. Merlino suggested the snowmobile clubs be invited to a Committee meeting so that more Supervisors would be encouraged to attend. Mr. Belden stated the snowmobile funding in the 2012 Budget might not be reduced at all, and he advised Mr. Butler should refrain from scheduling a meeting with the snowmobile clubs until after this decision was made. Mr. Butler said many members of the snowmobile clubs had day jobs and would not be able to attend a Committee meeting and he offered to make contact with the clubs and gather information to be presented at a future meeting.

Concluding the agenda review with the Referral section, Mr. Dusek apprised he had no updates to provide on any of the items listed.

There being no further Parks, Recreation & Railroad business to discuss, Mr. Belden announced the Committee would take a short break before beginning the DPW portion of the meeting.

The Committee recessed from 10:51 a.m. to 11:05 a.m.

Mr. Merlino left the meeting at 10:51 a.m.

Upon reconvening, privilege of the floor was extended to Mr. Tennyson who distributed copies of the DPW agenda to the Committee members, a copy of which is also on file with the minutes.

Mr. Tennyson began the agenda review with a report of storm damages incurred during the Tropical Storm Irene event, distributing photos, *copies of which are on file with the minutes*, and reading aloud a long list of road damages throughout the County. He then directed the Committee members to agenda page 2 which included a request to establish Capital Project No. H327.9550 280, Tropical Storm Irene, in the amount of \$400,000 to fund the repairs using anticipated FEMA disaster relief monies. Mr. Tennyson advised he had discussed this request with both the Treasurer's Office and Mr. Dusek in the hopes that the funding source could be established using inter-fund transfers which would avoid the need for any bonding services, assuming that the FEMA reimbursements were made in a timely manner. Mr. Dusek confirmed that he approved of the concept and advised if the Committee was in agreement, they would need to approve the request and refer it to the Finance Committee to determine a source of funding.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the request to establish Capital Project No. H327.9550 280, Tropical Storm Irene, in the amount of \$400,000 and refer same to the Finance Committee to determine a source of funding. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Due to the nature of Tropical Storm Irene which had affected every part of the County, Mr. Tennyson apprised they had relied heavily upon the various Town Highway crews who had worked seamlessly with the County Highway crews to address issues and re-open roads. He said communications with all of the Towns had been excellent and he was very happy with the way in which they were able to work together, allowing them to make considerable progress in addressing necessary repairs already. Additionally, Mr. Tennyson apprised the Sheriff's Communication Desk had been critical during the storm operations because there were so many reports of downed trees, the Communications Desk had been key in avoiding redundant reports.

A brief discussion ensued.

Resuming the agenda review, Mr. Tennyson advised the agenda included a copy of the County Road Pavement Condition Report in its draft form. He explained a study had been performed by his Engineering staff to determine the status of the County highway infrastructure and determine what areas were in need of attention, as well as to provide projected funding levels to return the infrastructure to levels similar to those seen in the past. Mr. Tennyson reiterated the report was in draft form and advised modifications and revisions would be made, with the final version to be revealed at a later date. He added his request that the Committee members feel free to contact him with any additional information they would like to have included in the report.

Mr. Champagne opined the figures listed in the Pavement Condition Report were unrealistic in relation to the County's funding abilities and he suggested that Mr. Tennyson reevaluate the matter to determine a lower amount that would meet the necessities of the County while being mindful of the available funding.

Mr. Tennyson advised agenda page 3 included a draft listing of the highway repair projects tentatively planned for 2012 as developed at the Budget Team's request to establish a paving plan that would maintain the current level of the County infrastructure. He explained that in developing the plan, a Service Life Analysis had been used which essentially accounted for 247 miles of highway which aged one year annually, requiring 247 miles of paving to maintain a consistent paving grade. Mr. Tennyson added that if the 247 mile total was exceeded, the overall paving

grade would be considered improved, while a lower figure would insinuate a decline in the paving grade. He noted that reductions in funding had led to a decline in the paving grade for the past three years as the 247 mile figure was not met. Referring to the draft document included in the agenda, Mr. Tennyson said the top portion reflected a plan to pave 247 miles of highway at a cost of approximately \$2.5 million, which would maintain the current paving grade, while the bottom portion showed some additional work he intended to include in his 2012 Budget request that could be performed at a cost of \$700,000 and would improve the overall road conditions. He noted the combined totals for both sections was around \$3.2 million and this figure had been used as it was determined to be the level he was comfortable could be completed in-house with the best efficiency and cost benefit to the County. Unfortunately, Mr. Tennyson stated, if the program was over-funded, he would not have the staffing available to complete the funded work and outside contracts, incurring prevailing wage rates, would be required. He concluded that he welcomed the Committee's comments and suggestions and planned to present this document along with his recommendations at the next Budget Team meeting.

Chairman Stec questioned how far below the minimum levels the paving program had fallen over the past three years and Mr. Tennyson responded that they had been in the 140 mile range. Chairman Stec deduced the paving program was now about 300 service life miles behind and Mr. Tennyson's plan for additional paving of 103 miles would reduce the deficit total to 200 service life miles.

Mr. Taylor said both the draft Highway Repair Project list and the County Road Pavement Condition Report included a lot of good information and he asked if the finalized versions of both could be placed on the DPW website and Mr. Tennyson advised that they could.

Discussion ensued.

Moving on, Mr. Tennyson presented a request for a transfer of funds in the amount of \$160,000 to be appropriated from the Road Machinery Fund Balance to cover fuel expenses. He said they had initially planned to transfer \$100,000 for these expenses, but due to increased fuel usage attributed to the spring storms and Tropical Storm Irene, a larger transfer was necessary.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the request to appropriate \$160,000 from the Road Machinery Fund Balance and refer same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Finally, Mr. Tennyson addressed the Items of Interest Section, advising the waste transportation bid had been released; he noted the bids were due back the following week, at which point they would be analyzed before being presented to the Committee.

Mr. Champagne asked for clarification on the bid and Mr. Dusek explained the disposal and transportation bids had been released separately and would later be factored together to determine the true lowest costs to the County for the necessary services. Mr. Monroe questioned whether any discussion had been held relative to electronics recycling by the Inter-County Solid Waste Committee and Mr. Taylor advised there had not. Mr. Champagne said there were now local collection areas where businesses accepted unwanted electronics at no cost and were able to then use those items to generate a profit. He added that since this type of business seemed to be growing, the electronics disposal issue seemed to be handling itself. Mr. Monroe then asked if a meeting had been scheduled to discuss the Hartford Landfill situation and Chairman Stec replied a meeting was desired but had not been scheduled for a specified date. Mr. Belden advised Solid Waste should be included on the agenda for the next Committee meeting to discuss both the waste disposal and transportation bids and the status of the Hartford Landfill.

Mr. Tennyson said he had one final item to note which was not included on the agenda, that being an issue with some severe interference on the County radio system they had been trying to track for some time. It appeared they had found the problem, he stated, with a paging company in Vermont, and it had been addressed.

As there was no further business to come before the Public Works Committee, on motion made by Mr. Champagne and seconded by Mr. McCoy, Mr. Belden adjourned the meeting at 11:36 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Allen, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist