

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: ECONOMIC GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

DATE: APRIL 30, 2014

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS TAYLOR
WOOD
BEATY
STROUGH

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR MONROE

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION:

ED BARTHOLOMEW, PRESIDENT

JENNIFER SWITZER, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

WAYNE LAMOTHE, COUNTY PLANNER

PATRICIA TATICH, ASSOCIATE PLANNER

PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD

FRANK THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER

SUPERVISORS BROCK

GIRARD

KENNY

MCDEVITT

MERLINO

SEEBER

SIMPSON

DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*

SARAH MCLENITHAN, SECRETARY TO THE CLERK OF THE BOARD

Mr. Taylor called the meeting of the Economic Growth & Development Committee to order at 10:26 a.m.

Motion was made by Ms. Wood , seconded by Mr. Strough 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 Wayne LaMothe, County Planner, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes*

Commencing the agenda review Mr. LaMothe presented a request to authorize a contract extension with Systems Development Group, Inc. to provide standard upgrades for the SDG Image Mate Online System for a term commencing October 1, 2014 and will remain in force until such time that it is terminated by either party for an amount not to exceed \$3,600 annually. He said the cost was offset by the contract his Department had with the Warren County Association of Realtors to access the SDG Image Mate online system in the amount of \$4,000. He stated the contract was normally for three years; however, he said, he was requesting to keep it open ended so they could utilize it only when necessary.

Motion was made by Ms. Wood, seconded by Mr. Strough and carried unanimously to approve the request as presented above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the May 16, 2014 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. LaMothe requested to amend the 2014 County Budget in the amount of \$71,000 to place revenue in the correct funding code. He explained that the request was the result of a request by the County Treasurer's Office to transfer the funds from Code A.8021 3905 to Code A.8021 1298 to reflect the correct revenue codes.

Motion was made by Ms. Wood, seconded by Mr. Strough and carried unanimously to approve the request as presented above and forward same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the request to Amend the County Budget form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. LaMothe stated requested to extend the existing contract with the LGPC (Lake George Park Commission) wherein the Warren County Planning & Community Development Department would provide the LGPC with GIS (Geographic Information Services) for an amount not to exceed \$2,500 at a rate of \$30 per hour based on the billable rate for a term commencing January 1, 2014 continuing until such time that it is terminated by either party. He stated he would like the contract to be open ended to allow the LGPC to utilize the services on an as needed basis.

Paul Dusek, County Administrator, questioned whether they were billed by the hour for these services and Mr. LaMothe replied affirmatively. He explained when LGPC utilized the service they were billed the established billable rate for GIS of \$30 per hour up to \$2,500 annually, as approved by the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Dusek suggested the resolution state the current billable rates were subject to change by the Board of Supervisors in the future.

Motion was made by Mr. Strough, seconded by Ms. Wood and carried unanimously to approve the extension of the contract with the LGPC (Lake George Park Commission) wherein the Warren County Planning & Community Development Department would provide the LGPC with GIS services for an amount not to exceed \$2,500 at a rate of \$30 per hour based on the billable rate subject to change for a term commencing January 1, 2014 continuing until such time that it is terminated by either party and the necessary resolution was authorized for the May 16, 2014 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. LaMothe presented a request for authorization to submit grant applications under the CFA (Consolidated Funding Application) for CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funds for miscellaneous projects and authorize the required public hearings at a date and time to be determined by the Planning & Community Development Department. He said the State would be releasing the next round of funding applications for the CFA process on May 1, 2014 and they would be due on June 16, 2014. He advised one of the potential projects consisted of the re-submission of the prior years application to connect the Countryside Adult Home to the municipal waste water system, as it was not approved in 2013. He apprised they would consider submitting an application to the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program for the First Wilderness Heritage Corridor. He noted they were reviewing potential infrastructure projects in the Town of North Creek, as well as the Town of Chester.

Another potential project under consideration, Mr. LaMothe advised was partnering with the EDC (Economic Development Corporation) and the Iowa Pacific Railroad Company, as well as other potential partners to complete a market study update. He noted the estimated cost of the revision was \$100,000, of which the County would be required to provide \$50,000. He stated discussions were ongoing with regards to providing the matching funds of \$50,000.

Mr. Dusek added a representative of the Iowa Pacific Railroad Company had attended a meeting with himself, Ed Bartholomew, President of EDC, Messrs. Geraghty, Thomas and LaMothe to discuss connecting the Saratoga North Creek Railroad to the Rensselaer Train Station. He explained that as of right now the Saratoga North Creek Railroad was not permitted to travel any further south than the Town of Corinth. He stated this created issues for individuals traveling from New York City to North Creek because they had to find an alternative mode of transportation from the Rensselaer Train Station to the Saratoga Springs Train Station in order to make it to their final destination. He

said they were discussing implementing a passenger train that would transport travelers from the Rensselaer Train Station to the Saratoga Springs Train Station so they could board the train that would take them to North Creek. He advised a study was necessary to ensure that this was a feasible plan.

Mr. Dusek apprised the representative from the Iowa Pacific Railroad indicated at the meeting the railroad was willing to contribute funds towards completing the study. He suggested other sources of funding be explored for the project such as the State, Saratoga County and other municipalities, etc. He reiterated the study was required in order to achieve the goal of making the aforementioned connection between the Rensselaer and Saratoga Springs Train Stations. He stated he felt this would increase the number of visitors from New York City to the area to enjoy all aspects of Warren County. He emphasized this connection benefitted the western portion of the County with regards to drawing tourists to that area, as he felt tourists were unaware of the opportunities available in that portion of the County.

Mr. Bartholomew advised it was a collaborative effort between Warren County, the EDC, Iowa Pacific Railroad and others to develop the western portion of the County. He noted the study would include updates to freight, as well. He said he felt these updates would be useful to have in the future. He stated he believed this project fit into the goals and objectives of the Capital Region Economic Development Council, as well as Governor Cuomo's goals and objectives. He apprised he would work closely with Mr. LaMothe on the application for this project through the CFA process.

Mr. LaMothe apprised should Iowa Pacific Railroad determine they no longer wanted to continue operations in Warren County the study could be used to market the strengths and opportunities of the railroad in Warren County. He pointed out the Iowa Pacific Railroad utilized the 2003 market study as a resource to base their decision to locate within the region. He said they would include the market study for this project on an application for funding under the CFA Program. Mr. Dusek interjected that the Iowa Pacific Railroad had indicated they were committed to this area and that new ownership of the company would not impact the management and vision of the company. He said he was confident Warren County would enjoy a long relationship with the Iowa Pacific Railroad.

Mr. Bartholomew advised he felt there would be continuity and familiarization with Warren County because the new owners of the railroad were not going to introduce a new management team. He said he believed one of the benefits of the new ownership was that a new funding source was established which would alleviate some of the concerns with the outstanding bills and lead to greater investments such as freight operations. He pointed out in order for the railroad to be successful with freight operations additional infrastructure was needed.

With regards to the request for authorization to submit grant applications under the CFA (Consolidated Funding Application) for CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funds for miscellaneous projects, Mr. LaMothe apprised since the rules and regulations had not been published there was an uncertainty as to what type of public hearing requirements would be necessary. He stated because of this he had included in his request authorization for the required public hearings at a date and time to be determined by the Planning & Community Development Department.

Motion was made by Ms. Wood, seconded by Mr. Beaty and carried unanimously to approve the request as presented above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the May 16, 2014 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. LaMothe presented a request to amend the 2014 County Budget to include unanticipated

appropriations in the amount of \$4,050 to reflect the receipt of grant funding to cover the cost of overtime for the Office Specialist. He stated the overtime was necessary for their Department to get caught up on the State reimbursement requests. He noted there would be no cost to the County because the overtime expenses would be reimbursed through grant funding. He advised he was working with the IT (Information Technology) Department on developing a method to record the various grant funded projects to allow for a faster turn around on the reimbursements.

Motion was made by Ms. Wood, seconded by Mr. Strough and carried unanimously to approve the request as presented above and forward same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the Request to Amend the County Budget is on file with the minutes. **Note: Subsequent to the meeting, a corrected budget amendment in the amount of \$3,562. A copy of this request is on file with the minutes.***

With regards to program updates, Mr. LaMothe advised that pages 7 through 9 of the agenda summarized the existing programs they had and the projects they were undertaking. He stated the older the program was the closer they were to completing them. He said once the First Wilderness Heritage Corridor Action Plan was completed the 2007 program would be finished.

Mr. LaMothe stated page 10 of the agenda consisted of the County Planning Board's annual report for 2013 as required by Section 239d, paragraph 6 of the General Municipal Law. He said the report summarized the number of referrals received and responded to by the Department in 2013. He appraised 156 hours of staff time was expended to complete the referrals. He pointed out the report included a graph displaying the number of referrals from the various municipalities. He noted the bulk of the referrals were received from the Towns of Queensbury and Bolton.

Mr. LaMothe appraised pages 11 through 14 of the agenda consisted of an overview and summary of the activities of the Warren County GIS. He stated they would be undertaking quality control of the aerial photography that was completed. He said he would return to the Committee later in the year to request the use of a paid intern to assist with this project.

With regards to Warren County's Fair Housing Plan, Mr. LaMothe advised no updates had been completed in several years. He stated they planned on reviewing other plans and updating it to ensure the County was in compliance with the required rules and regulations. He appraised pages 15 through 18 consisted of two letters from the Vice President of the NYSHCR (New York State Homes & Community Renewal) Program congratulating the Department on successful audits of the County's 2007 and 2008 NYS Home Program contract. Mr. Dusek commended Mr. LaMothe for managing his Department in an efficient manner, as the letters received from the NYSHCR demonstrated the quality of work completed by the Department. He noted that Mr. LaMothe had pointed out that the County was not compliant with the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act). He said he felt Mr. LaMothe was on target with the projects he was managing for the County.

The Planning and Community Development portion of the meeting concluded at 10:47 a.m.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Ed Bartholomew, President of the EDC, who advised he did not prepare an agenda for the meeting; however, he said, he would like to discuss a few matters with the Committee.

In reference to the study conducted in conjunction with the Adirondack Gateway Council pertaining to infrastructure needs in Warren, Washington and Saratoga Counties, Mr. Bartholomew appraised it was nearing completion. He said meetings were scheduled to provide an update on the process

in Glens Falls on Monday, May 12, 2014 in the morning, as well as the Town of Chester that same evening. He anticipated identifying areas in need of broadband and applying for a Broadband NY Connects application on behalf of the Adirondack Gateway Council for certain areas of Warren, Washington and northern Saratoga Counties. He said the study identified unserved areas, as well as under served areas, which he felt was pertinent to the economic development of the area. He explained that when businesses considered expanding or relocating to this region they would inquire whether there was more than one broadband provider available. He stated it was important to identify the areas that were unserved and under served for broadband and national grid services so funding could be sought. He pointed out there were no natural gas lines available north of Lake George, which he felt some types of business would find prohibitive.

Mr. Bartholomew advised the EDC was hosting their annual luncheon on Friday, May 16, 2014. He stated the presentation portion of the luncheon consisted of dialogue from Mr. Geraghty and the keynote speaker was Deba Mukherjee, Ph.D., President & Chief Executive Officer of Finch Paper LLC. He said the focus of the luncheon was the forest products industry. He noted there were over 2,200 people employed within that industry in Warren, Washington and Saratoga Counties. He apprised the industry consisted of foresters, timber harvesters, sawmills, paper product manufacturers, as well as related equipment manufacturers, fabrications shops, and industrial contractors. He stated he felt it was just as important to recognize the established industries in the area, such as the forest production industry as it was to attract new businesses and technology to the region.

Mr. Bartholomew apprised the EDC was working with a number of Economic Development agencies located within the County. As an example, he said they assisted the Bolton Economic Development Agency with becoming compliant with the PAAA (Public Authorities Accountability Act). He advised they would be formalizing an agreement between the EDC, the Town of Bolton and the Bolton Economic Development Agency within the next few months.

With regards to the Hacker Boat Company Operation, he advised that through the efforts of Mr. Strough and the Queensbury Planning Board the process was moving along. He said he anticipated the process would be completed later this year so they could commence construction of their facility. He stated he felt this would provide momentum in the Queensbury Business Park.

Mr. Bartholomew stated SUNY (State University of New York) Adirondack would be submitting the Start-Up NY Program to the State for review within the next few days. He said the EDC would be working closely with SUNY Adirondack on some programs and exciting projects for the region. He advised Senator Gillibrand had flown into the Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport to attend a meeting with a number of representatives from the region to review a presentation about economic development, as well as discuss the needs of the area.

Mr. Bartholomew apprised in conjunction with the Governor's initiatives the EDC was reaching out to the business community this year. He said the Governor emphasized the importance of businesses with global operations. He referred the Committee to an article featured in *The Post Star* that highlighted local businesses that were conducting business worldwide. He estimated there to be about 68 businesses in the region that performed some type of international business. He stated the EDC would be reaching out to them to inquire whether they required assistance for expansion or purchasing new equipment. In response to complaints received about the lengthy process to receive funds through the CFA Program, the Governor's Office was discussing implementing a shorter process to submit an application to receive funds on an interim basis.

Mr. Beaty questioned whether Mr. Bartholomew was aware of the percentage of jobs within Warren

County that were related to the forest product industries and Mr. Bartholomew replied the percentage fluctuated. He said the four key economic development clusters that provided the bulk of the employment in Warren, Washington and northern Saratoga Counties were medical services, the forest products industry, the tourism and hospitality industry, and the medical device industry. He stated he felt that although there would not be immense growth within the forest product industry there would be stabilization.

There being no further business to come before the Economic Growth & Development Committee, on motion made by Mr. Strough and seconded by Ms. Wood, Mr. Taylor adjourned the meeting at 11:01 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah McLenithan, Secretary to the Clerk of the Board