

**WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**COMMITTEE: ECONOMIC GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT**

**DATE: JULY 23, 2014**

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**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

SUPERVISORS TAYLOR  
MONROE  
WOOD  
BEATY  
STROUGH

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

WAYNE LAMOTHE, COUNTY PLANNER  
KEVIN B. GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD  
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
MARTIN AUFFREDOU, COUNTY ATTORNEY  
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD  
FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER

SUPERVISORS CONOVER  
DICKINSON  
FRASIER  
MCDEVITT  
MERLINO  
SIMPSON  
SOKOL  
VANSELOW

AMANDA MAY METZGER, *THE POST STAR*  
SAMANTHA HOGAN, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

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Mr. Taylor called the meeting of the Economic Growth & Development Committee to order at 10:18 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, Warren 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 renew the contract with Fountain Spatial, Inc., for General Information System (GIS) Programming Services for the term commencing January 1, 2014 and terminating December 31, 2015 for the lump sum of \$3,600 per year. He advised the request had not been presented earlier in the year because the contract expiration was overlooked.

Motion was made by Ms. Wood, seconded by Mr. Monroe and carried unanimously to approve the contract renewal and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 15, 2014 Board meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Moving on to the Program Updates and Discussion Items section of the Agenda, Mr. LaMothe apprised they had requested the full amount of funding from the New York State Housing Trust Fund for a Community Development Small Cities Block Grant for the Health Center in Warrensburg; he advised this was a \$400,000 grant which would be closed out by the end of September. Additionally, Mr. LaMothe apprised bid specifications were being released through the Purchasing Office for construction activities relating to the Bandstand in the Town of Warrensburg, sidewalks in the Town of Johnsbury and design work for the town-owned parcel at the main intersection in the Town of Stony Creek. He explained that all these projects were funded under the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program.

Mr. LaMothe continued that they were in the process of closing out the flood grant program and requesting final payments. He noted the State had preliminarily approved the information that had been sent and then requested submission of a full reimbursement package, which consisted of a very large amount of information. Mr. LaMothe stated they were still working on processing this information and hoped to disburse the funds as quickly as possible.

Mr. LaMothe stated that under the latest round of Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) grant funding they had re-submitted for the public sewer connection for Countryside Adult Home. He said they had also applied for grant funding in the amount of \$410,450 under the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, which required a local match; however, he added, he had been advised the investment made by the Saratoga & North Creek Railway in the publicly owned portion of the rail lines could be used as matching funds.

Mr. LaMothe then directed the Committee's attention to the First Wilderness Corridor brochure he had distributed with the Agenda packet. He pointed out that the brochure included a driving map and an interpretive explanation of what was available in the towns along the corridor. He stated that they had printed 10,000 copies of the brochure and he anticipated the need to print more.

Returning to the subject of Grant Programs, Mr. LaMothe advised that he had spoken with Ed Bartholomew, President of the Warren County Economic Development Corporation (EDC), in regards to the County's funding application for the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program and the associated matching funds. He stated that Mr. Bartholomew had obtained financial commitments from the Warren-Washington Industrial Development Agency (IDA) and the Saratoga County IDA, as well as from the EDC, and a \$10,000 cash donation from the Saratoga & North Creek Railway.

Moving on to Item D, Economic Development Action, privilege of the floor was extended to Martin Auffredou, County Attorney, who gave an update on a proposed Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreement for 65 Ridge Street LLC., "The McEchron House", for the City of Glens Falls IDA. He explained that he had received a 10 year standard PILOT agreement that would commence on January 1, 2016 for the County's tax billing purposes and September 1, 2015 for the Glens Falls School District tax bills. He further added that the base evaluation would be the current assessment of \$353,500. Mr. Auffredou stated that he had some concerns about the base value which were cleared up with Lauren Stack, City of Glens Falls Assessor. He stated that he had taken the 2014 County tax rate of 4.812% and applied it to the base valuation and the revenue generated annually was \$1,701.04, which would continue throughout the 10 year agreement. Mr. Auffredou stated that for the first five years of the PILOT agreement any added value would not be included in the assessment; he explained that any updates and added value would be tax free for the first five years of the agreement, and for the last five years a formula would be used to determine how those values would be added to the assessed value of the building, as outlined in the PILOT agreement. Mr. Auffredou advised he had provided Mike Swan, Warren County Treasurer, with a copy of the PILOT agreement for review and Mr. Swan had responded that he did not have any concerns, commenting that this seemed to be a standard PILOT agreement. Mr. Auffredou stated that, as per the Law, the County did not have any approval authority in this matter, only comment authority. In conclusion, he indicated that any comments made by the Committee would be provided to the attorney for the City of Glens Falls IDA for their review.

Mr. Taylor, stated that he was fully supportive of the PILOT agreement, expounding that if this project had not occurred the County would have continued to receive only \$1,701.04 in property taxes annually, and given the improvements to the property, that figure would likely double after five years.

Mr. Dickinson noted that during the second half of the PILOT agreement the property assessment would increase from the prior assessed value to its proper assessment and he questioned whether the increase would be accrued at a rate of 20% per year over the five-year term to reach the 100% assessed value figure. Mr. Auffredou responded

the abatement schedule allowed 100% exemption from the taxation for the added value for PILOT years one through five, with 50% for years six through ten; he clarified that whatever the added value was, the property owner would receive a 50% credit for years six through ten and at the end of year ten, the full value would be assessed.

Mr. Auffredou asked if there was any objection to forwarding a letter indicating that the Committee was in favor of the PILOT agreement and there were none. Mr. LaMothe questioned whether the PILOT agreement would remain in effect if the business was unsuccessful and Mr. Auffredou responded that the agreement would be specific to the property and not the owner.

Continuing the Agenda review, privilege of the floor was extended to Paul Dusek, County Administrator, to speak about developing an RFP (Request for Proposal) for the establishment of a web page link and creation of Warren County Promotional You-Tube videos on topics such as economic development, tourism, education, welcome to Warren County, etc., with opportunities for local business participation. Mr. Dusek explained that he was approached by a company called CGI, who indicated they offered a program to produce several videos for Warren County which could be linked with the County website for the general public, residents and visitors to view at no cost to the County. He advised CGI would accomplish this by selling advertising spots on the web page which could range from just a name or logo to a complete video, to local businesses within Warren County. Mr. Dusek said CGI had indicated their typical business contracts lasted two to three years, depending on the contracts with the advertiser; he added that if the County decided to do this, they would be required to leave the advertisements up for as long as CGI's longest running contract term, which he understood to be three years. Mr. Dusek advised the Executive Management Team had discussed this idea and determined that this was worth bringing to the Committee's attention; however, he said, the Team felt that an RFP should be released to determine what options were available. Mr. Dusek noted that Sullivan County had already done this and he played the welcome video produced for the Committee's review, pointing out the advertisements included and the quality of the video.

Mr. Beaty asked if the County would have control over which businesses would be able to advertise on the site and Mr. Dusek replied in the negative. Mr. Beaty then stated his concern that allowing a business to advertise in this manner would make it appear as if the County endorsed them.

Mr. Strough stated that he felt this was a good idea and that the County was not doing anything like this currently. He questioned as to the length of the commitment and Mr. Dusek advised the County's commitment would match the term of the longest advertising contract and he reiterated the contract terms ranged from two to three years. Mr. Dickinson stated his concern with the contract term and Mr. Dusek noted that the longest contract term that could be required was three years, at the end of which the County would be able to renew, if they chose to do so.

Ms. Wood stated that Warren County had a great Tourism Department that produced videos of fantastic quality and she opined that if they desired a "Welcome to Warren County" video the Department would be capable of accomplishing such a task. She said she agreed with Mr. Beaty's concerns about the perception of Warren County's endorsement of the businesses advertising on the site and noted another concern was that the advertising rates were currently unknown and might prove too costly for the smaller businesses within the County.

Mr. Dusek explained that in addition to the Executive Management Team, he had met with Kate Johnson and Peter Girard, of the Tourism Department, who had viewed the videos. He stated that while the Tourism Department had a good production ability, he did not believe it was sufficient to produce a video of this quality.

Mr. Conover stated that he felt that the video could be produced without County involvement, and he questioned why County approval was necessary. He pointed out that the County already had a wonderful tourism website that

received hundreds of thousands of visits annually and he suggested that if the County wanted to produce a better common government site they should just focus on that desire.

Mr. Dusek stated that he was bringing this matter before the Committee because it was offered as a free service. He further stated he was aware of the pros and cons on the issue and suggested that if they decided it was not something they wanted to do, they might be able to incorporate some similar ideas into the County website to highlight more than just tourism by providing information on education, similar to the "Welcome Video" placed on the Sullivan County website.

Mr. Monroe stated that he was in favor of the idea, and felt that three years was a short term commitment. Mr. Taylor stated he felt that this was something that deserved to be looked into it further.

Ms. Wood expressed her willingness to make a motion to develop and release the aforementioned RFP, provided that it included verbiage indicating Warren County had the right to reject any and all proposals in the event that something adverse was detected and allowing the County some control over the three-year contract term. Mr. Strough seconded Ms. Wood's motion and it was carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. LaMothe commented that he had looked into having videos produced for the First Wilderness Corridor website and the quotes received for a two-minute video had ranged from \$6,000.00 to \$20,000.00 each. He stated that if you the County had the opportunity to obtain a video for little or no cost, the idea was worth exploring. Mr. Merlino stated that he had commissioned a promotional video for the Town of Lake Luzerne which had cost \$4,000 for a two to three minute video.

There being no further business to come before the Economic Growth & Development Committee, on motion made by Ms. Wood and seconded by Mr. Strough, Mr. Taylor adjourned the meeting at 10:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Samantha Hogan, Legislative Office Specialist