

STEBEN COUNTY AGRICULTURE, INDUSTRY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Wednesday, August 2, 2017

10:00 a.m.

*Legislative Committee Room
Steuben County Office Building
Bath, New York*

****MINUTES****

COMMITTEE: Robin K. Lattimer, Chair Dan C. Farrand John V. Malter
Robert V. Nichols

STAFF: Jack K. Wheeler Mitchell Alger Amy Dlugos
Jennifer Prossick Eric Rose Andy Morse

LEGISLATORS: Joseph J. Hauryski Kelly H. Fitzpatrick Hilda T. Lando
Steven P. Maio

ABSENT: K. Michael Hanna, Vice Chair

OTHERS: Kevin Costello, Executive Director, Steuben County Conference & Visitors' Bureau
Larkin Podsiedlik, Executive Director, Steuben County Cooperative Extension
Stephanie Mehlenbacher, Horticulture Community Educator, Cooperative Extension
Pauline Emery, Director, Southeast Steuben County Library
Tom Simms, President, Board of Trustees, Dormann Library
Cheryl Stephenson, Board of Trustees, Dormann Library
Phil Trautman, Director, Cohocton Public Library
Heidi Robinson, Director, Wimodaughasian Free Library
Candy Wilson, Director, Savona Free Library
Justin Zeh, Director, Avoca Free Library
Barbara Radigan, Director, Pulteney Free Library
Jen Farr, Director, Wayland Free Library
Lorraine Nelson, Director, Howard Public Library
Marsha Watson, Director, Hammondsport Public Library
Mary Perham

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Lattimer called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and asked Mr. Malter to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: ADOPTING THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 12, 2017, MEETING MADE BY MR. MALTER. SECONDED BY MR. FARRAND. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 3-0. (MR. NICHOLS ABSENT FOR VOTE)

III. OUTSIDE AGENCIES

A. Southern Tier Library System

1. **2018 Budget Presentation** – Pauline Emery stated she is here today on behalf of Brian Hildreth to provide their 2018 budget presentation. The funding you have given to the libraries has such an impact in the

communities we serve. She stated that she has brought members from libraries throughout the County to provide their thoughts.

Tom Simms, President, Board of Trustees, Dormann Library introduced Cheryl Stephenson who is also a member of the Board of Trustees. Mr. Simms and Ms. Stephenson both thanked the County for their support.

Phil Trautman, Director, Cohocton Public Library, thanked the Legislators for their support. With your support, we are able to help three people for every one person who lives in Cohocton. Our average attendance is 4,500 per year. We offered 370 programs during 2015 and about 360 programs during 2016.

Heidi Robinson, Director, Wimodaughasian Free Library, stated with the County's funding, we have placed an emphasis on our community. We are hosting business meetings and helping people help themselves.

Candy Wilson, Director, Savona Free Library, thanked the Legislators for their support and hopes they always will continue to support the libraries. One of our most popular programs has been Minecraft, which is for both adults and children.

Justin Zeh, Director, Avoca Free Library, stated they are able to provide after-school enrichment programs. Last year they had 1,314 children that attended the after-school program. We also hold a summer recreational program at the school. Additionally, we have been focusing on unemployment and helping adults to prepare for interviews and generate resumes.

Barbara Radigan, Director, Pulteney Free Library, stated the Pulteney Library is 136 years old and your funding enables us to continue operating. We do so much more than just books. Thank you for your support.

Jen Farr, Director, Wayland Free Library, thanked the Legislators for their support and continued support. Your funding has allowed us to do great programs. Recently we brought in a Kangaroo, and we had 200 people attend. Our library also provides technology support for seniors and all ages.

Lorraine Nelson, Director, Howard Public Library, stated we have a small library which is 15 miles from Bath and Hornell. We serve an area of 60 square miles and a population of 1,430. Additionally we also serve a large population of home schoolers, and that number is increasing.

Marsha Watson, Director, Hammondsport Public Library, stated we have 700 residents, but we serve the entire Keuka Lake tourist area.

Ms. Lattimer stated she has reviewed the presentation materials and there is an increase in the amount requested; the amount of 2018 being \$123,829. What is the increase targeted for? Ms. Emery replied we have requested an increase due to technology and the increase cost of internet communications. A lot of the libraries will be connected to dark fiber and that is an advancement in our communities. Mr. Wheeler commented the library system has partnered with the Southern Tier Network.

Mr. Farrand commented that he supports the libraries and would support an allocation of \$100,000, but he will not support the requested increase. Mr. Malter asked is the proposed allocation based on percentages from 2017? Ms. Emery replied yes.

IV. DEPARTMENTAL REQUESTS

A. Buildings & Grounds

1. **Contract Renewal** – Mr. Rose requested authorization to renew the contract with Hunt Engineers to provide design and engineering services. Specifically, they are providing design and engineering services for the pillar repairs on the Bath Courthouse. Mr. Wheeler commented the contract would be under the same terms and conditions. This can also be used for other engineering services in the County.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE SUPERINTENDENT OF BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS TO RENEW THE CONTRACT WITH HUNT ENGINEERS FOR DESIGN AND ENGINEERING SERVICES UNDER THE SAME TERMS AND CONDITIONS MADE BY MR. NICHOLS. SECONDED BY MR. FARRAND. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

2. **Bid Award – Bath Courthouse Pillars** – Mr. Rose informed the committee that they received two bids; one from Elmira Structures for \$160,000 and the second from Streeter for \$204,000. He recommended awarding to the low bidder, Elmira Structures.

MOTION: AWARDING THE BID FOR THE BATH COURTHOUSE PILLARS TO THE LOW BIDDER, ELMIRA STRUCTURES, FOR \$160,000 MADE BY MR. FARRAND. SECONDED BY MR. MALTER. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

3. **Veterans’ Service Agency** – Mr. Farrand stated that he would like to commend Mr. Rose’s staff as they are doing a really good job at the Veterans’ office.

B. Planning

1. **Commencing the Review for Agricultural District No. 10** – Mrs. Dlugos requested authorization to commence the review on Agriculture District No. 10. This covers the southwest corner of the County.

MOTION: COMMENCING THE REVIEW FOR AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT NO. 10 MADE BY MR. NICHOLS. SECONDED BY MR. FARRAND. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0. Resolution Required.

2. **Authorizing Submission of Application for Community Development Block Grant Funds** – Mrs. Dlugos requested authorization to submit an application to the New York State Homes and Community Renewal for a Community Development Block Grant for the well and septic program.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE PLANNING DIRECTOR TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO THE NEW YORK STATE HOMES AND COMMUNITY RENEWAL FOR A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FOR THE WELL AND SEPTIC PROGRAM MADE BY MR. FARRAND. SECONDED BY MR. MALTER. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0. Resolution Required.

3. **Approval of Additional Contracts for NYS Snowmobile Trail Maintenance Grant** – Mrs. Dlugos requested authorization to contract with Ten Towns Snowmobile Club and the Southern Tier Snow Riders for the NYS Snowmobile Trail Maintenance Grant. Mr. Farrand asked what is the amount of the contracts? Mrs. Dlugos replied that is based on mileage and the amount of maintenance the clubs do during the winter.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE PLANNING DIRECTOR TO ADD CONTRACTS WITH THE TEN TOWNS SNOWMOBILE CLUB AND THE SOUTHERN TIER SNOW RIDERS FOR THE NYS SNOWMOBILE TRAIL MAINTENANCE GRANT MADE BY MR. MALTER. SECONDED BY MR. FARRAND. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

4. **Agricultural Protection Plan** – Mr. Hauryski asked Mrs. Dlugos if there is any information on the status of the Agricultural Protection Plan? Mrs. Dlugos replied this morning she received an email about the timeline for the Farmland Protection Grant. They did have a lead on a potential slaughterhouse partner. She will get the details from the Steuben County Industrial Development Agency. With regard to a food hub, we did not have a partnering agency and they lost interest. Mr. Hauryski commented we have some work to do.

V. **OUTSIDE AGENCIES (Cont.)**

A. **Cornell Cooperative Extension**

1. **2018 Budget Presentation** – Ms. Podsiedlik provided her 2018 budget presentation. With respect to activities, they will be holding the 2017 Farm-City Day at Karr Farms just outside of Hornell. They also held farm visits and producer meetings and started a Farmer University, which discusses the legal and financial aspects of farming. The Southern Tier Outdoor Show has outgrown its space at Wilkins and will be moving to the Steuben County Fairgrounds. This show will be held on October 14th and 15th and we plan to have 140 vendors. Another program initiative was the Going Solar Steuben. This was an educational program for residential solar. We had 95 leads and so far, 19.08 kW of capacity have been installed. Ms. Podsiedlik stated that with regard to the budget, in 2016 they requested an allocation of \$375,000. Most of that goes toward program staff salaries. Approximately 77 percent is program cost and 23 percent is administration. We were able to reach 23,000 people.

Mr. Farrand asked what types of farm consulting do you provide? Ms. Mehlenbacher replied when we are discussing economic viability, we tend to talk with a lot of dairy farms. There are a lot of labor questions due to the increase in minimum wage. Many farms are moving to robots. Mr. Farrand commented there are a number of small dairy farms that have gone out of business. Ms. Mehlenbacher commented the market is not there anymore. Ms. Podsiedlik commented some farms are looking to diversify and are going into agritourism. Mr. Farrand asked have you seen an increase in hops and barley farms? Ms. Mehlenbacher replied yes. Mr. Nichols commented the large farms will go to robots because of the higher minimum wage. Technology will replace people.

Mr. Hauryski stated that he would like to commend Ms. Podsiedlik and her staff as he has been seeing something every week about Cooperative Extension. He stated that was something he had been critical of when he first came on the Legislature. He is very pleased to see this and the money is now being well spent. Mr. Nichols commented he will always support Cooperative Extension because they teach people how to better themselves.

Ms. Podsiedlik stated for 2018 she is asking for an increase from \$375,000 to \$382,000. There are three reasons for this. First, we would like to hire a new agriculture educator. Second, with Farm-City Day, it is a Farmland Protection Board activity, however, we have coordinated that event at a deficit of \$4,000 per year over the last couple of years. Lastly, she is asking for a one-time funding request for their Centennial activities as they will be celebrating their Centennial in 2018. The \$7,000 total increase breaks down to \$5,000 for an agricultural educator, \$1,000 for Farm-City Day and \$1,000 for Centennial activities.

Mr. Malter stated with regard to the residential solar program, have any projects been completed and, if so, have there been issues with property assessments? Ms. Podsiedlik replied she can get that information together. Mr. Malter stated he would be interested to see what the assessors are doing. In all of the challenges in small claims court, the landowner has won, as it has been viewed as equipment. He stated that he has been researching this. Mr. Wheeler commented the straightest line would be for the State to open up the Part A exemption. Back in early 2000, we opted out of that exemption. If we opt in, there were questions about whether we could set a limit between residential and commercial. Each taxing jurisdiction would have to opt in. Mr. Malter stated his problem is that it is equipment, and that is how he treats it as an accountant. The State is promoting clean energy, yet people are getting taxed. Discussion followed.

B. **Steuben County Conference and Visitors' Bureau**

1. **2018 Budget Presentation** – Mr. Costello stated he started as Executive Director in April 2017 and provided some background information. He briefly outlined the numerous activities that they were involved in during the past year. For 2018, they will be looking to redesign their tourism website. We have seen slow or no growth in occupancy over the past five years. We have seen an increase in nightly rates which has the overall effect of creating stagnant room tax revenue. Mr. Costello stated that going into 2018, he is recommending that the Conference and Visitors' Bureau focus on Steuben County first. We are going to look at how to develop a new tourism product and include a new Water Trail.

Mr. Farrand asked for an explanation for increasing the salary line item \$55,000. Mr. Costello replied we are proposing to end our contract and hire a Group Tour individual in the \$50,000 range. We currently have a contract for \$70,000. The remaining \$20,000 would be spent on attending group tour shows. It will provide us with more flexibility to spend on advertising. Mr. Farrand stated you are showing a \$170,000 increase for 2018. Mr. Costello stated during the budget process last year, they requested \$715,000 plus an additional \$35,000 for hospitality training program. They did not budget \$105,000 pass through into the budget. He stated he is including that \$105,000 as a line item and will be using that as a way to go after matching funds.

Mr. Malter asked so no money is coming out of the reserves in the 2017 budget, but it actually was? Mr. Wheeler replied yes, it was budgeted for. Mr. Malter asked how much is in reserve? Mr. Costello replied approximately \$500,000. Our general request of \$715,000 is flat. We do have two reserve project requests. The first is \$25,000 for the Water Trail Program and those funds will be matched with grant funds. The second is \$30,000 which will be used as a down payment on website development.

Mr. Farrand commented that he likes how Mr. Costello showed the budget breakdown for 2018. Mr. Malter asked are you requesting a \$50,000 increase in the 2018 budget? Mr. Costello replied no. He is asking for \$715,000 which has been the traditional request for the last four years. Last year, his predecessor asked for \$745,000 which included the \$35,000 out of reserves. Mr. Nichols asked will that come out of room tax? Mr. Wheeler replied we like to fund the budget and the special requests separately. Mr. Nichols commented that is a good idea so that you can evaluate the projects.

Mr. Nichols asked what will it take to get more people to stay in rooms? Mr. Costello replied marketing. The marketing for outdoor recreation and camping is different than that which would encourage visitors to stay in hotels or motels. There are two different target groups. He stated that he is allocating \$100,000 for advertising to do more marketing.

MOTION: TO AJDOURN MADE BY MR. MALTER. SECONDED BY MR. FARRAND. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted by

Amanda L. Chapman
Deputy Clerk
Steuben County Legislature

****NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR****

Wednesday, September 6, 2017

10:00 a.m.

Please send your agenda items to the Clerk of the Legislature's Office

NO LATER THAN NOON

Wednesday, August 30, 2017