I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Lattimer called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 7, 2021, AND APRIL 26, 2021, MEETINGS MADE BY MR. VAN CAESEELE. SECONDED BY MR. HANNA. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 5-0.

III. DEPARTMENTAL REQUESTS

A. Planning

1. Authorizing Public Hearing – Mr. Sousa requested authorization to hold a Public Hearing relative to land submitted for inclusion in certified agricultural districts during the 2021 annual thirty-day period. The thirty day period runs from February 15th through March 17th of each year.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING A PUBLIC HEARING ON LAND SUBMITTED FOR INCLUSION IN CERTIFIED AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS DURING THE 2021 ANNUAL THIRTY-DAY PERIOD MADE BY MRS. LANDO. SECONDED BY MR. VAN CAESEELE. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 5-0. Resolution Required.

B. County Manager

1. Additional Finger Lakes SPCA Payment – Mr. Wheeler stated I sent an email to the Legislature outlining the fees that the SPCA is requesting in addition to the $10,000 retainer. This request is tied to two cruelty cases that are still pending. He stated candidly he should have requested a monthly update to see how much the charges were accruing. We are talking multiple thousands per month. To close out 2020, netting out the $10,000 that has already been paid, we need $24,008.57. We have $30,000 available in the Animal Cruelty Capital Project. All that savings over the past few years is about to be drained and the charges are still accruing. There will be additional charges for the current year and again, that will be a few thousand per month. The second item on the agenda for the RFP for animal holding services hopefully will rectify that.
Ms. Lattimer stated last year Mr. Mullen had brought up the idea of an RFP to try to get the large animals housed at farms. That idea was pushed on the premise that the District Attorney’s Office would cooperate. One of the arguments the DA had for not going to court under Ag and Markets Law was that the professional testimony would be too costly. The case was finally adjudicated against the individual. Long story short, how much money are we spending now? There has been foot dragging on this and now I think we have to move on that as soon as possible.

Mr. Horton asked who covers the liability for the services that are provided? I can tell you that one of the animals at the SPCA was a nine month old Jersey bull with horns and that animal is now three years old and mean. The girl that takes care of the bull has to take another individual in the pen with her. If she gets hurt is the County liable or the SPCA? She has asked several times if something can be done. I hate to say it, but that bull needs to go to auction. Ms. Lattimer explained under Ag and Markets Law, the DA has to go to a judge to get permission to take control of the animal. Ms. Prossick stated I can look into it as far as the County’s liability.

Mr. Nichols commented Jersey bulls are extremely mean as they get older. There are different facilities around the State that house bulls and those facilities are set up so that nobody gets hurt. I would suggest sending the bull to a facility like that. Bulls can kill a person. Mr. Wheeler stated we will work on this specific issue with the bull with the DA and the SPCA. Ms. Lattimer commented the DA could make a case because of the danger.

Mr. Maio asked is there a process for the owner to pay the bond? Ms. Prossick replied I think there is. Mr. Maio asked how much does it cost the DA’s office to get ready to take that to court? Ms. Lattimer stated we have never gotten an answer on that. The professional services to testify would be cheaper than what we are paying now.

Mr. Van Caeseele asked how long is this case expected to last? Mr. Wheeler replied if the DA doesn’t push it, it will not go anywhere. We are approaching the level of the large animal seizure case from ten years ago. In the budget we have $35,000 and you could pay this out of the budget instead of the capital project if you choose. What we have done is you have not changed the allocation amount and if there was any money left at the end of the year it got rolled into the capital project for these types of situations. There is $29,000 in the capital project.

Mr. Malter stated he would recommend taking what is owed to the SPCA out of the capital project and leave the 2021 budget intact.

**MOTION:** AUTHORIZING THE PAYMENT OF $24,008.57 TO THE FINGER LAKES SPCA FROM THE ANIMAL CRUELTY CAPITAL PROJECT RELATIVE TO AN ANIMAL SEIZURE CRUELTY CASE MADE BY MRS. LANDO. SECONDED BY MRS. FERRATELLA. FOR DISCUSSION.

Mrs. Lando asked can we go back to the DA and have him push and finish this case? Mr. Wheeler replied yes, we can.

**VOTE ON PREVIOUS MOTION. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 5-0.**

Mrs. Lando asked will you be getting ongoing monthly reports from the SPCA? Mr. Wheeler replied yes.

2. **RFP for Animal Holding Services** – Ms. Lattimer asked are there any questions on this? Is there anything we need to discuss? Mr. Wheeler replied no. He would like authorization to put the RFP out and see what the options are. Ms. Lattimer asked how will you be sending it? Do you have specific individuals targeted? Mr. Wheeler replied if you have contacts locally, regionally or statewide, send that information to us and we will send the RFP directly to them.

Mrs. Ferratella commented the only thing missing is emergency situations are not addressed. Mr. Wheeler stated we have a process internally for emergencies, so we would do that process. Mrs. Lando asked what about cats and dogs? Ms. Prossick replied they are different. Ms. Lattimer stated the SPCA is more equipped to handle cats and dogs.
Ms. Fitzpatrick asked is there any way to put in or take out line items from the DA’s budget since these costs are related to his actions/inactions? Mr. Wheeler replied the Legislature controls the budget. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated she would like to add this for discussion at the Finance Committee.

Mr. Nichols commented with the boarding of bovines, the ones that have tested positive for Johne’s Disease; no one will want to take those animals. Ms. Lattimer stated we will have the DA go to court for the angry bull and the diseased bovines.

Mr. Maio commented we should invite him to attend a meeting so we can address this personally. Maybe when Finance discusses it he will take it more seriously.

**MOTION:** AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY MANAGER, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE PURCHASING DIRECTOR, TO PUT OUT AN RFP FOR ANIMAL HOLDING SERVICES MADE BY MR. VAN CAESEELE. SECONDED BY MRS. LANDO. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 5-0.

IV. OUTSIDE AGENCIES

A. Steuben County Industrial Development Agency

1. **Activity Update**
   a. **Annual Performance Report** - Mr. Johnson informed the committee that they completed their annual project performance report. This is prepared and sent to the State every March and we also present it to our Board. For 2020 we had 52 active projects and out of those, there were 5 new projects. We typically average 5 – 8 new projects per year. During the year, out of the 52 projects the capital invested was $92.5 million. What is significant is the amount of money those projects were spending during the pandemic, which was a $24 million increase over the previous years. While the pandemic was going on, businesses were spending a lot of money in the County.

   Mr. Johnson stated of those 52 projects, $2.6 million was generated in PILOT revenue. There was a total investment/payroll impact of $1 billion to the County. That is compared to the $11 million in benefits that companies are receiving. Our efforts are generating a cost benefit to the communities of $81.00 for every $1.00 in incentive spending. We are very proud of that fact and that is something we monitor on an annual basis. Last year for the 52 projects, 7,000 jobs were created resulting in a payroll of $826 million. That represents a decrease of 372 jobs from last year, but that is accounted for from the businesses that were impacted and shut down by COVID. As an example, Gunlock had a really difficult year. The majority of the 52 projects maintained or continued to grow employment. If you back out these 52 projects, with the COVID impact, we saw an increase of 226 jobs for the reporting year.

   Mr. Johnson stated there were a handful of projects that did not perform as expected. The State doesn’t look at whether a project hits their goal originally and then falls below. Many of our benefits go out 10 – 20 years and business cycles do go into play. We want to make sure we look at whether a project hit the benefit at one point and then for some reason failed to maintain.

   b. **Gunlocke** – Mr. Johnson informed the committee that Compin USA has relocated to the Gunlocke facility. Compin is a manufacturer of rail passenger seats and has a contract with Alstom and several others throughout the country. Compin is leasing the upholstery manufacturing space in Gunlocke and purchased all of the existing equipment. They are making 30 or so jobs available for those Gunlocke employees that are being dislocated from Gunlocke. They will be creating 51 jobs total which is a net benefit of 20 plus jobs. This is a great example of being able to work with our partners.

   c. **Hornell Industrial Development Agency** – Mr. Johnson stated we provided technical assistance to the Hornell IDA to submit a $3.4 million grant request to the Economic Development Agency for a new Alstom shell plant. J.C. Smith was hired because of the commitment of the County to financially support that position and he dedicated time to put the EDA application together and get it submitted.
d. **Hammondsport Sewer Project** – We have received approval from the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to proceed with the final engineering. There will be a public information session on June 2, 2021 at the Hammondsport Fire Hall. We anticipate going to bid late summer with a contract to build next spring.

e. **Finger Lakes Community Health** – Finger Lakes Community Health is planning to construct a new facility in the IDA park. We are hoping they will get final approval from the Town Planning Board.

f. **Wind Projects** – Mr. Johnson stated we received notification from Baron Winds of a $308 million wind project in Wayland, Dansville, Cohocton and Fremont. This will generate 234 megawatts of power and will be constructed in August. He stated the Eight Point Wind project was approved for financing in March. This project will have a $210 million investment and will generate 108 megawatts. They will also build a 17 mile transmission line from Greenwood to Hornell, which will go through Hartsville. We are seeing an expansion in renewable energy however, there are gaps in infrastructure. A large scale wind project can assume the costs of a 17 mile transmission line, but the smaller solar projects cannot as there is no capacity.

g. **Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) Process** – Mr. Johnson stated there have been questions about when this will be announced through the regional economic development contacts. We are being told we will hear more information, but they will be much different projects than in the past. It will be project focused and there will not be a regional component. Also the application process will be rolling instead of having a one-time per year announcement.

h. **Employment Issues** – Mr. Johnson stated CSS Workforce Development held a virtual job fair last week and 130 businesses participated with 3,200 available jobs. There were only 476 job seekers that participated in this online event. A lot of disengaged workers are not seeking jobs and that is becoming a real problem. This is a major issue nationwide. I believe this is a result of what is going on with the Federal stimulus and the extension of unemployment benefits through August.

i. **Philips** - Ms. Lattimer asked do you have an update? Mr. Johnson replied we are engaged in conversations with them. There has been a lot of activity with the next phase of cleanup. They are assessing and will make a decision on how to move forward in the coming weeks and months. We hope by the end of the year they will have a solid plan on how to move forward.

j. **Amazon** – Mrs. Lando asked do you have an update? Mr. Johnson replied we are in communications with the company. They did get SEQR approval from the town. We are working on some access improvements that DOT requested on Route 54. Those improvements should be resolved in the next few weeks so they can make a decision on whether or not to move forward.

Mr. Johnson stated I want to thank the committee and Ms. Fitzpatrick for your work on the Dana Lyons School. I appreciate the support of the entire body as we have worked through a lot of projects lately.

V. **OTHER BUSINESS**

A. **Cornell Cooperative Extension** – Mrs. Lando announced Cornell Cooperative Extension is holding cooking classes on line. These are fun and no cost. Next week will be Caribbean cooking. She stated there is all kinds of information on the CCE website, so be sure to pass that along to your constituents. Ms. Lattimer stated I would encourage you to the read their newsletter. They have some good information in there.

B. **VRBO** – Mr. Van Caeseele asked for an update. Mr. Wheeler stated VRBO has not gotten back to him. He has been trying to find the corporate number and that has been next to impossible. My next step is to go to our Federal elected officials to try to get a live person to talk to. There has been no response to the emails that I have sent.
C. Tourism – Mr. Van Etten stated during the budget process there is always the question of how many tourism agencies we need and if there is any sort of consolidation. Ms. Lattimer stated I felt the same way ten years ago, but since that time there has been more networking and no one is duplicating the other services. They are consistently talking with one another to make sure that another agency is not doing the same thing. There was a push by the Legislature and the AIP Committee a long time ago that said that we wanted to be able to expand our tourism effort and to do that in cooperation with one another. I feel they have done that.

Mrs. Lando stated it is better, but the Conference & Visitors’ Bureau is pursuing some action items. Mr. Hanna stated the SCCVB Board gave Mr. Costello that task a few years ago. Ms. Lattimer stated with some of these tourism agencies we have to look at the geography and the areas they cover and we do have some overlap. I don’t see them duplicating each other down the line. Mrs. Lando stated everyone is trying to get tourism. Ms. Lattimer stated it is big enough for everyone to get a piece.

MOTION: TO ADJOURN MADE BY MR. HANNA. SECONDED BY MRS. FERRATELLA. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted by

Amanda L. Chapman
Deputy Clerk
Steuben County Legislature

**NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR**
Wednesday, June 2, 2021
9:30 a.m.

Please send agenda items to the Clerk of the Legislature’s Office
NO LATER THAN NOON
Wednesday, May 26, 2021