I. **CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Lattimer called the meeting to order at 10:20 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION: APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 7, 2019, MEETING MADE BY MR. MULLEN, SECONDED BY MRS. LANDO. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 5-0.**

III. **OUTSIDE AGENCIES**

A. **Southern Tier Library System**

1. **2020 Budget Request** – Mr. Hildreth thanked the Legislature for their continued support. He has provided a 2018 overview of the 17 libraries across the county. Steuben County has the most public libraries out of the five counties we serve. He stated nationally, circulation decreased 3 – 5 percent, however, in Steuben County it only decreased 1 percent. We are doing a great job of engaging the public. Nationally, program attendance increased 6 percent while in Steuben County it increased 12 percent. We have also seen a 2 percent increase in the number of cardholders and a 5 percent increase in internet use.

Ms. Emery, Director of the Southeast Steuben County Library, stated we have recently completed our strategic plan. We polled the community and time again they have told us they want to be connected; they want to feel that they know their neighbors. People want a place and a space where they have community and a sense of belonging. Our library provides space for other organizations to come in and provide programs. Mr. Hildreth commented our libraries are parenting and collaborating with 28 agencies in the county.
Mr. Zeh, Director of the Avoca and Prattsburgh Libraries, stated that in Avoca we offer an after-school program on Tuesdays and Thursdays. This year we partnered with the school district for our summer program and we had 35 – 40 children in attendance. At the Prattsburgh Library we offer a summer program two days a week. The Prattsburgh School has summer school and when the kids are done, they come down to the library where we offer cooking classes. This summer we had 25 children for five weeks. Your funding really helped us to provide these programs.

Ms. Radigan, Director of the Pulteney Library, informed the committee they have a new library. We opened the new facility on June 29th. We had previously been located in the Town Hall and had 1,100 square feet. Now, the new facility has 6,000 square feet and a full basement. We have a children’s area, a teen area, a tween area and an adult area. She noted they did not have to raise taxes to fund this building; there was a lot of community funding and grant funding. There has been such a positive response and people are staying in the library longer because there is space to spread out. As part of the building project, we did purchase some new books. This is truly now a community center. Mr. Hildreth commented it is very exciting to see a new library built in Steuben County and it is important that we talk about our facilities.

Mr. Trautman, Director of the Cohocton Library, informed the committee that their library takes up three older store front buildings on Maple Avenue; previously known as the Carpet Rack. He has been with the library for five years and during that time we have expanded our usable footprint in the building. The second floor is still closed to the public and we are in the process of removing the physical wall barriers and installing new floor covering. Beginning in 2020 we will begin working on the renovations of the community room where we will be adding two ADA compliant restrooms.

Mr. Van Etten asked how do you justify a 25 percent increase in your budget request? Mr. Hildreth replied we have had stagnant funding for the past several years while library costs have continued to increase. Most of the increased costs are due to technology. Mr. Van Etten commented when the Corning Library went to a taxing district, they said they would never increase the cost to taxpayers and they increased the cost in the last school vote. There has been a significant increase in the library taxes in the southeast portion of the County.

Mr. Mullen asked are all of the libraries getting their funding approved through school budgets, and is this a long-term plan? Mr. Hildreth replied referendums are aligned with the libraries for funding which also provides more tax transparency. Mr. Malter commented there are a modest number of libraries requesting funding through school budgets. Mr. Mullen asked how many libraries are currently doing this? Mr. Hildreth replied there are about 14 out of 17 libraries that are getting funding approvals through school budgets. The majority of those have been doing this since the 1970’s.

B. Cornell Cooperative Extension
   1. 2020 Budget Request – Mr. Shirley stated he is happy to announce the new Executive Director is Theresa “Tess” McKinley. She will start September 16th and will be introduced at the October AIP meeting. He provided a handout of his budget request and program impact statement. Mr. Shirley stated they are requesting an appropriation of $409,000 which is flat from 2019. When Steuben County invests in Cornell Cooperative Extension each year, the public return on investment is significant. For an investment of $409,000 in 2020, Steuben County receives a $1.3 million education program provided by a highly skilled staff of 14. These programs include one-on-one and group support for farmers across all sectors of agriculture, premier regional agricultural programs such as Finger Lakes Grape Program, Cornell Vegetable Program, Southwest New York Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Program and Harvest NY. Additionally, we have a Cornell Vegetable Team Vegetable Specialist housed on-site and a SNYDLFCP Dairy Specialist housed on-site. We also promote agriculture through agritourism and youth education and hold weekly classes for DSS clients in the areas of financial literacy and nutrition.

Mr. Shirley introduced Joshua Putnam who is our Field Crop Specialist. Mr. Putnam stated our team is covering a five-county region with a particular specialty in each district. Dairy is Steuben County’s specialty. We want to know what the growers’ wants and needs are from our team. He distributed a brochure which includes an
assessment form to better target areas of interest. Ms. Lattimer commented that she is happy to see the expansion of program. Mr. Mullen commented that he would like to have a farmer come in at some point and do a presentation.

C. Steuben County Conference & Visitors’ Bureau
   1. Designating Official Tourism Promotion Agency - Mr. Costello stated he would like to request the county to designate the Steuben County Conference and Visitors’ Bureau as their official Tourism Promotion Agency. They utilize this designation to apply for and receive matching funds.

MOTION: DESIGNATING THE STEUBEN COUNTY CONFERENCE & VISITORS’ BUREAU AS THE OFFICIAL TOURISM PROMOTION AGENCY MADE BY MR. MULLEN. SECONDED BY MR. HANNA. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 5-0. Resolution Required.

2. 2020 Budget Request – Mr. Costello presented a PowerPoint presentation outlining 2018 and 2019 activities as well as a breakdown of the 2019 budget. He also provided a six-year trend report on occupancy rates, room supply and demand and short-term rentals along with a monthly occupancy trend. Looking forward, they will be developing marketing strategies to develop shoulder season visitation, fill their vacant group tour/sales position and focus on increasing that market segment, develop a strategy for winter tourism, continue to create great content for the website and microsites and focus on new product development.

Mr. Costello stated he is requesting $765,000 for the 2020 budget. He is asking for an additional $20,000 which reflects the increase in room tax collections in 2018. Also, funds will be used to develop a new Route 36 program in partnership with Livingston County, which is a strategic plan priority. Additionally, he is asking for consideration to come back during the fiscal year for possible match funding from the reserve account in the amount of $50,000 for an ARC grant for water trail development; this is a main project for 2020 in our strategic plan priority. He stated that he did move around the funding for e-tourism, promotions and contracts to better reflect advertising expenses. Mr. Mullen asked was that not properly accounted for in the budget? Mr. Costello replied the bookkeeper had it in the budget, however, it was on the wrong budget line.

Mr. Malter asked with regard to the 2019 occupancy, is there an increase in room tax? Mr. Costello replied they are tracking travel fairly well. He commented next year there may not be as much travel, but Steuben County is a repeat destination.

Ms. Lattimer commented $50,000 is quite a big amount to take out of the reserve account. Mr. Costello replied we want to work closer at recreation. In order to do that we need a plan of action and would like to use ARC and CFA grant money. When he comes back next year, he would be looking to get a letter of support from Steuben County to match funds.

Mr. Mullen asked how much of your budget has been spent year to date? Mr. Costello indicated he does not have those numbers today, but can provide them. Ms. Lattimer asked Mr. Costello to email that information to Mrs. Chapman and she can email it out to the Legislators. Ms. Lattimer asked Mr. Costello to come back once he has all of his numbers and make a presentation to the Legislators in October or November at a Chairmen’s Meeting.

Mr. Hanna asked how much are we losing by not collecting the 4 percent room tax on short-term rentals? Mr. Costello replied he is not positive on the amount, but if he had to guess it would be around $30,000. That report can be compiled for a fee through AirDNA.com. Discussion followed.
MOTION: TO ADJOURN MADE BY MR. MULLEN. SECONDED BY MR. RYAN. ALL BEING IN FAVOR.
MOTION CARRIES 4-0. (MRS. LANDO ABSENT FOR VOTE)

Respectfully Submitted by

Amanda L. Chapman
Deputy Clerk
Steuben County Legislature

Yvonne Erway
Confidential Secretary
Steuben County Manager’s Office

**NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR**
Wednesday, October 2, 2019
Legislative Committee Room
9:30 a.m.

Please send agenda items to the Clerk of the Legislature’s Office
NO LATER THAN NOON
Wednesday, September 25, 2019