

## **PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**May 18, 2022**

**Members Present:** D. Root, G. Barnes, P. Curran, A. Cyr, G. Hanchett, D. Healy, J. Ricci, J. Ricketts-Swales, P. Stockin

**Others Present:** T. Boyde, B. Budinger, J. Burdick, A. Carrow, C. Clark, J. D'Arcy, S. Decker, K. Demick, K. Dirlam, D. Fanton, B. Harris, S. Havey, T. Linn, R. Lynch

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. by Planning & Economic Development Committee Chair Debra Root.

### **Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Legislator Curran, seconded by Legislator Hanchett, and carried to approve the April 20, 2022, Planning & Economic Development Committee minutes.

### **EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING**

Employment and Training Director Reita Lynch attended the meeting and submitted her monthly report to the committee for review. Mrs. Lynch stated that business has been steady with front desk traffic and highlighted items from her report.

### **Summer Youth Employment Program**

Mrs. Lynch stated that they are currently working on the summer youth employment programs with 110 applications from Allegany County youth. Mrs. Lynch is hopeful that they will be able to place approximately 65 of those applicants throughout the County for the summer. Mrs. Lynch explained that these positions will work approximately 28 to 35 hours per week for 4 to 6 weeks. Mrs. Lynch explained that these positions could be with businesses or not-for-profits, and if anyone is looking for an intern for the summer to please let her know. Committee Chair Root commented that any business that is looking for part-time employees should contact Mrs. Lynch's office. Legislator Healy asked if there are specific criteria for the businesses where the youth will be placed. Mrs. Lynch explained that the Summer Youth Employment Program contracts with the Department of Social Services whom received Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds to support the program. Mrs. Lynch stated that DSS is responsible for determining the eligibility of the youth by looking at several different criteria such as: family income, family size, and any DSS services like SNAP or Medicaid that they are currently receiving. Mrs. Lynch also explained that all of these interns are from Allegany County and are therefore covered by Allegany County worker's compensation and insurance which is a nice incentive for businesses to employ a youth intern. Mrs. Lynch stated that they work very closely with Heather Bedow to make sure that the interns are placed appropriately, and they attempt to match the interns to a business that they may be interested in as a future career. Mrs. Lynch explained that the only criteria for the businesses is that the interns are not replacing a current employee.

### **Job Fair**

Mrs. Lynch stated that they are partnering with the Wellsville Chamber of Commerce and the David A. Howe Public Library to offer a job fair on Wednesday, June 8. Mrs. Lynch explained that they have completely filled the library to its capacity with 30 businesses, and now they are looking for job seekers. Legislator Ricketts-Swales wanted to know why the job fair was occurring in Wellsville. Mrs. Lynch explained that they are working with the Southern Tier Library System and that the David A. Howe Library was the space available for the date of the job fair. Mrs. Lynch stated that the nice thing about the library is that they set up all of the tables and chairs, but they could have the job fair just about anywhere.

## **Comments**

Committee Chair Root commented that at last month's committee meeting, Mrs. Lynch had reported approximately 400 open jobs in Allegany County and asked for an update. Mrs. Lynch stated that the number of open jobs have declined since then with people finding employment, and businesses filling their vacant positions. Mrs. Lynch commented that their job board is very popular with over 90 subscribers. Mrs. Lynch explained that they post a job listing at the beginning of every month and update it each Monday with any new listings.

Legislator Healy complimented Mrs. Lynch's department for the outstanding job they do with continued outreach to our veterans and providing them with resources and assistance.

## **PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

Planning Director Kier Dirlam attended the meeting and submitted his monthly report to the committee for review. Mr. Dirlam stated that he placed the Scenic Drives brochure on each of the Legislators desks. Mr. Dirlam explained that the brochure had been completed in the fall, but he did not remember handing any out to them at that time. Mr. Dirlam explained that his department will be looking at creating more brochures with similar topics because they are cost effective.

## **County Planning Board**

Mr. Dirlam reminded everyone of the County Planning Board meeting that evening at the Crossroads Center at 7:00 pm, and that he would email the Zoom link to anyone that would like to participate that way.

## **Empire State Development**

Mr. Dirlam stated that he learned today that Empire State Development is planning to come down on June 10 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at their building to do a session on grants for the consolidated funding applications with stakeholders, Towns, Villages, and not-for profits that would like to apply. Mr. Dirlam stated that once he received the press release from Buffalo, he will kick it out to everyone.

## **Hazard Mitigation Project**

Mr. Dirlam stated that the Hazard Mitigation Project is in full swing and started meeting monthly with the team, and they met with the Highway Superintendents Association last week. Mr. Dirlam stated that they intend to have kick off quadrant meetings with each part of the County invited to sessions in June to work through a lot of the forms that are required. Mr. Dirlam stated that they are still waiting for notification of whether they are receiving the previous grant that was applied for in the fall, but they are currently putting together another application for a similar grant due by June 1 in case they do not receive that original funding.

## **Wild Souls, Wild Places**

Mr. Dirlam stated that they are in the last month of the Wild Souls, Wild Places campaign and that they have expended all of those funds. Mr. Dirlam stated that they may be requesting a transfer of funds to cover extending this campaign or other marketing projects at a future committee meeting.

## **Greater Allegany County Chamber of Commerce Training**

Mr. Dirlam complimented Legislator Havey on his session with the Greater Allegany County Chamber of Commerce and Small Business Association training the previous day. Mr. Dirlam stated that they had a very nice, well attended event with a lot of good conversation after the event. Legislator Healy

asked how many people attended the event. Legislator Havey replied that they had 20 businesses in attendance not including the presenters. Legislator Havey stated that the presenters included the Small Business Association, Jamestown Community College Business Center, ACCORD Business Center, a Better Business Bureau Representative, and SCORE to name a few.

### **Tourism Guides**

Mr. Dirlam stated that he has been receiving many questions wondering why some have not received the tourism guides. Mr. Dirlam explained that they felt it important to send the guides to the areas outside of Allegany County first. Mr. Dirlam explained that another batch of guides will be distributed within a couple hundred distribution sites in Allegany County soon.

### **Travel Trailer**

Mr. Dirlam stated that the County travel trailer is getting a new wrap to include the Western NY Wilds branding and website, and should be ready by the end of May or beginning of June.

### **Department of Planning Positions Update**

Mr. Dirlam stated that they have filled the Planning and Development Specialist and Associate Planner positions, and found an intern candidate starting at the end of the month. Committee Chair Root asked if they had been able to find any Tourism Ambassadors. Mr. Dirlam explained that they should not have a difficult time filling those positions, but that they have not been able to act on those requests because the Board has not approved them yet.

### **Comments**

Committee Chair Root asked for more detail on the types of grants the Village of Cuba is looking at. Mr. Dirlam explained that they are looking at a Main Street Project with building owners to update some of the Main Street buildings. Legislator Fanton asked if they are keeping track of all of the hours they are putting in for the Towns and Villages to possibly bill them for that time. Mr. Dirlam stated that they are not keeping track of that time because they do have some funds allocated within their Budget for assisting with grant writing. Mr. Dirlam explained that providing this shared service is also a benefit to the whole County to help the Towns and Villages move forward with their projects, but that if they choose to bill the Towns and Villages for this, they could create a method for tracking. Legislator Fanton stated that he believes they should be keeping track of the time. County Attorney Allison Carrow cautioned the Board regarding grant writing explaining that certain Federal and State grant funding agreements may require that they track all of the time spent assisting municipalities with grant writing, and that they have to look at those contracts carefully. Mr. Dirlam stated that they act as a matchmaker to help the Towns and Villages connect with the appropriate grant writing consultants to help them write the grant applications. Legislator Burdick stated that it was her understanding that part of the program was to provide those types of services to municipalities instead of sharing sales tax, so to say that we would now charge them would be wrong. Committee Chair Root stated that they need to have a larger discussion moving forward with the role that the Planning Department is playing with the Towns and Villages, and asked who is paying for the grant writing services. Mr. Dirlam stated that it is shared with the County doing some and the Municipality doing some. Committee Chair Root asked if Board approval is required for all of these grants for the Towns and Villages. Mr. Dirlam stated that they are not applying for the grants. Committee Chair Root stated that they are helping them apply for the grants. Mr. Dirlam explained that they help them with the consultant costs, that they are not applying for nor administering the funds. Mr. Dirlam stated that their only role is to make sure that the Towns and Villages have the resources available to be able to apply for grants. Committee Chair Root asked Mr. Dirlam to expand on what type of grant opportunities they are researching. Mr. Dirlam stated that they are at the beginning of this and hoping that the two new employees will be able to start to get a handle on what is available, which items are in the comprehensive plans, what might be applicable with those different funding

sources and start to connect the dots. Mr. Dirlam stated that they are in day two of that. Committee Chair Root asked if they are setting priorities with grants for the County or with Towns and Villages. Mr. Dirlam stated that they have not gotten that far, but that it is a good question. Mr. Dirlam explained that they are in day two and do not have a thorough understanding of what grants are available. Legislator Fanton stated that he would like to see the language that requires the County to assist Towns and Villages with grant writing. Mr. Dirlam stated that there is no requirement because it is a shared service. Chairman Stockin commented that it is critical that they are available as a resource because often the Towns and Villages have no clue what they are getting into with these grants. Chairman Stockin stated that from his past experience with town grants, the Planning Department provided vital assistance to help them get a handle on it and feels it is a valuable service. Legislator Fanton stated that Mr. Dirlam and his Department do a good job and appreciate all of the extra effort, but believes they need to have parameters in place so that Towns and Villages know their responsibility. Legislator Healy stated that tracking the time that goes into this service whether formally or informally will ensure that our services are distributed on a fair and equitable basis and that none of our communities get overlooked. Mr. Dirlam explained that his Department does not promote or advertise this service, but the Towns and Villages will reach out to them with issues that they will try to assist with, but they have not historically looked at what amount of time each district is getting. Legislator Healy stated that it is our role to make local governments aware of the opportunities and to assist all of them. Mr. Dirlam stated that they have not been actively tracking all of the available grant activity.

Committee Chair Root asked if Mr. Dirlam had any Wild Souls, Wild Places campaign statistics. Mr. Dirlam stated that they are in the last month of the campaign and will have totals available at the next committee meeting along with the last video. Committee Chair Root asked if they could provide monthly statistics so that they could see the trends. Mr. Dirlam stated that they will try, but the data is not coming in as nicely as they would like.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

Allegany County Development and Industrial Development Agency Executive Director Craig Clark attended the meeting and submitted his monthly report to the committee for review. Dr. Clark highlighted several items from his report.

### **Crossroads Project**

Dr. Clark stated that the Crossroads Project is primarily working on a hotel and a couple of restaurants, and that CPL Engineering has completed most of the initial site review. Dr. Clark stated that the next step is to look at all of that review detail and fine tune the concept, begin the traffic study, and the SEQR process. Dr. Clark stated that at the last meeting it was brought up to look at other options for sewer. The current option was for an on-site sewer, but it may make more sense for economic development to estimate costs of going to either Belmont or Friendship for sewer. Dr. Clark stated that there will never be a final plan until they have a hotel developer, but they have enough to start preparing the site. Committee Chair Root asked who will be going out and obtaining the comparative costs for the sewer. Dr. Clark replied, "CPL Clark Patterson." Dr. Clark agreed and explained that they will have to look at both options, and that Clark Patterson will also look into grants that may be available to assist with total costs. Committee Chair Root asked how long it would be before site ready work could start. Dr. Clark stated that those two things will not affect any other things that can be done on the site, but that he would estimate it will take another couple of months before they put anything out to bid. Dr. Clark stated that once they know the total costs they will have to go to the Board to obtain the funds. Legislator Fanton asked if the water tank was going to be part of that process. Dr. Clark stated that the water tank will probably be necessary because while they will have enough water they may not be able to meet peak demand.

## **ARVOS Ljungstrom**

Dr. Clark stated that ARVOS Ljungstrom gave a presentation at the last IDA Board meeting, and suggested that they schedule a time to come and speak to the full Board. Dr. Clark explained that at this stage he believes it is important for the Board to know what they are doing, because they have modified from being a purely coal fired type plant, to wind and CO<sub>2</sub> carbon capture energy. Dr. Clark stated that by doing that they potentially saved approximately 130 jobs and added 120 jobs. Dr. Clark also made a correction to his report that the ACIDA Financial assistance application was reviewed and approved at the May 12 meeting. Legislator Fanton asked if the carbon capture operation was going well. Dr. Clark stated that they have their second proto-type out, and it is not going as fast as they would like, but it has been successful. Committee Chair Root asked Dr. Clark to reach out to ARVOS Ljungstrom and ask them to come to the next Planning and Economic Development Committee meeting in June.

## **Clean Energy Projects**

Dr. Clark stated that they are still working with the ANGEL fund and Wellsville Business Park. They also started a new Solar Photo-Voltaic Power project in Independence which brings a total of four projects planned to start this summer that have been approved by the Allegany County Industrial Development Agency (ACIDA) for financial assistance. Dr. Clark stated that they also continue to discuss the large solar project with the Town of Alfred, and the Alle-Catt wind project is still anticipated to start this year.

## **Micro Enterprise Grant**

Dr. Clark stated that they are hoping to receive more Micro Enterprise grant funding for similar projects over the summer.

## **CDBG CARES Grant for Small Businesses**

Dr. Clark stated that they did apply for the \$1 million CDBG CARES Grant to hand out to companies with fewer than 25 employees that were impacted by COVID-19. Dr. Clark explained that the application needs a little bit more work. Committee Chair Root asked if that is something that they will try and find companies that are interested in applying. Dr. Clark explained that they already know who replied to their original outreach for the grant, but now they need the actual names of the companies for the application. Committee Chair Root asked how they will make local businesses aware that they could be applying for this grant. Dr. Clark stated that they had more than enough responses from putting it in a local paper and outreach through Facebook. Legislator Fanton thanked Dr. Clark for “sticking with it,” because he knows that it is like pulling teeth sometimes to get these things to happen, and he appreciates his patience.

## **Start Up Allegany**

Dr. Clark stated that Start-Up Allegany had a great event on April 9 and explained that this was a way to encourage college students to give presentations on potential start-up businesses in Allegany County. Dr. Clark stated that he will put a link up on the webpage of the actual presentations by the students.

## **RISE Grant**

Dr. Clark stated that they are in the process of submitting an application for the Rural Innovation Stronger Economy (RISE) USDA grant with Incubator Works Alfred State and Alfred University. Dr. Clark explained that this grant will help students and communities with innovative ways to work with ALSTOM, ARVOS Ljungstrom, and everybody else in between for helping the supply chain build locally.

**Comments**

Legislator Barnes stated that he had the opportunity to stop by Franklinville and they are “ripping and tearing” for the Great Lakes Cheese project just as they said they would, which is good for them but not so good for us. Legislator Barnes asked if the existing plant in Cuba will be marketable once they pull out. Dr. Clark stated that he has heard they may still use it for cold storage, and they were also talking with Cuba on repurposing or tearing down the facility. Dr. Clark stated that the last he had heard was that Great Lakes Cheese may not exit the facility.

Legislator Barnes asked if the PM Research, Inc. building at the airport has done anything to increase their employment. Dr. Clark stated that they have increased their employment, and he will bring the numbers to the next Committee meeting. Dr. Clark explained that one increase was what came in with Curtis Wright, and they have also hired executive type staff as well as workers and are doing very well.

**Good of the Order**

Legislator Healy commented that as long as they are going to have ARVOS Ljungstrom come in and give the Legislators a presentation, we should open up a forum and invite other local businesses to come in once every six months and put on a presentation to tell the public and the Legislators what their business does. Legislator Healy stated that it would be interesting and informative to do on a regular basis. Committee Chair Root agreed and stated that this is a great idea.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:19 p.m. following a motion by Legislator Cyr, seconded by Legislator Ricketts-Swales, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Tiffany Linn, Confidential Secretary  
Allegany County Board of Legislators