

## **PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**July 20, 2022**

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m. by Planning & Economic Development Committee Chair Debra Root.

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

**Other Attendees:** T. Boyde, J. Burdick, A. Carrow, C. Clark, K. Demick, K. Dirlam, B. Harris, S. Havey, K. Hooker, C. Knapp, T. Linn, R. Lynch, B. Riehle, D. Root, T. Ross

### **Approval of Minutes:**

A motion was made by Legislator Ricci, seconded by Legislator Barnes, and carried to approve the June 15, 2022, Planning & Economic Development Committee minutes.

### **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 stated that he had submitted the June report twice and that he would send the July report later that day.

### **Crossroads**

Dr. Clark stated that he had previously reported that the Crossroads project had been completed but he had since learned that the engineers still have to perform the wetland delineations with the DEC. Dr. Clark stated that once that is complete, the entire report will be presented to the IDA and the County. Dr. Clark stated that he was not happy that this has taken approximately six months to complete, but explained that is what is nice about shovel ready sites. Dr. Clark explained that it is nice to have all of this pre-work done so that the developer does not have to wait six months for approval by the DEC. Dr. Clark stated that he hopes to have all of this completed by the next monthly meeting.

### **ARVOS Ljungstrom**

Dr. Clark stated that ARVOS Ljungstrom is still in the process of hiring employees and that they have been working with them to provide some updated training for their welders. Dr. Clark stated that a federal work grant will fund the updated training to include upscaling current employees as well as training primarily for the new welding employees. Dr. Clark stated that they will also be completing another ARC grant for training with the new paint system.

### **Wellsville Business Park**

Dr. Clark stated that he talks to the owner of the Wellsville Business Park often and that they just put in for another project through the Buffalo Niagara Enterprise as well as Empire State Development. Dr. Clark commented that the good news is companies are still looking to relocate to the Western New York area.

### **Tracewell Building**

Legislator Healy asked for an update on the Tracewell building. Dr. Clark stated that this is no longer appearing on his monthly report because the Seneca Nation has decided to use it for other purposes and it is no longer on the market. Legislator Healy asked if there were any other facilities that could be used for chip manufacturing. Dr. Clark stated that the Wellsville Business Park and ARVOS Ljungstrom are still considered the best larger scale facilities for that type of manufacturing.

## **Runnings**

Dr. Clark stated that it was announced that Runnings had purchased the old K-Mart facility and they have begun working with them on their financial aid application. Dr. Clark stated that they had originally planned to begin work this month, but it looks like they will not be doing anything until August. Dr. Clark stated that they have not given him a move in date, but obviously there is a lot of interior and exterior work that will need to be completed. Legislator Harris asked if Runnings purchased the entire plaza. Dr. Clark stated that they only purchased the K-Mart building. Legislator Harris asked if that purchase included the parking area out front of the K-Mart building. Dr. Clark confirmed that the purchase included the parking area associated with that building. Dr. Clark commented that LC Whitford should get “kudos” for deciding to allow Runnings to purchase the facility. Legislator Healy stated that this should also help LC Whitford with renting other store fronts at the River Walk Plaza, as well as helping Tops, and other holdings on Bolivar Road. Dr. Clark stated that if you look at Hornell and Olean where they were able to bring in a large retailer, it encourages growth, increases sales tax receipts, and adds jobs. Committee Chair Root asked how many people would be employed. Dr. Clark stated that he believes the application listed that they will have approximately 28-30 full-time equivalents.

## **Clean Energy Projects**

Dr. Clark stated that all four projects in Independence should be moving along shortly. Dr. Clark stated that a lot of the issue with these projects has been timing for materials and labor costs. Dr. Clark stated that it is very difficult to find people and materials. Dr. Clark stated that the 100 megawatt solar project was originally a \$100 million project, and it is now a \$190 million project. Dr. Clark stated that they are now planning for 700 acres instead of the current 100 acres. Legislator Ricketts-Swales asked how clean energy projects fit into economic development when there are no real long term jobs produced, and how it fits with the idea of WNY Wilds. Dr. Clark stated that the whole debate with these economic development projects has been in the context of the State, and not just Allegany County. Dr. Clark explained that these projects bring in a lot of dollars to the area, but most of the jobs are temporary. Dr. Clark stated that they do bring in money with approximately two or three full-time jobs, as well as money to contractors during the build. Dr. Clark explained that the economic benefits come back to the host agreements with the Town Government money that would have never been available prior to these projects. Dr. Clark explained that most of these towns consisted of 500 or less residents, and these projects are now bringing in a substantial amount of tax dollars to these communities every year. Legislator Ricketts-Swales asked how long these projects are expected to last. Dr. Clark stated 15 to 20 years. Legislator Ricketts-Swales asked how it all fits into the WNY Wilds. Dr. Clark stated that he has heard that the struggle is that agricultural people are worried about some of the land being farmed, but there is so much land that is not being farmed in Allegany County and the entire State. Dr. Clark stated that a good question to ask is how it affects our parks and walkways. Committee Chair Root stated that the landowners are going to benefit with these leases, and many of these landowners are farmers. Dr. Clark stated that the landowners and farmers are actually making substantially more money on the land now than if they were to sell or rent it, and they get to keep the land. Legislator Healy asked what the life expectancy is for these solar panels. Dr. Clark stated that they will last much longer than the expected 15 to 20 years. Dr. Clark stated that they have panels at the Alfred campus now that are over 20 years old. Dr. Clark explained that they do degrade over time, that newer panels degrade less, but at 15 to 20 years they will continue producing at approximately 80 percent. Dr. Clark stated that as technology changes they will likely replace the panels in 20 years. Legislator Healy asked if the contractors mentioned above were local contractors. Dr. Clark stated that they have been mostly contractors from out of the area but they are working to rectify that. Dr. Clark stated that there are some local contractors trying to bid on these projects, and we are trying to help them with that. Legislator Ricketts-Swales stated that the only local contractors listed were for the port-a-potties. Legislator Harris stated that he could not recall the exact project, but noted there had been local job postings to perform the work. Dr. Clark stated that they do try because it is cheaper for them to hire local people the best that they can, but the problem is that the job market is such that it is difficult to find people willing to work. Dr. Clark stated that our local

labor law requirement states that they can hire from Western New York because we know there is not enough people in Allegany County to fill the projects even if we wanted to.

**Cares Act Microenterprise Grant**

Dr. Clark stated that the microenterprise grant has been signed off on, and they will putting in for another microenterprise grant before it is closed out with the State. Dr. Clark stated that the CDBG Cares grant for small businesses of 25 employees or less that were impacted by COVID-19 has been approved by the State. Dr. Clark stated that they will not send out a press release until they have the actual application process, but there will be money available to use toward operating expenses or capital expenditures. Committee Chair Root asked who does a business apply through for this grant. Dr. Clark stated that they will manage it similarly as the last one to ensure that the requests are eligible for the funding. Dr. Clark stated that companies will need to contact the IDA for the application forms, but that there will be a press release with all of that information once we have the grant. Committee Chair Root asked how many companies are expected to take advantage of this grant. Dr. Clark stated that the maximum number is \$70,000 which could be 12 to 15 companies. Legislator Hanchett asked how many grants were given out to small businesses and what was the variety of businesses. Dr. Clark stated that he will provide the full list, but that it totaled approximately \$170,000, with approximately 7 businesses.

**EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING**

Employment and Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch attended the meeting and submitted her monthly report to the committee for review. Mrs. Sobeck-Lynch stated that the unemployment rate has remained the same and explained that while the news reported a huge increase in the number of unemployment applications, this is not the case for Allegany County. Mrs. Sobeck-Lynch explained that new applications for unemployment remain very low in Allegany County despite there being a lot of jobs available. Mrs. Sobeck-Lynch stated that the summer youth employment program is taking up a majority of their time. Legislator Healy asked if there had been any additional funding had become available for Veterans. Mrs. Sobeck-Lynch stated that there had been none that she was aware of at this time.

**Request of Resolution for a Budget Adjustment of Additional TANF Summer Youth Funding**

Ms. Lynch requested a resolution to increase Budget appropriations for the acceptance of an additional \$3,497 in TANF Summer Youth funding. The Employment and Training Center originally budgeted \$185,498 in the 2022 Budget and actually received \$188,995 in TANF Summer Youth funding. The adjustment to the 2022 Budget is as follows:

Appropriations: (\$3,497)

|              |                             |          |
|--------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| CD1 6794.101 | TANF Staff Regular Pay      | \$ 6,300 |
| CD1 6794.401 | TANF Postage                | \$ -150  |
| CD1 6794.402 | TANF Mileage/Transportation | \$ -200  |
| CD1 6794.407 | TANF Office Supplies        | \$ -250  |
| CD1 6794.408 | TANF General Supplies       | \$ -188  |
| CD1 6794.414 | TANF Rentals: Real Property | \$ -125  |
| CD1 6794.424 | TANF Legal Advertising      | \$ -100  |
| CD1 6794.474 | TANF Youth-Stipend          | \$ 3,450 |
| CD1 6794.802 | TANF Staff Retirement       | \$ 850   |
| CD1 6794.803 | TANF Staff FICA             | \$ 500   |
| CD1 6794.804 | TANF Staff Workers Comp     | \$ 125   |
| CD1 6794.805 | TANF Staff Disability       | \$ 25    |
| CD1 6794.806 | TANF Staff Hosp/Med Ins     | \$-2,800 |
| CD1 6795.802 | TANF Part. Retirement       | \$-2,440 |
| CD1 6795.804 | TANF Part. Workers Comp     | \$-1,500 |

Revenues: (\$3,497)

CD1 6794.4701.12 TANF Federal Aid

\$3,497

The request was approved on a motion made by Legislator Hanchett, seconded by Legislator Ricci, and carried. **Refer to Ways & Means**

## **PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

Planning Director Kier Dirlam attended the meeting and submitted his monthly report to the committee for review. Mr. Dirlam stated that there will be a planning board meeting that evening with a large agenda with quite a few items. Committee Chair Root asked what is battery storage. Mr. Dirlam explained that certain solar facilities like to be able to store some of the energy that is collected during the day into the battery storage unit, and then release it into the grid. Mr. Dirlam explained that the towns and villages should all have battery storage laws, but they do not. Mr. Dirlam explained that this causes issues when there is a proposal to add a solar collection facility. Committee Chair Root asked what kind of laws the towns would need. Mr. Dirlam explained that it is similar to a site plan review law specific to battery storage. Legislator Burdick explained that in the Town of Alfred, it is part of the solar law. Legislator Burdick explained that they originally came up with a solar law and included battery storage, which explains all of the town regulations that must be followed outside of the state regulations. Legislator Burdick stated that this protects the towns by having their own local laws. Committee Chair Root asked what it protects the town from. Legislator Burdick stated that it protects them by making sure that battery storage is done correctly and that there are laws in place that they must abide by whether it is fire protection, or access to them by making it a local law. Legislator Hanchett asked if there is a part of the solar law that addresses what happens when the project needs to dispose of them. Legislator Burdick stated that there is a decommissioning plan as part of their solar law. Legislator Burdick stated that the 94C projects are different because it goes through the State of New York, but she believes the State also has a decommissioning plan.

### **Tourism Guides**

Mr. Dirlam stated that they received a shipment of Allegany County tourism guides. Mr. Dirlam stated that they expended everything from the shipment they received back in March. Mr. Dirlam stated that it is very difficult to get things printed on a quick timeline. Mr. Dirlam stated that they are in the process of shipping guides around different places and around the County. Mr. Dirlam stated that they are shipping approximately 700 guides to the Erie County Fair where they will be representing Allegany County.

### **Additional Questions**

Committee Chair Root stated that the Wild Souls, Wild Places video campaign had been closed and that the data analysis was completed, and she wondered when they could expect the report. Mr. Dirlam stated that he had sent that report out last month.

Legislator Healy asked what the current problems were with getting jobs completed from the printers. Mr. Dirlam stated that the biggest problem is with getting the paper. Mr. Dirlam stated that just in the last six weeks, the price of paper went up significantly by approximately 20 to 25 percent since January. Legislator Healy stated that he noticed various County personnel working the different booths at the Allegany County Fair the previous day, and that several were using good time management skills preparing information for the budget.

Legislator Hanchett asked about the various videos that were done by Genesee Media and asked if they could at least be sent to the businesses that participated in them. Mr. Dirlam stated that he is not

familiar with what businesses are on the list for the videos, but that if she could provide him with names and contact information, he would be happy to share them with anyone that wants them. Mr. Dirlam stated that the videos are not on the website and were not sent out because they had not determined how they wanted to use them. Committee Chair Root stated that YouTube would be a great place to store them. County Attorney Allison Carrow stated that they would need to make sure we know the terms of the agreement we had with the agency that performed this for us because we have to determine exactly what rights that we have and how we are able to disseminate them. Mr. Dirlam stated that this is part of the issue with our video and photo library and making sure we have rights to everything that we pay for in the future without limitations and no liabilities or problems down the road.

Legislator Cyr asked for more details regarding the Wellsville Zoning Map item for the Planning Board meeting that evening. Mr. Dirlam stated that back in the 90s when the Riverwalk Plaza was built, it was a residentially zoned area. Mr. Dirlam explained that the map was never revised and the village never officially approved a revised map showing it as non-residential. Mr. Dirlam stated that the goal at tonight's meeting will be to convert the Riverwalk Plaza properties to a business zone.

Legislator Havey asked if Mr. Dirlam had a sense of when the next travel guide might come out. Mr. Dirlam stated that the intention is simply to amend the existing tour guide with updated information. Mr. Dirlam explained that they are having ongoing discussions with what exactly needs to go into the next version of the guide, but it will likely not be ready until next Spring.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:52 p.m. following a motion by Legislator Ricci, seconded by Legislator Barnes, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Tiffany Linn, Confidential Secretary  
Allegany County Board of Legislators