

COUNTY OF OSWEGO
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

March 24, 2009

PRESENT:

Morris Sorbello, Chair
Louella LeClair, Vice Chair
Jack Beckwith
Shawn Doyle
Art Gearsbeck
Doug Malone
Art Ospelt

STAFF/GUESTS:

Philip Church, County Administrator
John DeHollander, Conservation District Manager (SWCD)
Margaret Kastler, Legislator
Barry Leemann, Legislature Chairman
Milferd Potter, Legislator
Paul Santore, Legislator
David Turner, Director of Comm. Dev. Tourism and Planning
Cindy Walsh, Cornell Cooperative Extension
Jeanette Woodland, Administrative Secretary

MEDIA:

Aaron Curtis, Palladium Times
Carol Thompson, Valley News

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Attendance:

Committee Chair Sorbello called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Old Business:

Committee Chair Sorbello asked for a motion to approve the February 24, 2009, minutes.

Motion: Legislator Malone

Second: Legislator Beckwith

Committee Business:

1. Resolutions

A. State Transportation Operating Assistance Fund – Budget Modification

David Turner, Director of Comm. Dev. Tourism and Planning, presented a request for a Budget Modification to increase the revenue and expense lines for the State Transportation Operating Assistance (STOA) fund. Mr. Turner explained that STOA's level of appropriation was increased in the past year for upstate dedicated tax fund accounts. The State significantly increased funding for Oswego County in February when we received an unanticipated \$419,115.29.

Motion: Legislator Ospelt made a motion to accept the Budget Modification for monies from STOA in the amount of \$419,116 to increase revenue and expense accounts, as presented.

Second: Legislator Malone

Vote: All in favor

Motion carried.

Louella LeClair asked if this was the same program that was done before. Mr. Turner responded that they both deal with Rural Transportation but they are not related

2. Employee Recognition

Donna Scanlon, Director of Community Development Programs, a 20-year full-time employee of the Planning Department was presented certificate in recognition of her service with the County. The members of the Committee along with David Turner, Director, offered their congratulations and a photo was taken. County Chairman Barry Leemann also commended Ms. Scanlon for her overseeing and dedication to the Adopt a Platoon program for the County.

Resolutions (continued)

B. Grant Authorization – NYSAHC

Mr. Turner presented a request to seek authorization from the Chairman to apply for a grant to the New York State Affordable Housing Corporation (NYSAHC) in the amount of \$250,000. Mr. Turner advised that this is for housing repairs for low to moderate income homeowners. The program requires a resolution as well as the grant application.

Motion: Legislator Malone made a motion to accept the Grant Authorization, as presented.

Second: Legislator LeClair

Vote: All in favor

Motion carried.

3. Tourism and Planning Updates

Mr. Turner distributed new maps of Oswego County. The County has reviewed the graphics and the roads for correctness and has been a joint effort between the County and the Chamber. Several thousand copies of the map have been made available to the County at no cost to the County. The mapmaker has sold advertisements to pay for the cost involved and will sell the maps to the public.

Committee members also received Agriculture and Market maps. Mr. Turner advised that these were produced by someone else and NYS Agriculture and Markets has made them available to us for distribution.

Mr. Turner passed around a binder that held copies of advertisements promoting the County which have run in tourism publications.

Mr. Turner gave the Committee statistics on the Oswego County Tourism Website. Three blogs showed that we had well over 1,000 visits to each, from places within the States as well as other countries.

The Planning Department is trying to access some stimulus funds. About 40 projects have been sent to the Governor and between Dave Turner, Phil Church, Barry Leemann, and Jack Proud they have narrowed it down to 15 and will probably narrow it down some more.

Snowmobile checks have been received and are being processed for mailing.

Legislator Sorbello had a request from the Environmental Management Counsel asking if we could write a letter of support to the Tug Hill Association as they are doing a study on the Tug Hill Aquifer.

Motion: Legislator Malone made a motion to write a letter of support, as presented.

Second: Legislator LeClair

Vote: All in favor

Motion carried.

Legislator Ospelt said that there had been a study done a while ago and Legislator Sorbello said that one was done last year. Leg. Chairman Leemann said that he would look to see if we could find that study.

Legislator Gearsbeck asked about the Planning Board coming back. Chairman Leemann stated that nothing has been decided but would like to bring it back but not the way it was before as it was not acceptable. We need more input and all county residents should be able to have a say because it affects everyone in the county. Mr. Turner added that we have a lot of Towns and Villages that have little or no regulations and it's always good to have another body to look at projects in cases like that. State law requires that every municipality send plans to us, but this doesn't always happen. There was some discussion about not being notified of a board being formed and it was stated that it was addressed in the Chairman's State of the County address. After further discussion many in attendance agreed with Chairman Leemann that it is a good idea to form a Board.

4. Soil and Water Conservation District

John De Hollander, Conservation District Manager, reported on the following:

Bid openings will be held next Thursday, March 26th for the sale of the aquatic weed harvester.

Funds that have traditionally supported the aquatic vegetation/invasive species control program have been approved in Albany but these funds may not be seen until this coming July.

An unexpected funding mechanism has allowed the SWCD to re-hire a Storm Water Control Specialist for the next two years to provide assistance to local units of government, contractors, consultants and developers to meet the State's Storm Water Regulatory Program requirements. An Erosion and Sediment Control Workshop will be held on April 14th at the Oasis at Thunder Island in Fulton. The workshop will provide necessary training for those who want to maintain their state certification in storm water activities pertaining to new development. Site Inspectors and Contractors are required to attend this workshop.

5. Cornell Cooperative Extension

Cindy Walsh reported that they have hired an Agriculture and Economic Development person who will be on board next month. In regard to a question by Legislator Kastler referring to

articles she has read about the use of more home grown vegetables, Ms. Walsh advised that they have been working in the Hannibal schools for years and one of the programs they have done is “Eating your way through the alphabet”.

At this time Mr. DeHollander added that in support of agriculture the SWCD staff participated in an Ag Literacy Day that was sponsored by the Farm Bureau and CCE of Oswego County. The staff provided a classroom reading of “The Applesauce Bandit” to second graders in the County educating them on the role that agriculture plays in our lives.

Legislator LeClair gave an update on the Oswego County Ambassador Program that she has initiated. More details will follow at the next meeting. The Chamber has offered to help publicize the event and will put a flyer in their April mailing. Workshops are slated for late April to early June. There is no cost to the County. Leg. Sorbello commended her for her initiative on this project.

Legislator Doyle inquired about the status of the trail system and Coordinator position. County Administrator Church said that he is working on this.

Adjournment

Motion: Legislator Ospelt motioned to adjourn the meeting at 2:46 p.m.

Second: Legislator Gearsbeck

Vote: All in favor

Motion carried.