

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

NOVEMBER 9, 2006 – 4:00 P.M.

Present: Chairman Peck; Supervisors DeCerce, A. Johnson, Sausville, and Yepsen; Spencer Hellwig, Mgmt. Analyst; Jason Kemper; Michael Valentine, Jamie O'Neil, Planning; Julie Stokes, Saratoga PLAN; Greg Dixon Saratoga Co. Chamber of Commerce; Anne Magnuson, League of Women Voters; Press.

Chairman Peck called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

**On a motion made by Ms. Yepsen, seconded by Mr. Sausville the minutes of the September 13, 2006 meeting were approved unanimously.**

Mr. Valentine said the grant application for the Recreational Trail Program is for the purchase of equipment. The Recreational Trail Program is a grant administered through the Office of Parks and Recreation and would be submitted through Saratoga County with a 20% match made by the Charlton Snowmobile Club in Saratoga County. The total amount of the purchase would be \$30,377.

This year the snowmobile application that goes into the Office of Parks and Recreation in April added 8.9 miles on the Zim Smith Trail. In doing that, is there something that can be done through Saratoga County where the snowmobile clubs can interact with other municipalities and other organizations for the use of the Zim Smith Trail. The Equipment is something that can be utilized for all four seasons; it is not just for grooming in the wintertime for the trails, he said.

Mr. Peck said it is like a four wheel all terrain vehicle with a plow for the wintertime, used for trimming in the other seasons. The grant application to the State needs to be from a not-for-profit in the county, leaving no cost to the county.

Mr. Sausville asked who would be driving the tractor. Mr. Valentine said the snowmobile club would be utilizing it on the Zim Smith Trail. The county and the snowmobile club will have to draw up an agreement as to where it will be stored and where it will be used.

Mr. Peck said there would be a lease agreement from the county to the snowmobile club. In order to keep the lease in effect; there will be access and availability for others.

**A motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. DeCerce to authorize a grant application for \$30,377 in State Aid for the purchase of a utility vehicle and trail-grooming equipment. Unanimous.**

Mr. Dixon from the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce gave a brief update on tourism in Saratoga County as follows. Tourism for the year has been very strong with occupancy tax collection for the third quarter up 6.8%, compared to last years 7%. Mail and phone inquires are up 17% this year. Web visits have been 1.68 million thus far, with an estimate of over 2 million by years end, up 43%. The travel guide has been downloaded on the website over 50,000 times this year. Two Hundred thousand visits were recorded for the first time ever in the month of July.

Mr. Dixon said 31% of inquiries come from the State of New York and within that 31%, 60% are from within New York City and Long Island. Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut and Massachusetts are secondary. There was a big increase seen this year from the Mid Atlantic states such as Maryland and Virginia.

Mr. Dixon said in 2007 there will be a completed revised website. The site is a good resource, however, it needs improvement in sell the destination to the people in terms of providing them with ideas and an itinerary. Electronic Internet advertising will be emphasized on the new site as well.

Mr. Dixon thanked the committed for their continued support.

Mr. Kemper said a letter was sent to DOT with regard to phasing of the Zim Smith Trail on September 5<sup>th</sup>. He stated everything should be in order for Spring Construction.

**On a motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. DeCerce the meeting was adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Sansom