

Economic Development Committee Minutes
November 5, 2014 - 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Lawler; Supervisors Daly, Grattidge, Johnson, Kinowski, Richardson, Veitch, Martin and Sausville; Ryan Moore, Mgmt. Analyst; Lisa Scaccia, Employment and Training; Steve Dorsey, County Attorney; Julie Stokes, Peter Leitchfield, Saratoga PLAN; Jason Kemper, Planning; Todd Shimkus, Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce; Peter Bardunias, Southern Saratoga Chamber of Commerce; Katherine Smith, Eric Catalano, Saratoga Rowing; Press.

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

On a motion made by Mr. Richardson, seconded by Mr. Grattidge the minutes of the October 1, 2014 meeting were approved unanimously.

Mr. Kemper said the 2014 harvest has just been completed. A bid was sent out for two parcels in the town of Corinth for 2015. Four bids were received with a high bid of \$96,160.42 from G&T Enterprises. He said if the high bidder does not come through with the security deposit in a timely manner then it would be forwarded to the second bidder.

A motion was made by Mr. Grattidge, seconded by Mr. Johnson to approve a contract with G&T Enterprises for the timber harvest in the Town of Corinth for 2015. Unanimous.

Mr. Kemper said with regard to the Zim Smith Trail, an RFQ was sent out for design for the remaining parcels from Coons Crossing to Mechanicville. The RFQ's are due back in two and a half weeks, and once they are received there will be a county committee formed to review the proposals, and at that time a fee will be negotiated with the vendor.

Mrs. Stokes presented the draft Open Space Plan and asked the committee members if there were any changes they would like to make to the plan. She said the plan is revised every five years, which is a listing of areas that people would like to see protected. She stressed that a listing in the plan does not restrict the use of someone's private property in any manner. She said it does mean, that if the town, city or not for profit wants to purchase the property and build a trail on it to protect an agricultural easement, it is eligible for state grants.

Mrs. Stokes said Saratoga PLAN at the last public hearing proposed adding the long path which goes from New York City, up the west side of the Hudson, ending in Thatcher Park. She said the thought is that it would then go north up to the Adirondacks and the Batchlerville Bridge. She said there is no designated route, but it will be established once properties become available. She said it was not one she had proposed before the Board of Supervisors, but if the Board would like to pick it up now there is an opportunity to do that.

Mr. Bardunias from the Southern Saratoga Chamber of Commerce distributed the October 2014 Status Report and 2015 Proposal for the Community Development Program and gave a brief overview of the 2015 proposed plan with the following initiatives.

- Improve on work already done on the 7 projects undertaken in 2014, which include the Historic Lock 19, Brookside Museum, Mechanicville Train Station, Waterford CBA, Charlton CBA, Farm Food Distribution, Historic Bldgs. and Business Preservation.
- Conduct volunteer work parties to assist the Town of Stillwater in preparing Browns Beach for the 2015 season
- Work with the Halfmoon Business and Economic Development Committee in locating manufacturing and other firms within the town - coordinate with Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership
- Assist with efforts to protect Schuylerville/Victory water supplies from contamination in the event of a severe weather incident
- Assist the US Navy in installing dock structure at the Capital Region Maritime Center
- One additional project (to be determined with input from Committee and Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership)
- Work with local BPAs/chambers/regional associations as partners
- Obtain in-kind assistance from Tech Valley corporations
- Coordinate local volunteer efforts
- Develop and exploit economic benefits of community improvement projects
- Provide a status report to the county Economic Development Committee of progress on 2015 projects, goals and funding requests for 2016.

A motion was made by Mr. Lawler, seconded by Mr. Richardson endorsing the Southern Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce request for funding in the amount of \$25,000 for 2015. Unanimous.

Mr. Shimkus requested approval for the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce to receive designation as the Tourism Promotion Agency for Saratoga County, which will allow the Chamber to apply for the "I Love NY" grant.

Mr. Shimkus said in 2014 the Chamber received \$53,589 from "I Love NY" matching funds. He said the Chamber expects funding between \$50,000 and \$55,000 for 2015 if they are able to apply.

Mr. Lawler requested a summary report of expenses for 2014 from the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce to be distributed to all committee members for their review. Mr. Shimkus said he would provide that information at the December Economic Development Meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Kinowski to approve the designation of the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce as the Saratoga County Tourism Promotion Agency for 2015. Unanimous.

Mr. Shimkus said the Chamber has had six consecutive quarters of record breaking occupancy tax revenues. He said hotel occupancy has been up for 15 consecutive months and at the same time that the occupancy is up, so is the revenue per available room. He said the thought is that the cooperative ad campaign has had something to do with that, as there have been a record number of private sector investments this year.

Mr. Veitch recommended an increase to the original request from the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce of \$346,500 to \$375,000 for 2015.

A motion was made by Mr. Richardson, seconded by Mr. Kinowski to recognize a request for \$375,000 for the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce for the year 2015, for the purpose of advertising the County. Unanimous.

Katherine Smith, Board President and Eric Catalano, Executive Director for Saratoga Rowing; gave a brief overview of what Saratoga Rowing is about. Ms. Smith said after compiling the numbers for 2012 there was a \$5.1 million annual economic impact to Saratoga County. With the update and growth of the regatta's in the last two years it is estimated that the impact to the county may be \$8.9 million. Mrs. Smith said in 2013 they received a grant from the State for more than \$2,000. These funds will be used for the new training center and racecourse.

Mr. Lawler said the county is looking to 2015 as a year to re-engage the county government in economic development. He said the county needs to be open to ideas such as this and open to creating new partnerships, pushing forward in economic development at any opportunity. He said the county needs to be proactive and look for ways to engage with the community. He said the county is serious about economic development and we are looking for partners and partnerships where it can be demonstrated to the communities.

Mr. Lawler asked Saratoga Rowing if they had a specific purpose for what the county might contribute. Ms. Smith said they are currently working on the regatta training center.

Mr. Grattidge suggested that this funding request be taken to the Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership for consideration.

Ms. Daly said the Prosperity Partnership will soon be bringing in an Executive Director who will be able to show us what projects work and fit into the plan and to what level. She said she would suggest moving the request from Saratoga Rowing to the Prosperity Partnership where they can tell the Economic Development Committee if this is something that they should or should not be investing in. She said the expertise that is being brought into the Prosperity Partnership is the advice that should be followed moving forward.

Mr. Lawler said the search committee from the Prosperity Partnership has a meeting tomorrow with the company that is recruiting the Executive Director. He said they have provided 12 resumes from applicants from all over the country that will be reviewed tomorrow with the intention of trimming it down to a more manageable number. It is estimated that before the end of November, beginning of December, candidates will be presented for face to face interviews with the board to make a selection and move forward.

Ms. Daly requested committee support for an extra \$5,000 in funding for the Southern Saratoga Chamber of Commerce.

Ms. Daly said the Capital Resource Corporation is in the process of granting to Saratoga County \$50,000. She said on November 12th the CRC will vote on granting the funding.

A motion was made by Mr. Richardson, seconded by Mr. Kinowski to approve an additional \$5,000 in funding for the Southern Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce for a total funding of \$30,000. Unanimous.

On a motion made by Mr. Richardson, seconded by Mr. Kinowski the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sansom