

Buildings & Grounds Committee Minutes
July 14, 2020 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Matthew Veitch; Committee Members Alan Grattidge, Ed Kinowski, Bill Peck, Mike Smith, Tom Wood and Benny Zlotnick; Supervisors Tara Gaston, Jean Raymond and Chairman of the Board Preston Allen; Chad Cooke, Matt Rose, County Administrator; Steve Dorsey, County Attorney; Keith Manz, Tom Speziale, Public Works; Frank McClement, Veterans; Robin Dalton, City of Saratoga Springs; Turner Bradford, McFarland Johnson; Frank Zilka, North American Flight Services; Shane Fitzgerald, Stone Church Village.

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

On a motion made by Mr. Zlotnick, seconded by Mr. Kinowski, the minutes of the June 9, 2020 meeting were approved unanimously.

Mr. Manz gave an update on the Public Safety Facility. The temporary certificate of occupancy was received today for the entire building. Tomorrow, Probation will be moved in and Emergency Services next week. Public Health will not be moved in until Department of Health approval is received, and this approval is imminent, possibly next week. Mr. Speziale said that phone cut over is happening tonight for Probation. Mr. Manz said that the Sheriff's Department will be later, 911 has to be set up and this will take some time. Mr. Peck said that a ribbon cutting is being planned for August 20th.

A motion was made by Mr. Grattidge, seconded by Mr. Kinowski, committee approval to authorize an minor contract to update the appraisal of the Woodlawn Avenue Public Health Building. Unanimous.

Mr. Veitch said that some internal conversations have taken place with what should be done with the building. Mr. Veitch said that the building is prime real estate located in the heart of downtown Saratoga Springs. Mr. Veitch said that the City of Saratoga Springs has approached the County on a few occasions to potentially inquire about taking the building. Mr. Veitch said that if the City does want the building, they will need to come up with revenue in some way to acquire the building from the County. Mr. Veitch said that he has also had inquiries from private developers over the years. Mr. Veitch said that he would like to alert the City to the fact that the building is becoming available, give them 30 days to make a decision about whether or not they want the building, and at that point if they do not respond, it would go onto the open market for sale. Mr. Veitch said that he would like to give the City the right to first refusal. Mr. Grattidge said that the original plan was to take the proceeds of the sale and put them toward the building of the new facility. Mr. Grattidge said that the sale figure should be based upon an appraised figure. Mr. Dorsey said that an appraisal was done by Bill Moore in 2017 and it appraised at \$2M at that time. Mr. Grattidge suggested that the appraisal be updated, see what it's worth, to give a starting point. Mr. Peck said that he believes that building will get a higher price in an open bid situation but helping intergovernmental agencies is not a bad idea either. Mr. Peck said that with an updated appraisal, he is supportive of giving them first option. Mr. Kinowski expressed concern over the budgetary constraints of the City, and if a 30 day time frame is feasible. Mr. Veitch said that they have

already had time to think about it, and believes 30 days is enough. If they respond within 30 days that they are interested, that will be considered as a response and they may need time after that to consider financing. Mr. Peck said that the City would also need to evaluate the income generated from the building if it was put back on the tax rolls. Mr. Kinowski questioned the process and timeline once it has been decided to sell the property. Mr. Dorsey said that putting it on the open market would require a resolution. If it was being sold to specific bidder, a non-public entity, for the appraised value, that would require a local law. In the case of selling it to a municipality, this can be done by resolution.

Mr. Veitch discussed securing the Public Health building once it has been vacated. One of the issues of this area is a homeless population located nearby. It is an area where there could be potential problems with vagrancy. One option that was brought was boarding up the building, however in Mr. Veitch's and other City officials opinion, this is not something that should be done. Another option is to have a DPW employee visit the site daily. Mr. Veitch and Ms. Gaston volunteered to also visit the site to show activity. A third option is to allow City of Saratoga Springs employees to use the parking lot for parking. Mr. Kinowski said that garage door opener type lasers could be added to the building to trigger an alarm in the event that someone breaks into the building. Mr. Veitch said that if there is an issue, that option could be considered. Ms. Dalton said that the area is heavily policed due to the group of homeless living in the Woodlawn garage. Ms. Dalton said that police are going by there at least hourly.

A motion was made by Mr. Peck, seconded by Mr. Smith, to authorize an Intermunicipal agreement with the City of Saratoga Springs to allow the temporary public use of the County parking lots on Woodlawn Avenue. Unanimous.

Mr. Veitch said that City Hall is now back in service after the fire damage. City employees are currently moving back into City Hall. Normally, they would use the parking lot on High Rock Avenue however the City Center parking lot is currently being constructed in that lot, and parking is not available for employees. Mr. Veitch said that Commissioner Dalton approached him to inquire if the parking lots at the Public Health building would be available for City employees' parking. Mr. Veitch said that the same stipulations that were used for the Village of Ballston Spa, in terms of adding the County as an additional insured, the indemnification etc. would be included. Allowing this parking would also show activity at the building throughout the day. Commissioner Robin Dalton said that they are currently moving employees into the new building, and there is a significant parking crunch right now. The only solution that has been offered to employees is to walk to work, which is not realistic for the bulk of the staff. This would be an incredible gesture of good will. It is expected that the City Center Parking Garage will be completed by October 1st so it would only be for a few months. Mr. Peck said that the agreement is beneficial for both parties and thanked Mr. Veitch for his work on this. Mr. Zlotnick said that he supports the agreement if the language is similar to what was done for the Village of Ballston Spa. Mr. Veitch suggested 8am-6pm. Ms. Dalton agreed, and said that she does not anticipate anyone being there at night or on the weekends. Mr. Veitch date said that the start date will depend on when Public Health moves out of the building. End date would be 12/31 or until the building is sold. Ms. Dalton also added that she believes the building is worth a lot more than \$2M. She was in commercial real estate for a long time and there is almost never a downtown building for sale. Mr.

Peck added that the value is not so much in the building, but in the airspace above it. Ms. Dalton agreed.

Mr. Bradford from McFarland Johnson said that the perimeter fence replacement at the Airport is part of the wildlife management. They are replacing the existing perimeter fence with a larger one to keep animals out. During the planning of the fence project, it was discovered that one of the adjacent properties have a few sheds that come over the county property line. The previous fence when installed, went around those sheds. Maps of the property showing the property line, existing fence and the shed encroachments were distributed. Photos of the sheds and property were also distributed. Mr. Bradford said that the project has been design and bid, they are awaiting a grant to go to construction. The grant is expected around the end of August with construction starting in October. This is a requirement based on the habitat. Mr. Bradford said that this round of FAA funding is 100%. Mr. Bradford said that the proposed fence line is actually offset 10 feet into airport property from the property line. They have spoken with the owner of the property. The current tenant of the property rents it, does not own it. Mr. Bradford said that the property owner is aware of the situation and has been quite cooperative and are willing to work towards a solution. Mr. Bradford said that there are three potential options: Option one is to require the buildings to be removed and put the fence along the property line as it is; option two is to do a no-cost land easement where the building is granted an easement with a clause that the easement goes away when the next tenant moves in; the third option is to do a land swap, the land where the building is would be granted to the property owner and they in turn give the County the same size piece of land. Mr. Speziale said that the current fence has been there since the early 2000's. It is possible that that the encroachment was discovered when than fence was going in and rather than not hold the contractor up, they went around the sheds. Mr. Speziale said that the condition of the sheds is that they cannot be moved. Mr. Grattidge said that he believes the County should follow the property line so that a bad precedent is not set for the future. Enforce the property line, have the sheds removed and install the fence 10ft from the survey line. Mr. Zlotnick said that the sheds have been there for 20 years, he understands the precedent but it has been there for 20 years. Mr. Fitzgerald, General Manager for Stone Church Village, said that the fence was installed approximately 15 years ago, prior to them being owners, and it also cut off part of their property line. Going around the shed made up for that cut off. He indicated that they would do whatever was needed to rectify the situation. Mr. Fitzgerald said that they do not want to upset the tenant's home life but if it has to be done it's ok. Mr. Veitch asked if there was any documentation, easements perhaps, or resolutions from the past regarding this. Mr. Speziale said that they looked through all of their files and could not find any records of the fence being located where it was. Mr. Peck confirmed that there is no airline or flight/runway issues in this particular area. Ms. Gaston questioned if the line being put there by the County so many years ago could implicate the County in any way. Mr. Dorsey said that you cannot adversely possess against property held for governmental purpose. Mr. Zlotnick said that this is a mobile home in the park and asked if there was anything else in the park that encroaches the property line. Mr. Bradford said no, they checked the remainder of the property line. Mr. Zlotnick said that he would prefer not to make a mountain out of a molehill. The fence has been there for 15-20 years and asked if the fence could just be replaced and move on. This is an anomaly and would like to just let it be. If something happens in the future where the buildings run out of their useful life, then the fence could be adjusted. Mr. Grattidge said that this is the time to clean it up, the property owner is willing to move the sheds out, and follow the County property lines to not cause a problem for another group of Supervisors

in the future. Mr. Peck said that would follow the lead of Supervisor Zlotnick since it's his township, he likes the idea of an easement whereby if a future owner, if it changes hands, is on notice to remove the sheds at that time. Mr. Zlotnick said that it appears that the area is being used by the tenant as a picnic area. It is in a rundown shape, but after all this time to take it down on someone just does not sit well with him. Mr. Allen expressed concern over the potential liability to the County of someone getting hurt or injured on this portion of the property. Mr. Grattidge questioned the property owner if they could relocate the sheds to another part of the property. Mr. Fitzgerald said that there is a chance they could move them, however they are not in the best of shape and there is a chance that they would not withstand the move. Mr. Veitch said that, having listened to everyone's thoughts, he is leaning toward option #1, requiring the removal. Mr. Veitch questioned if a resolution was needed. Mr. Dorsey said that no funds are being spent, no work being done by DPW. Mr. Veitch said that he, Mr. Grattidge and Mr. Smith are on board with the removal. Mr. Wood and Mr. Kinowski agreed also. Mr. Peck said that looking at the rooflines of the sheds, they are not going to be movable sheds. Mr. Veitch said that they will follow the property line and require the removal of any sheds that encroach on the County's property. Mr. Veitch said that if there is any discussion on having the County DPW aid in removing the property, to keep him posted as a committee decision can be made about that. Mr. Fitzgerald said that the sheds were put in place not by the current tenant, but by a previous tenant.

Mr. Frank Zilka from North American Flight Services distributed satellite photographs of a portion of the County Airport property. The photographs note the location of a proposed 150'x150' hangar. It is their intention to construct a new hangar behind the current office hangar, behind the blue building on the left side of the Greenfield Avenue airport access road. They have been contacted by several people looking for hangar space and they felt this would be a good business decision. The hangar would involve some additional pavement. FAA approvals would need to be accomplished. This does not involve any runway extensions. The hangar could house up to 5 planes. Mr. Zilka said that only a portion of the building would be visible from the road, there are quite a few trees in that area and it is their intention to keep it as shielded as much as possible by trees. Mr. Peck questioned if the building would be built by NAFS and donated to the County. Mr. Zilka confirmed that they would build the building and said that the County would own it in 20 years anyway, there are approximately 7 years left on the current lease. They are responsible for the ramps and maintenance of the buildings. In this particular case they would look at whatever arrangement looks best for both sides. Mr. Dorsey reminded the committee that a year or two ago, North American donated a building to the County once the Town of Milton decided it was going to start taxing the building. Mr. Dorsey said that he assumes they could run into the same situation here. Mr. Zilka said that they were blindsided two years ago and handed a bill for \$20K+, having not had a tax bill for 18 years. There was no explanation that went with the bill and it did not leave them with many options at that time. Mr. Zilka said that as lucrative as an airport might sound to some people, this is not a high profit business by any means, and the only way it will survive, from his standpoint, is if they have more planes based there so that they can put fuel in them and maintain them. Mr. Zilka said that they do not want to cause any disruption with the County. They understand the ramifications of a new building going in and obviously if taxes are involved then it has to be a business decision on what the result is. If the tax on the building far exceeds the rent they can capture, then they may look at donating the building if in fact, whoever they can put in the building gives them enough fuel sales to make up for the term of the note incurred to build the building. Mr. Zilka said that their intention was to see if this building is something acceptable to

the Board. Mr. Kinowski suggested the Town work out a PILOT arrangement and questioned why this was not done a few years ago. Mr. Peck said that he believes the Town got a new assessor who had worked with another area with an airport. The County was under the impression for a long time that this was County owned property and therefore exempt. The new assessor said that the properties were assessable and that is why it was a surprise. Mr. Veitch said he recalls that there was some option of making the Town whole for the loss of taxes. Mr. Zilka said that they initially thought it was a mistake, grievance process had passed, the assessor did not want to hear their side, and they were left with few options. In this particular case, if there was something that could be done to satisfy the Town's requirements he is all about it. A brief discussion took place regarding the town approval process and residents concerns. Mr. Zilka said that one tenant in the airport comes into the airport to be picked up and leave, on an average day there is an arrival and departure for both pick up and drop off. Having the plane based at the airport will eliminate a takeoff and departure in one day. Mr. Zilka said that he does not anticipate a noticeable uptick in traffic with the new building.

Mr. Grattidge said that prior to authorizing a new building, all of the discussions should be worked up and a plan presented to the County. He is supportive of a private sector building but believes the business plan is important to be coupled with the approval. Mr. Zilka said that he would have gone over to meet with the new Supervisor however we have all been under limited exposure. Mr. Zlotnick asked Mr. Zilka to give him a call tomorrow, they can meet 7 ft apart and begin the Town discussions. Mr. Zlotnick said that he anticipates residents will be inquiring about the details at the next Town board meeting and would like to have some answers to begin with. Mr. Zilka said that he has learned recently that there have been quite a few inquiries of people relocating from large cities to Saratoga County. With that comes a certain level of wealth which can also bring airplanes. Mr. Zilka said due to COVID they had to lay people off for the first time in 40 years of business. They are hoping to get back up to their \$1.2M in payroll. This is run as a County airport and hopefully show people that there is a possible community benefit. Mr. Zlotnick said that he understands that this is a County airport and it serves the County but he and his residents also have concerns. Mr. Zilka said that there has been some disconnect in past years with different Supervisors reacting differently to things. They do produce a payroll with people making a living in the County. Mr. Peck summarized that the general consensus of the committee supports the idea of a hangar and believes there needs to be discussions between North American and the Town to get further approvals. Mr. Grattidge said that additional information and details need to be brought back to the committee and Board. Mr. Zlotnick confirmed that they would talk tomorrow and look at the calendar for a meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Peck, seconded by Mr. Wood, to authorize a lease renewal agreement effective August 1st 2020 with 2144 Doubleday Ave LLC for the Veterans Service Agency at a cost of \$24,284.64 with an annual increase of 3% for years 2 and 3. Unanimous.

Mr. McClement said that they will have been at this location for three years in August. The location has worked out very well for the agency and the peer connection program. The square footage cost has been relatively cheap and they are recouping a majority of the cost through the peer to peer grant. The current monthly lease amount is \$1,872.72. The new lease would increase by \$151 per month for the first year. This is to help recoup some of their costs for improved signage, paving the parking lot and replacing an exterior door in the building. The cost for years

2 and 3 reflect a 3% increase. Mr. Peck said that moving the Veterans office to this location has been very beneficial for our Veterans.

On a motion made by Mr. Grattidge, seconded by Mr. Zlotnick, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Therese Connolly
Deputy Clerk of the Board