

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Transcript

6/2/2021

SPEAKERS

Steve Bulger, Andrew Jarosh, Shelby Schneider, Phil Barrett, Sandra Winney, Tara Gaston, Jason Kemper, Jonathan Schopf, Joe Grasso, Annamaria Bellantoni, Kevin Tollisen, Several Supervisors, Todd Shimkus

Phil Barrett

Welcome to the Economic Development Committee meeting, June 2. I'll entertain the approval of the minutes of May 5.

Joe Grasso

So moved.

Sandra Winney

I'll second that motion.

Phil Barrett

Moved by Mr. Grasso, second by Mrs. Winnie. Discussion. All in favor?

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Phil Barrett

Opposed? Motion carries. All right. Annamaria Bellantoni from the Chamber. How are you today? You've got a presentation for us on the I Love New York tourism grant.

Annamaria Bellantoni

Yes. Good afternoon, everyone. For those of you who don't know me, I'm Annamaria Bellantoni with the Saratoga County Chamber and I manage the Saratoga County Tourism program. So part of the reason we're here today is I Love New York is reinstating their matching grant for quarters three and four. And we need to request a resolution for that. So we need to request a resolution from the County to name us as the official Tourism Promotion Agency, or name the Saratoga County Chamber as the official Tourism Promotion Agency for the County. And we need to submit that along with our, we already submitted our application. The award is \$28,862, which the funds that we already get from the County will be the match for that grant. And as I said, that's just for Q3 and Q4 of this year. So any questions on the resolution for naming us as the TPA?

Phil Barrett

So this is only for two quarters?

Annamaria Bellantoni

Yes, the State did not offer the grant in Q1 and Q2, because of the pandemic. Last year, they pretty much also canceled the grant. So in 2019 we were here to request it for 2020. But the State was not able to come through with the money due to the pandemic. So they've just reinstated it for Q three and four.

Phil Barrett

Okay. And this is a pass through the County, right? It doesn't go directly to you. Does it?

Annamaria Bellantoni

The funds from the State? No, they come to our office I believe. You mean the 28,000?

Phil Barrett

Yeah. Well, I guess it would be 56 in past years.

Annamaria Bellantoni

Yes, it comes through our office.

Phil Barrett

Well, it gets to you. I believe I goes through the County first. As far as I can tell from the records.

Annamaria Bellantoni

Okay.

Phil Barrett

Because we do make a payment each year of 56,250 to the Chamber.

Annamaria Bellantoni

That might be one of the quarters that you pay us.

Phil Barrett

Well, they're not even.

Annamaria Bellantoni

Right. They're different in each quarter.

Phil Barrett

(inaudible - two people speaking at once) over the place, but I was thinking 28 times two is 56.

Annamaria Bellantoni

Yeah. No, I mean, the quarterly payments that you pay to the program are just different. And I don't know who, I don't know how that was determined, but we apply each quarter for whatever amount you deem that we should apply for that quarter.

Phil Barrett

Yes.

Andrew Jarosh

This is Treasurer Jarosh. The amount you're stating, what you're saying is correct. The quarterly payment are actually a different line item out of there. So that's not mixed in. What she's also talking about is not mixed into the 56,800 you're seeing in there.

Phil Barrett

Okay. Alright. Is that the only resolution you're asking for today?

Annamaria Bellantoni

Yes.

Phil Barrett

All right. So this is a little different. Typically, we would have made this determination earlier.

Annamaria Bellantoni

Yes.

Phil Barrett

But for the stated reasons they're looking at the last two quarters of the year to receive this money. And also, we are also being asked to designate the Chamber as the I Love New York grant partners with Saratoga County. How many years? That's been a long running partnership. Do you know how many years by chance?

Annamaria Bellantoni

It's over 30, I know that. 30 plus, probably.

Phil Barrett

Alright, so I'll entertain a motion to approve that partnership and the associated funding that'll come from New York State.

Joe Grasso

So moved.

Kevin Tollisen

Back.

Phil Barrett

Mr. Grasso. Second, was that Mr. Tollisen?

Kevin Tollisen

Yes sir.

Phil Barrett

Okay. Thank you, sir. All right discussion? All in favor?

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Phil Barrett

Let's not all jump to the, unless you're gonna vote no? Any nays? All right. Very good. Alright continue.

Annamaria Bellantoni

I also just put together a short presentation, just so I could let you guys know what we're up to as far as County tourism goes, and not going to take too much of your time. But we kicked off our spring and summer campaign on April 12. We wanted to get out around this time, just to sort of, obviously promote our spring travel as well as get to those folks who have been wanting to travel and who have had that pent up demand to get out and do things. So we started the campaign, as I said, April 12, some of the tactics we're using, search engine marketing, display ads, native ads, social media ads, as well as connected TV. And I just put a little blurb in there about connected TV, just because I didn't know if everybody knew what that was. But it's very inexpensive way to do TV advertising over streaming services, basically. So any of the cord cutters who don't use cable or may have cable and stream anyway, will be receiving some commercials about Saratoga County.

Phil Barrett

So you're talking about all the various streaming services?

Annamaria Bellantoni

Yes.

Phil Barrett

God knows there's a million of them.

Annamaria Bellantoni

Well, we're not on all of them. But it's based on our geography and behaviors of the people that we're targeting. So, like discovery TV might be where some of our folks might come from, or, other stations based on desire to travel, luxury travel, casinos, horse racing, outdoor recreation, things like that. So there's all these algorithms that are used when plugging these spots into different slots on these streaming services. But it's a great tactic as far as awareness. There's nothing that people can click on, for example, on a commercial, they're not sitting at the computer where they can click on it and get more information. But, they see these commercials many, many, many, many times because you're buying a large quantity of them. So it's that lower funnel tactic that just gets them, gets in their minds, and says, Hey, I think I am going to go there, that looks like a great place to travel. And then of course, we're sort of, we keep following them through some of our other tactics that I'll touch on. So, the primary message of this one was really focused on outdoor activities, things to do outdoors before sort of everything ramps up here for the summer season, and then probably mid-May we kind of weaved in our summer ads, which you can see on the next slide. And just like focusing more on our iconic

attractions, and continuing with recreation as well as outdoor dining, things like that. I just mentioned the behavioral targeting and the retargeting. So if someone does interact with our ads, we're basically just, we just keep reaching out to them, and just basically helping stay top of mind. So they will definitely consider traveling to our destination. We do also communicate with probably 20,000 plus visitors through email. And what we've done this year too, is we've added a series of what to open, so alerting people to what's open. One of the reasons, or one of the questions people had during this time is like, well, I don't know if such and such attraction is open, or can I go to SPAC? Can I go to the Casino? Can I go to the National Park? So we've been just doing a little bit of extra communication with them, just letting them know, Hey, this is open or Hey, this, here's the new hours of this or that or whatever. So people know what's happening while they're making their plans. And of course, people are still concerned about safety. So we're sharing up to date information on that. And for our summer campaign, we also offer a sweepstakes to drive traffic and conversions. So that's been really popular every year, a lot of people enter the contest. And that's another way that we collect emails to remarket to these folks. So the next slide I just put on there just to show you, who we're targeting, what geographies that we're hitting. I mean, you can see it all there. I mean, we definitely hit the entire State of New York, Western Mass, Southern Vermont, Northern New Jersey, Connecticut.

Phil Barrett

Annamaria, maybe you could explain that a little more? It says campaign impressions by geo, which is geography. So yeah, maybe you could just better explain that for the members of the Committee or anybody else that's listening.

Annamaria Bellantoni

Sur. So basically, all the areas that you see here are our drive market. So we target to about a four hour drive market from our destination. So when you see that big green portion, the NY DMA, that is all of say New York City, Long Island, Westchester, Northern New Jersey, all of that area, that is a popular area that travels here. And then all of these other slices of the pie, for example. Albany, Schenectady, Troy, that's obviously our Capital region, those folks are still interested in things that we have to offer here. But we're not going to spend, you know a lot on that, because it's in our own backyard, and they kind of know who we are, we still want to reach out to them and be in touch with them. But we're really trying to generate overnight stays and people staying in lodging properties and to be able to generate those occupancy taxes.

Phil Barrett

Is there any way to tell by zip codes who is staying in the hotels, and maybe be able to match it up to the percentage of people that stay here in comparison to the percentage of people you're targeting, or geographical areas you're targeting?

Annamaria Bellantoni

Yeah, we've done similar analysis like that. We have reached out to the hotels to get that information, some of them are willing to part with it, some of them aren't. And we did do exactly what you mentioned, last year, you know, while we were kind of refocusing everything while everything was closed, so we were definitely making sure that we were targeting all of those zip codes. When I come back in the fall, I'll have a chart like this, but it'll also have the conversions. So the good thing about

doing a campaign like this, a digital campaign like this is you're going to want to see the New York City DMA, you're going to want to see as much impressions that we served as equaling as many conversions. Like we don't want to waste funds, if someone's not interested in a particular region or area. So the nice thing about digital campaign is that you can shift. So let's just say Boston is showing really great interest in the impressions that we're serving them, or we're seeing those conversions there, we're going to serve more impressions in that area. So it's well monitored. It's a really great way in a reasonable way to target folks and expansively. Versus a print ad, for example, that there's no way to really check the conversions on something like that.

Phil Barrett

Yeah, I was just curious, because if you could get a good data points on who was actually coming here, and from where and how many from each geographical location, you might change where you target some of these.

Annamaria Bellantoni

And that may, that probably did change last year based on what was happening, where people could and could not go. So it's worth looking into again, and I'll certainly reach out to some of the main properties and make sure that we are doing that.

Phil Barrett

Is that information that the hotels, you're saying some will share and some won't?

Annamaria Bellantoni

Yeah. Some. It's not as easy as you think to get some of that information from them. Some just like to hold it close. And some are happy to give you give you that.

Phil Barrett

Is that's something Darryl might have more information on that?

Annamaria Bellantoni

We work together and things like that. I mean, we did work together on that as well. And but yeah, he's a good resource for something like that, as well. Or maybe a relationship that I don't have with somebody that he do.

Phil Barrett

Yeah, I was thinking too, if SPAC or the Casino had information and where people are coming from, that might also be something you can plug into the overall plan. Again, just trying to get a sense of how many and from where?

Annamaria Bellantoni

Yep, absolutely. Any other questions on that? On the geographies? Feel free to contact me anytime, for anything that comes up that you think of that you just want clarification on. So the next slide is just a real simple budget overview. And so basically, you can see, it's the Saratoga County funds and our I Love New York funds that equal our to our budget. And just the what to know, in the expenditures is

basically all of that money is going to advertising which is excellent. I mean, there's a few things that we have to pay for outside of that. But with me working at the Chamber and being employed by the Chamber, none of my salary goes into any of this. It strictly goes all to marketing. Any questions?

Phil Barrett

Give us a breakdown of that 360, different categories? And where the money's going. Is that something you could do?

Annamaria Bellantoni

Yeah. So it's basically all of these different tactics that I just discussed. And there are some other things that I do with I Love New York, a few different ads that I might do with them and say, a travel guide for international travel or brand USA, there are some other miscellaneous things outside of this digital ad campaign. But I mean, that is really the bulk of what we do just because it's trackable. We know the exact cost of everything that we're doing, we can monitor who's clicking on our ads, we can research, and so it's really the best use of these funds to put it all into digital, especially in today's day and age.

Phil Barrett

Obviously, we can track the hotel receipts on a regular basis through Mr. Jarosh's office, but have you received any feedback from the hotels, not just in Saratoga, but throughout the county as far as their confidence level going into the summer season? What they experienced in general terms, now the first half of the year because we're almost halfway through the year already. Any stories?

Annamaria Bellantoni

I mean, I've got the occupancy stats. I mean, we're still, I think we're definitely poised for a great season with the track returning. I mean, that's gonna add, and several concerts, probably 15 to 20 concerts already booked. So that's going to really push a lot of overflow out into the other communities outside of Saratoga, which is great. I haven't spoken to anyone about their feelings about summer but I can tell you, they're excited to know that our major attractions are returning. So, occupancy is still down, running 12 months 30% but it's going to build. It's definitely going to build. And winter's not our season anyway. And then given the pandemic, it probably was a factor in there as well. And there were no conventions or meetings. So that's another reason it was down. But I think as we're ramping up for summer, we're gonna recover nicely.

Phil Barrett

Are we? I know Todd raised his hand and I'll ask him to come up. But, what about business travel? A lot of the county hotel rooms very dependent on business travel. I don't know if we're doing anything specifically within this program to kind of hit on that.

Annamaria Bellantoni

Well, we sort of work with Darrell on that. And that's really his focus is conventions, meetings, etc. But that is expected to ramp up in the fall. I believe the City Center has a number of bookings, correct? They've already got a number of bookings for the fall. And I think they're really getting filled up. So that, even international travel business travel, that's sort of the expected date for a lot of that to return.

Phil Barrett

Yeah, and I think working with some of our larger employers is important along those lines as well, because we want to make sure they stay in the County as opposed to an adjoining County. What about other attractions like the Zim Smith Trail, which I think is kind of an overlooked attraction for people? I don't think they're gonna come here just for the Zim Smith Trail. I'm not saying that, but it certainly I think.

Annamaria Bellantoni

It is a great trail. It's beautiful.

Phil Barrett

I think it's a great kind of add on, you know, you're going to come for other reasons. While you're here, we've got these right outlets.

Annamaria Bellantoni

Exactly and that's the goal to get them here for the main thing they're here for and then push them out into, like, the other attractions that we have. And llovesaratoga.us is our website. If you go on there, you'll see all kinds of outdoor itineraries, trails, hiking, biking, kayaking, we have a special section from the water, history. I mean we have a wealth of information on there. And in our monthly emails, we usually put something like that. We did talk a lot about outdoor recreation, when that was really the only thing you could do last spring and into the summer. So we send people back to the site, we provide them the itineraries, we're constantly promoting things like that. So, I mean, we have a wealth of outdoor recreation here, which is exceptional, and people do take advantage of it. I have some other stats that I can share with the group if they want to know like, how many people were attending these types of locations? I don't have it with me today.

Phil Barrett

Yea sure. Because a lot of those things, they tie in, like in Clifton Park and the southern part of the Town, we have a park that several hundred acres, and we just put in a huge new pedestrian bridge. And so now you can really access the new trail network that we put in with our friends, the Town of Halfmoon. So the trail ends, you're standing under the Twin Bridges, but you cross over the Erie Canal and there's dry docks where people used to pull off on the canal and all of that is featured.

Annamaria Bellantoni

Is that on your website? Or is that on Town of Clifton Park website?

Phil Barrett

Yeah.

Annamaria Bellantoni

Okay. That's great. I'll get some more information on that.

Phil Barrett

Yeah, Vischer Ferry Preserve. So I mean, there's other opportunities like that?

Annamaria Bellantoni

Absolutely.

Phil Barrett

Tie in some history and recreation. Todd, did you, you had raised your hand?

Todd Shimkus

I was just gonna say in regards to the hotels and occupancy and the business component, that the US Navy has been a substantial business venture for us over the last two years. And when we did a zip code analysis last spring, when we were trying to figure out who was still coming here, Norfolk, Virginia, was the highest zip code in Clifton Park and Malta. And I remember looking at it going, Oh, yeah, that's the Navy. So the project that they've been doing there to upgrade the nuclear facilities has created a nice little book of business, particularly for the extended stay properties that are in Malta and Clifton Park.

Phil Barrett

Yeah, we see them all the time on Route 9 there at the Residence Inn. Yeah. Any other questions for Annamaria at this point?

Tara Gaston

Chairman?

Phil Barrett

Yes. Supervisor Gaston.

Tara Gaston

Apologies for the tardiness. One, I would like to just as a note, I know and I know Warren County is doing a lot of this. I would like us to see more but, individuals who do bike tourism and hiking tourism tend to spend a lot more money than other methods. So I think the Zim Smith and trails like it are indeed, fast becoming a primary attraction as opposed to a secondary. And certainly with Palmertown with the addition of trails around the County, I would like to see more of that broadcast, because then we can get in. I do not know how that feels. But I understand that people with dual incomes and no children, spend a lot more money and have a lot more of these visits. Having a single income and three children, I mostly throw them in the yard. But I would like to capture some of those dollars if I can. The other thing is, I noticed under

Phil Barrett

How do we capture that market?

Tara Gaston

How do we capture the poor market? Um, that does indeed remain a mystery. Although, we could have some ideas about universal basic income and subsidized childcare and lots of things we can talk about at another meeting. But under the film and media, I had a question and we were talking about occupancy. What I was hearing in Saratoga Springs is that a lot of the occupancy connected to the film

was in Airbnb's. Is that your understanding? Do you believe that hotels were utilized more? I have a big concern with our hotels not being on a level playing field and suffering. Do you have any insight into that one?

Annamaria Bellantoni

So yep, I can, that was the next slide. So I can just jump to that one. But so we have had several Film and Media projects in our area, ongoing for years, smaller projects, commercials, couple days shoots, documentaries, things like that. But this recent project was, was a feature film, an independent film, excuse me an independent film, but with a good budget. So they did have about 65 cast and crew members here for an entire month. And they did have probably 15 rooms at Pavilion Grand Hotel for that extended stay, those 30 days. So, in today's short term rental market, I was working with the location manager on this project. And I connected him to the lodging properties where, when we were going to go out and do an RFP, and they had already, they must have had a relationship with Pavilion Grand, they already booked that for several of their crew members. And then the rest of the folks, just younger folks are, we think the location manager was in his early 30s, he just before I even could get to me went on Airbnb and booked his stay, brought his wife and his dog and so people want to travel, how they want to travel, and they want to have the convenience of different things with them. So like I said, he wanted to bring his pets. And then some of the folks I couldn't even get to them before they had already booked these Airbnb's. So I would say probably half were in Airbnb's and half were in hotels.

Tara Gaston

I mean, I absolutely understand the benefit and the attraction of them. I was just wondering if you'd heard anything from proprietors about especially, I know that some people were preferring to stay in short term rentals over hotels during the larger, more intense parts of the pandemic, because they thought there was more privacy, and security and cleanliness. And I just, I'm wondering how our hotels are doing seeing as how there are different requirements for them. Are you hearing anything from them or?

Annamaria Bellantoni

I mean, not really, not in relation to short term rentals. But Saratoga County does have, as you probably know, has a lot of short term rentals, which is not great for hotels.

Tara Gaston

Yeah, and that's, I'd like to possibly get some occupancy tax from them as well. But thank you, and we need to, that 30% it's not great.

Phil Barrett

Anything else you want to say about the film media project?

Annamaria Bellantoni

Just that it was a really great boost and a shot in the arm for our economy as we were sort of just wrapping back up here. And so a project like that spends money on other things, like as I mentioned, retail, restaurants, services, for example, Twin Bridges, garbage service or trash service, they use them for multiple days, things like that. Every time they used them it was \$100 for a pickup. So, just

that's the kind of projects that we would like to see as far as film. So we are out there kind of working with scouts. I just met a scout yesterday for Showtime series. So it would be great to get something like that. And we just have a lot of demand for it right now. And I don't know if it's because people are trying to like not film in New York City because of like the restrictions and what's happening there and it's just harder and it's more expensive to do it. But this project was great too, because it landed in Ballston Spa, Corinth, Greenfield, Lake Luzerne, Wilton. It really was all over the County and like private residences, and in non-private residences, so it was just it was just kind of neat and fun for people to see some of the stars floating around .

Phil Barrett

This is one with a guy from Wedding Crashers?

Annamaria Bellantoni

Yes. Owen Wilson.

Phil Barrett

That's a great movie. I think it's the only movie I've ever seen him in. But boy, that was a great movie.

Annamaria Bellantoni

So anyway, I just wanted to bring that up just because it is an economic boost. And I'd love to get more projects like that. And the City was great, City of Saratoga was great to work with, all the Villages and Towns that we worked with were amazing, and just really just made it so easy and flawless for us to pull this off.

Tara Gaston

I will say I enjoyed a day or an evening break from Caroline Street when they were filming on there. It was nice and calm for one day. So thank you for that one.

Annamaria Bellantoni

So that's my report. I don't know if anyone has any questions. You can always reach out to me any time during the year after the fact. You know, if anything comes up and Supervisor Barrett, you'll be interested to know on that mobile location data that I sort of was referencing, where people were visiting attractions. Clifton Park Center was one of the highest visited places.

Phil Barrett

The Mall is booming. Major tenants that are that are being retained for multiple more years. And it's booming.

Annamaria Bellantoni

Yeah. So I thought that was just kind of interesting. But any questions for me?

Phil Barrett

Yeah. Any questions for Annamaria at this point? Okay, well, maybe we can do Wedding Crashers 2 in Saratoga, that would be great.

Annamaria Bellantoni

I'll work on that.

Phil Barrett

Maybe we can get some people from this committee to star in that.

Annamaria Bellantoni

Well, thank you, everyone.

Phil Barrett

Anything else on that? Okay. Very good. All right. Well, thank you much for the update. And yeah, hopefully that 30% rises soon and get some help for our hospitality segment of our economy that's been suffering over the last year. Next up, we have some approval of Economic Development Fund applications. Shelby Snyder is here. How are you?

Shelby Schneider

Thank you so much? Does anyone need a packet I brought extra just in case?

Phil Barrett

Everybody has these applications, email or otherwise? Okay.

Shelby Schneider

They were sent out Friday. So last month, I was here with our first application from Clifton Park. As you are all aware, if people are on the other line listening in, Saratoga County has an Economic Development Fund, which you allocated 150,000 to. And each community, town and city throughout Saratoga County has \$7100 to spend on something related to economic development in their community. So this round, I'll just I can give you a quick rundown, of the total amount for the 2021 submissions is \$71,000. And we have one request for revision of their 2020 application, which is essentially budget neutral as long as the money is still there that was reallocated. And I can go over that and explain it, but they just want to reallocate it to this larger project.

Phil Barrett

Sure.

Shelby Schneider

Okay. I'm the Town of Ballston is asking to use their money to go through their comprehensive planning process. They used this last year. But as you all know, in your communities, it is a long process and a relatively expensive one. So they're using their \$7100 to keep that going. The Town of Corinth, they are in the process of getting ready to update their comprehensive plan and they're also working with the Village of Corinth. So they are using their \$7100 to come up with a comprehensive, not a comprehensive plan but per se a comprehensive plan to look at the renovation of the International Paper Mill that has been vacant since 2003. So that is a major economic engine for them for that area. When IP was open, it employed over 270 people and many of which lived in the northern towns. So that is a definite important project. And if you're not all aware, they have the ability to draw 30 million gallons

of water out of the Hudson River. They have electric substation on site. They do have a landfill that actually it was an obstacle in redeveloping that property is now been decoupled from that property. So, the main terrace, that's pretty much level with Palmer Avenue, is the target area that they are looking to revitalize, and it straddles both the Village as well as the Town but has a major impact for both communities. And again, kudos to them for working together on this plan The Town of Greenfield, or you may or may not remember, but last year, they created a business map of their community and worked in partnership with Saratoga Today. What they're going to do this year with their \$7100 is keep that going. It worked out very, very well. They had targeted advertising, they had a specific map. It lived on the website, and it's been really, they feel like that was effective. It's for both tourism as well as supporting their local businesses, especially during COVID. The Town of Malta, you may notice if you drive through Malta, they now have wonderful medians, streetlights, etc., they are actively in the process of working on their complete streets plan. This money this year will be used to pay for engineering to do a crossing between the Town Hall over to Ellsworth Commons. So you don't have to go all the way down to the roundabout to cross. And traffic calming measures, which I'm sure you're going to see all over Saratoga County, if not the region. The Town Moreau, they are using their funds, specifically for grant writing, to leverage the \$7100 that they get to go after more money to complete their sewer project, which as we all know, is going to be a major economic engine for their Route 9 corridor because it does not have infrastructure. The Town of Providence, we don't see a lot of businesses necessarily in the Town of Providence. It is also, a portion of that are in the blue line of the Adirondack Park. So they are going to be using their funds to upgrade their landfill transfer station. And this reduces costs and the cost burden on the residents. So they did a similar project last year, they were supposed to do this, but instead they did a community wide cleanup project. But now they're going back to the original project that they intended. The inter municipal request includes the City of Mechanicville, Town of Northumberland, Town of Stillwater, and the Town of Saratoga. The Champlain Canal Regional Gateway Visitor Center, if you have been down to the Village of Schuylerville, they started that project quite a long time ago. It actually does not have public restrooms. This is a long plan initiative that these communities have all worked collaboratively together on. It affects most of their communities. So they are pooling their funds, as well as Northumberland is asking to reallocate their funds from last year to build these public restrooms and make sure that this center takes off. So I have each individual application, as well as the spreadsheet. And this spreadsheet also includes the communities that have not submitted yet. I know that quite a few of them have ideas and plans in the pipeline, but weren't ready for this round. So I'm here to answer any questions.

Phil Barrett

Well it's great. You know, you look at the wide breadth of projects and initiatives here and I think it's exactly what was envisioned in the beginning.

Shelby Schneider

Absolutely.

Phil Barrett

When this Economic Development Fund was initiated. So, based on the parameters that we set forth a couple of years ago, I think it's very successful and has made a difference in spurring some important improvements in every municipality, or at least they have the opportunity to do that with the funds. Any

questions for Shelby on any of these submissions, or if there's anybody here representing one of these municipalities that wants to talk about their submission?

Joe Grasso

Shelby, great description of the applications. I was interested in the intermunicipal one, which I think is great that communities pulled together to submit that. Just in terms of those restrooms, who owns that building, who's gonna control those restrooms is that a local?

Shelby Schneider

I believe it's owned by this entity, the Gateway, I believe there was a special entity set up, and my understanding it's an inter municipal kind of, the Champlain Canal corridor works with multiple Counties, multiple areas. So that's why all these towns were involved.

Joe Grasso

So these towns actually have a stake through in operation or?

Shelby Schneider

I don't believe so, I think like as representative,

Joe Grasso

So it's just a funding 35,000 to build it, and then somebody else will operate it?

Shelby Schneider

Exactly. But it matters to their community that this gateway center takes off.

Joe Grasso

Great.

Shelby Schneider

Okay? I mean, this is essentially found money. In our direction and guidance that we're offering to communities. I mean, the more that they can work together, especially if it's an economic development plan, the chances that this fund is going to help leverage them to get more funds, the fact that they're working together, is like an added bonus, especially for funding entities that would be looking at funding.

Phil Barrett

Yeah, absolutely. You know, not every community is going to be working on economic development plan, per se. And that's why community development was part of the original thought process when we started this program. So I think it's coming along nicely. If there's no further questions, I will entertain a motion to approve these fund applications.

Tara Gaston

I'll move that, Supervisor Gaston.

Phil Barrett

Supervisor Gaston.

Kevin Tollisen

Second.

Phil Barrett

Second by Mr. Tollisen. Discussion. All in favor?

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Phil Barrett

Opposed? Motion carries. All right. Any other business to come before the committee today? Mr. Bulger?

Steve Bulger

Yep. Thank you. I just want to recognize our new Deputy Administrator Ridge Harris. He started yesterday, and glad to have him on board. So Ridge, thank you. Please introduce yourself to any of the Supervisors you don't know here today. And we're looking forward to getting you on board. And I also wanted to take this opportunity to thank Jason, for all the work he's been doing over the last five months pinch hitting while we've been waiting to fill this position. So thanks to both.

Phil Barrett

Do you want to give us an update on the fishes while you're here? Better turn on your mic or Therese will come down there and swat you right in the head.

Jason Kemper

So all of the spring trout stocking is completed. We wrapped that up actually with a neat event we did last week with the Edinburg Central School and Northville Central School, their trout in the classroom program. So our spring stocking is now completed. We've got some other stocking, warm water species throughout the summer we're looking at, and we will be redoing our fish stocking brochure as well. Because you remember, this spring, there was some significant changes to the DEC guidelines, specifically for targeting trout. So we've got to revamp our trout stocking brochure. We were able to get a lot of school kids involved again this year, with a lapse last year in the pandemic, it was difficult, but hopefully we can improve that next year. It's really a great part of the program is including as many school kids as possible. So we had a great day up in Edinburg, and smaller groups here and there on the stocking. But I'd really like to get that ramped up again next year and a lot more involvement from the schools. And hopefully with the restrictions easing on the pandemic, we can definitely accomplish that.

Phil Barrett

Yeah, we have our Clifton Park learn to fish day, Saturday, it's an annual event in partnership with DEC. They bring the poles and the equipment and we market it and works out well.

Jason Kemper

It's a great, great program. In one of the other hats I wear, we work on those across the State. And I mean, the amount of folks that show up, especially in the suburban settings, that don't necessarily have the equipment or the knowledge. It's a great program and a lot of kids come out of there and pursue fishing after that event. So it's a great program. One of the other hats I wear, we work on those programs statewide and it's great to see those kids participate in those programs.

Phil Barrett

Yeah, it really is. Kids have a have a great time. The DEC officers are great. They really work very well with the parents and the kids that show up so it's a nice day. All right. Anything else for the good of the order. All right. If not, I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

Jonathan Schopf

So moved.

Phil Barrett

Mr. Schopf.

Joe Grasso

Second

Phil Barrett

Mr. Charlton. All in favor,?

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Phil Barrett

Opposed? Motion carries. Thank you.