

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING TOURISM/AGRICULTURE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING August 4, 2020

ATTENDEES:

Legislators: Dale Weston, Ed Hollenbeck, Mike Roberts, Dennis Mullen, Marte Sauerbrey

Staff: LeeAnn Tinney, Linda Sampson, Rebecca Maffei

Guests: Shirley Kennedy, resident

Legislator Weston called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M.

MINUTES

- Approval of minutes from July 7, 2020 – Legislator Weston asked for approval of minutes from the July 7, 2020 committee meeting. Legislator Hollenbeck made a motion to accept the July 7, 2020 minutes, seconded by Legislator Mullen. All were in favor.

TIOGA COUNTY TOURISM: Rebecca Maffei - Monthly report was previously emailed. Ms. Maffei distributed and reviewed her Tourism 2020 Recap Report; highlighting NY On Pause Social Media Contest, Advocacy, Welcome Back Tioga, Tioga To-Go and other activities and places being developed, updated and promoted to enjoy the outdoors and nearby amenities, as well as income and expenses for 2020 and 2021.

Legislator Roberts inquired about hotel/motel tax. Ms. Maffei reported the 1st quarter was on par with last year, however, with Covid-19, traveling has slowed down; mentioning Tioga County does not tax Airbnb's. Ms. Tinney reported its time to begin the renewal process of the Hotel/Motel Local Law. Ms. Tinney reached out to Ms. Maffei for recommendations whether to increase the percentage or not, mentioning we're at 4% right now. With no recommendation to increase the percentage, Ms. Maffei pointed out the Airbnb situation. Ms. Tinney has contacted the County Attorney, Mr. DeWind, and found he had been trying to negotiate with Airbnb with no success at this point, but will follow-up. Ms. Tinney will be bringing this forward next month.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING (ED&P): LeeAnn Tinney – Agenda, attachments and highlights previously emailed. Following are the Director’s Highlights:

Meetings Attended – Ms. Tinney reported attending the following meetings:

- Southern Tier Network- Broadband study continues; reporting how looking at our broadband capability expanding possibilities is so critical now. Ms. Tinney also mentioned the USDA grant money applied for to pay for this study has been funded at 100%. No match is needed.
- Economic Development Organizations in the Southern Tier – With the Regional Council not meeting at this time, the Economic Development Leaders across the region (8 counties) have been meeting every other week to talk about what everyone is doing and sharing information. Ms. Tinney commented this is very helpful.
- Tioga County Economic Recovery Advisory Council – Working on the Strategic Plan, 8 sectors identified, Ms. Jardine is organizing and providing guidance through this process.
- Congressman Reed Roundtable – Participated in this event and was able to discuss with him directly on the challenges we are being faced with at this time.
- Tioga County Chamber of Commerce – Connecting with the Andy Hafer, the new President and CEO; very interested in coordinating efforts as a team.
- Leaders Meeting – Met a couple times this month.
- SEPP – A Broome County Housing entity; exploring doing a project in Tioga County.
- Community Foundation – Met to discuss child care challenges; in anticipation of whether children go back to school or not.
- STREDC – Attended monthly meeting; approved a loan.
- ST8 CEDs – Virtual meeting; discussed what’s going on across the region.
- Private Investor – Met to discuss a possible project in Tioga County.
- Municipal Visits
 - Town of Owego – Met with Don Castellucci to discuss pending projects in Owego.
- Business Visits – Ms. Tinney reported setting up visits with businesses is difficult due to COVID-19 restrictions, however, was able to visit the following:
 - V&S – Meeting set at the sheriff's request to introduce new employees in leadership roles to those at V&S and tour of the facility in the event of an emergency situation. Not on the agenda, Ms. Tinney reported the sheriff has made the same request to meet with Crown, Cork and Seal. They have agreed to set up a meeting.
 - Norwesco – Met to find they were deemed essential and have been working through the pandemic and are doing well.
- Presentations- none this month.

Department Highlights

- COVID-19
 - Tioga Downs
 - Press Conference on July 24th - The purpose of the press conference was to encourage the Governor to provide guidelines for casinos to open.
 - Letters of Support were sent from the following:
 - ❖ Elected Officials (State/Local)
 - ❖ Not For Profits
 - ❖ Veteran Groups

- ❖ School Districts
- ❖ Business Community
- ❖ General Population

The last update was the Governor deemed casinos non-essential and will not be opening. However, the hope is that this will change in the near future.

- Tioga County Economic Recovery Advisory Council (TCERAC)
 - Economic Recovery Strategy Plan – Continues to move forward.
- Pending Impacts – Ms. Tinney reported the guidelines for schools reopening have not been issued yet, however schools are trying to put together plans to submit to the State in preparation. The following issues are of concern:
 - Child care
 - Schooling vs. Working Parents

Ms. Tinney brought to everyone’s attention the need to be mindful of the change in the workforce and how it may likely remain in the future. Many businesses have already recognized that employees can work from home, be productive and are able to cut overhead costs.
- Sales Tax – Ms. Tinney reported the following that Mr. McFadden mentioned at the last Leaders Meeting:
 - Sales tax is down 7% this year over last year at this time.
- Hotel/Motel Tax – Local Law – Reported on earlier in the meeting.
 - Rate
 - Airbnb
- 2020 Census – Ms. Jardine continues to work on the following activities to encourage people to complete the census:
 - Press release went out announcing this is “Push Week.”
 - Social Media posts.
 - Field visits by census takers to begin August 11th.
 - Text Banking Event - This event scheduled for August 5th will be rescheduled.
 - Awareness materials distribution.

Not on the agenda, Tioga County has been awarded \$36,440.00 by the State for additional census awareness work. Ms. Jardine is putting together a budget in partnership with Tioga Opportunities as the money has to pass through a not-for-profit.
- Village of Owego
 - DRI - 17 projects moving forward and close to beginning work.
 - NY Main Street – Funding awarded for 6 projects that have been selected; work to begin soon.
 - Owego Gardens 2 – This project is moving forward; following are steps taken:
 - DEC visit to look at a stream wetland concern; solution was found.
 - Work submitted for review to the Department Of Health regarding the water system, including the water tank; review to be completed in the next couple weeks.
 - Home Leasing financing package – Anticipating a review in September with an approval by the end of September; close in October with the hope of breaking ground mid to late October.

- Land Bank – Ms. Saraceno continues to work on the following:
 - Additional property acquisitions pending.
 - Bid documents completed.
- RESTORE NY
 - Owego and Waverly projects progressing. With the help of the Senator a progress payment was received on the Owego project.
- Community Development – Ms. Hendrickson continues to work on the following projects:
 - Nichols Park historic designation.
 - North Avenue Park – Working on a land swap with an adjacent property owner.
- Workforce – Phase 1, study the workforce, complete. Phase 2, putting a plan together on how to address workforce issues, complete. Now, working on the following:
 - Phase 3 – Implementation; funding received to hire a consultant to help through this process.
 - WORC Grant Application - In the plan it was identified to look for a person to work as a liaison between our school districts and industries; create a plan to move students who are not choosing college, but rather entering in the workforce. Funding application to WORC has been made for this position.
- Ag – Ms. Griffiths continues to work on the following:
 - 8 Year District Review on the following 2 districts:
 - Owego/Nichols District- Public hearing completed.
 - Spencer/Candor/Barton/Tioga- Public hearing scheduled for August 25th; resolution listed below.
 - USDA- Ag Value Chain Study – Funding applied by the IDA; approved at 100% with no match required. Once the contracts are received, work will begin.
- Planning
 - 239 Reviews- none for July
 - Active Plans – Ms. Jardine continues to work on the following:
 - REAP- Tioga County Workforce Pipeline- Implementation
 - Tioga County Economic Recovery Strategic Plan (COVID)
 - Village of Waverly Comprehensive Plan
- Grants
 - Potential
 - REAP- USDA Community Facilities, Town of Richford- (water system)
 - REAP- USDA Community Facilities, Richford Fire Dept.- (fire station)
 - REAP- USDA, Village of Spencer- Raymond Hadley (equipment)
 - Owego Elks Lodge (TBD)
 - Town of Berkshire (TBD)- rec trail
 - Village of Newark Valley- USDA Community Facilities (equipment)
 - Town of Berkshire- DOT TAP funding (sidewalk extension)
 - Pending
 - Tioga County- Snowmobile
 - Owego Apalachin Central School District- WDI (workforce)

- Town of Richford- SAM, Assemblyman Friend (highway equipment)
- NYS 2020 Census Outreach Funding- indefinitely postponed
- USDA RDBG, North Avenue Revitalization Program- appealing
- Northern Tioga Chamber- Community Foundation (facilities improvements)
- REAP- DOL, WORC
- Active
 - Village of Owego- RESTORE NY, Briggs/Award
 - Village of Owego- Downtown Revitalization Initiative
 - Village of Spencer- Nichols Park (grandstand restoration)
 - Village of Spencer- Nichols Park (historic register nomination)
 - Village of Waverly- NYS Parks, Waverly Glen Park
 - Village of Waverly- RESTORE NY, Twigg
 - Tioga County- Snowmobile Trails
 - REAP- USDA REDI, Strategic Planning (extended 1 year)
 - ❖ Cottage Industry Study (TOI/REAP/TEAM Tioga)
 - REAP- USDA, Public Well (equipment)
 - REAP- Tioga Downs, Workforce Pipeline Implementation
 - TCPDC- Enterprise Community Partners (land bank funds)- X2
 - Village of Owego- Design Connect (Art Park)
 - Village of Owego- Main Street (CFA)
 - Midwestern Pet Foods (CFA)
 - Racker (CFA)
 - **IDA- USDA RDBG, Multi-County Broadband Study**- Approved
 - **IDA- USDA RDBG, Ag Value Chain Study**- Approved
 - **Waverly Glen Park- Mildred Faulkner Truman**- Approved
- Completed
 - REAP- USDA, Code Enforcement Shared Services Feasibility Study – Ms. Jardine is working on recommendations that are not going to require funding.
 - REAP- USDA, Workforce Pipeline Strategy Study- Phase 2

2020 Budget – Ms. Tinney reported making the required cut for 2020.

- Economic Development- tracking
- Planning- tracking

2021 Budget- A worksheet of the proposed 2021 Budget was in everyone's packet. Ms. Tinney pointed out the required cuts.

- Economic Development- proposed
- Planning- proposed

Resolutions – The following resolutions were presented and agreement was made to move them forward:

- H08-Set Public Hearing for Ag District #1 - Towns of Barton Candor Spencer and Tioga
- H10-SEQRA Consideration for NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation
- 2020-2021 Snowmobile Trails grant-in-aid program phase II application

Guest, Ms. Kennedy, asked for an explanation of the Broadband Study and what was to be expected for the future. Ms. Tinney explained the purpose of participating in this study that was brought to us by Southern Tier Network, is to provide dark fiber on the highway for service providers to tap into to increase fiber availability to the home. Tioga County, engaged with 4 other counties; Yates, Schuyler, Steuben and Chemung to hire a consultant, Fujitsu, to do a study to look at the unserved and underserved areas in these counties and put a plan together on how to reach those areas. Ms. Tinney reported they have connected with the service providers.

ADJOURNMENT – With no further topics of discussion or questions, the meeting was adjourned at 2:10 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda Sampson
Administrative Assistant to Economic Development & Planning