

## MINUTES

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING COMMITTEE

**Wednesday, February 8, 2023 10:35 a.m.**

Present: Supervisors Groat, Chatfield, Robusto, Lasher and Eygnor, County Administrator Rick House, Fiscal Assistant Brian Sams, Tourism Director Christine Worth, Economic Development/Planning Department Director Brian Pincelli and Wayne County Soil and Water Conservation District Director Lindsey Gerstenslager. Supervisor Johnson was not present for the meeting.

Minutes from the January 4<sup>th</sup> Committee meeting were approved as written.

A transmittal was presented requesting authorization to re-appoint Gene VanDeusen as a Landowner Representative and appoint Anthony Verno as the Wayne County's Sportsman Alternate on the Regional Fish and Wildlife Management Board. Ms. Gerstenslager stated this Board was established to encourage the preservation and development of fish and wildlife resources on privately owned lands and water and to improve public recreational access to these resources. Approved 4-0.

The monthly activities report for the Tourism Department was included with the agenda. The report listed meetings and events attended by Mrs. Worth and staff, along with a list of advertising and promotion efforts made during January. She is anticipating I Love New York funding very soon. There is a meeting later today with County officials to make sure everything is on target for the April 11<sup>th</sup> Bicentennial kick-off. There will be a 40-page supplement in the Finger Lakes Times containing Wayne County facts, tidbits of local history, details on the year-long events, and much more.

Mrs. Worth presented a travel request for herself to attend the Annual West Virginia Fishing, Hunting and Outdoors Sport Show in Morgantown, WV, from March 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>. There is no local cost for attending the event. Approved.

The 2022 Annual Report for the Tourism Department was received and filed. A copy of the report was e-mailed to Supervisors prior to today's meeting. The report included:

- A list of 15 publications the Department developed for promotional programs.
- Noted the \$55,797 the Department received in NYS Matching Funds.
- The Department received 6,736 inquiries from ads placed in various media outlets. The Department's direct mail campaign went out to 3,800 individuals.
- The Department's web site [www.waynecountytourism.com](http://www.waynecountytourism.com) had 6,924 users during 2022. This form of marketing increases every year.
- The local Department supported and/or participated in the Apple Tasting Tour, the Wayne County Fair, Taste of Wayne County and Cycle the Erie Canal Bicycle Tour.
- Four freelance writers wrote, and had published, stories about Wayne County in the past year.

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- The Tourism Department participated in both regional and multi-county promotional programs and had a presence at the County Fair, State Sportsman's Expo, State Canal Conference and International Travel Show, along with many other events throughout the year.

The following transmittals were presented for the Economic Development/Planning Department:

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign an agreement with the Wayne County Industrial Development Agency for payment of their \$329,123 County appropriation for 2023. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign restrictive liens and releases under the Community Development Block Grant Farmworker Housing Safety Program. The \$1 million received for this program was used to replace unsafe farmworker mobile and manufactured housing in the County. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to appoint members to the Wayne County Civic Facility Development Corporation Board of Directors. These members will now be the same as those on the Industrial Development Agency Board. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to appoint Amanda McDonald as an Independent member on the Wayne County Industrial Development Board of Directors. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to appoint Ron Thorn, from the Town of Galen, to the Wayne County Planning Board. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to approve the appointment of Luke DeFisher and Michael Frederes to the Wayne County Agricultural Development Board. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to re-appropriate unspent 2022 funds in the Industry Development Program into the 2023 program budget. The amount of the transfer request is \$902,819. Program funds encourage the extension of public infrastructure so industry can expand and grow, and to attract businesses to the County. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign a one-year extension request from the NYS Small Cities Community Development Block Grant for Microburst Programs. Grants, for up to \$20,000, are provided for development of small business start-ups. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to set the date for a public hearing pursuant to opting out of Real Property Tax Law 487, which provides for a 15-year real property tax exemption for properties, located in the State with renewable energy systems. Mr. Pincelli stated the law exempts solar projects from property taxes, but provides a mechanism for requiring a PILOT. Notification is required in areas where taxing jurisdictions have not opted out, and requires those jurisdictions to respond with

notice requiring the PILOT. Mr. Pincelli is suggesting the County opt out to relieve the notice and response requirement. There are areas in the State where the notice was made and not responded to providing for a full exemption from property taxes and no PILOT. Mr. Groat questioned if this action would be an obstacle to solar project investors. Mr. Pincelli said this was his initial concern, but over the last several years there have been several projects developed in jurisdictions that have opted out; given a stronger familiarity and necessary discussions for local approval. Mr. Groat requested the language and procedures for opting out be sent to all Supervisors for their review and consideration. Approved 4-0.

Discussion was had regarding the loss of farmland, renewable energy development, and PILOT provisions. Additional costs under a PILOT are under consideration for projects developed on particular soil groups (MSG 1-4). Mr. Eygnor stated the need to start to address local concerns on development of energy projects on prime farmland. Mr. Pincelli agreed, and described the updated Farmland Protection Plan and other projects impacted. Consideration of the balance of protecting farmland and accommodating growth and increases in the tax base also need to be looked at.

--Authorization to extend the contract for the County's Comprehensive Housing Study from February 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023. The Project contractor needs additional time to complete their housing needs and market study. Approved 4-0.

--Authorization to pursue a transfer of ownership of the Ontario Midland Railroad to the Wayne County Industrial Development Agency. Since 1981, the Ontario Midland Railroad Corp has operated and maintained County owned railroad property under a lease agreement. Recent discussions and change in railroad ownership have led to review of details and the process required for ongoing asset management. No vote was taken as the County Attorney and Treasurer will present a resolution to the County Finance Committee next week to initiate a review and consideration of transfer and management of the line to the County Industrial Development Agency.

--Authorization to submit a Raise Grant application to the Federal Department of Transportation for up to \$25 million dollars. Mr. Pincelli said funding would be utilize to make improvements to the Ontario Midland Rail Line. Approved 4-0.

Ms. Gerstenslager review the County's shoreline asset prioritization process as completed by the Shoreline Steering Committee. Findings were reviewed at the Public Works Committee meeting earlier today. She and other County representatives attended NYS Department of State Regional Coastal Initiative CLEAR meetings from May – December 2021 to review local assets that would be at risk if Lake Ontario water levels were to greatly change again. The findings could potentially prioritize support from the State and Federal Governments for planning and implementing programs to reduce and/or eliminate economic risk. The 66 sites included in the report were prioritizing according to vulnerability and risk ratings. The top five value scores were for: 1) Infrastructure of Sodus Bay (west), 2) Sodus Bay (north/east) areas, 3) Crescent Beach, 4) Infrastructure for the Port Bay Channel, and 5) Leroy Island Bridge.

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A transmittal was presented requesting authorization to adopt the proposed ranked list of project assets for future planning and funding initiatives for Wayne County shorelines. Approved 4-0.

In other business, Mr. Pincelli said he has yet to hear back from the State regarding the future of the Butler Shock Correctional Facility. Apparently, the State is talking with Bond Counsel regarding the facility.

Mr. Pincelli participated in a number of shoreline dredging meetings with lakefront counties. The State would like counties to work with them on needed dredging projects. The State has yet to submit a proposal to the counties stating what work they intend to perform and the local cost to have it done. Counties are waiting for more information from the State before they proceed with any agreement. There is a need for a Harbor Management Plan, with the level of Lake Ontario changing so much, more debris is being brought into the bays of Wayne County.

The meeting adjourned at 11:31 a.m. The next meeting of the Economic Development/Planning Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, March 8<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.