

Economic Development, Tourism, Housing, Planning & Transit Committee

Regular Meeting Minutes

DATE & TIME: February 4, 2016, 7:00 PM or Immediately Following the Public Works and Capital Projects Committee

LOCATION: Karen L. Binder Library, 6th Floor, COB, Kingston, NY

PRESIDING OFFICER: Chairman James F. Maloney

LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Krista J. Barringer, Deputy Clerk

PRESENT: Legislators Jennifer Schwartz Berky, James Delaune, Ron G. Lapp, Jr., Herbert Litts, III, Mary Beth Maio and Hector S. Rodriguez

ABSENT: None

QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Deputy County Executive Ken Crannell, College Intern Cassandra Burke, League of Women Voters of the Mid Hudson Valley Observation Corps Member Vic Melville, Ulster County Trails Advisory Committee and Ulster County Tourism Advisory Board Representative Kathy Nolan, Director of Tourism Rick Remsnyder, Office of Business Services Director Suzanne Holt, Focus Media Representatives Josh Sommers and Tony Morino

Chairman Maloney called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Motion No. 1 **RESOLVED to Approve the Minutes of January 19, 2016.**

Motion Made By: Legislator Rodriguez

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Delaune

Discussion: None

Roll Call Vote: No

Voting In Favor: Legislators Berky, Delaune, Lapp, Litts, Maio, Maloney and Rodriguez

Voting Against: None

No. of Votes in Favor: 7

No. of Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Approved as Presented

GUEST PRESENTATION: Targeted Industry Analysis and Existing Conditions Analysis – Suzanne Holt, Director, Office of Business Services

Director Holt presented a review of the Economic Development Alliance and its role of business interaction. She highlighted the marketing of the county business community.

Legislator Rodriguez asked percentage of time spent on business marketing versus business expansion or retention. Director Holt replied she spends about 10% of the time on marketing and 90% on expansion and retention activities. She provided an example of the 200+ jobs that were retained at Zumtobel in Highland as it had been in the press. She noted money was found and the company was able to make a 7-year commitment to stay in the county. She provided the example of Precision Flow leaving as not being able to help if they are not asked for assistance.

Director Holt noted she makes an effort to attend quarterly and welcomed calls from the Committee members. She stated "I am always here."

Director Holt stated the contract with the Economic Development Alliance was a public/private partnership. She stated Julie Lonstein is the Chair of the Marketing Committee. She stated in the first year, 2013, they hired Focus Media to brand the county and develop the professional collateral. She stated they developed brochures, redesigned the website and produced a video. She noted, in the second year, they hired Peter Fairweather to do a targeted industry analysis with a technological entrepreneurial campaign at the same time to lure small technology businesses to move to the county.

Director Holt showed the video Techpreneurs: Do Business Differently in Ulster County [<https://youtu.be/gTJcyYVui6M>]

Legislator Rodriguez asked how many businesses contacted her from the tech entrepreneur campaign. Director Holt provided examples of a medical biller and a fashion and NPR business that contacted her last week. She stated "the buzz is real." She provided a summary handout and reviewed the last year of activities. She noted the networking opportunities that have developed for the existing tech community in Ulster County.

Director Holt stated the goals for the 2016 contract with the Economic Development Alliance was to 1) grow the tech entrepreneur sector, 2) expand vertically to the tourist sector with a goal for them to move their businesses here, and 3) focus on the value added food product industry. She noted for the third goal that the farm to table co-packing company is reporting limited capacity and they are analyzing demand and market. She stated they are in discussion with an agribusiness development center.

Director Holt stated they are developing their outreach based on calls received to the office, educational events such as webinars and breakfasts, and maintaining relationships with existing businesses.

Legislator Berky noted the analysis indicated the strategy was still being fleshed out. She noted it did not include the method to determine how they are successful. She stated the Legislature needed to know where the strategy is working and where they might need help. She felt a more detailed strategy would be beneficial. She noted the marketing budget could be used as leverage and provided an example of how the report is thin on strategy. Deputy County Executive Crannell agreed with Legislator Berky and noted the Legislature developed the county's strategy and policies. He stated they were still doing the strategy that had been passed in Ulster Tomorrow. Legislator Berky replied this demonstrated the Ulster Tomorrow goals were very accurate as written.

Director Holt stated Tim Wiederman was meeting with the Towns to determine what they need or want in regards to growth areas. She noted there were big, significant projects all over the County; with some expansion projects. Legislator Berky encouraged open dialogue and communication with the Legislature. She noted it was the first time she had seen the tech marketing video and suggested there be an increase in social media activity. She felt with her connections in New York City, she would have heard back from them regarding a New York City oriented tech campaign video.

Chairman Maloney and Legislator Berky discussed the local municipal perceptions regarding development.

Legislator Delaune stated he was pleased with the sectors the campaign was chasing and commended the presentation.

Legislator Berky asked about a future target of the arts industry. Director Holt and Deputy County Executive Crannell noted the limited resources available limiting the ability to reach other industry segments. Director Holt noted Peter Fairweather's report indicates a phase in of 3 – 5 years.

Legislator Litts noted the possible impact on tourism with the upcoming shut down of the Catskill Aquaduct. Director Holt noted the individual communities affected were identifying alternative water sources. Legislator Litts noted the possible future economic development connection to developing back up water routes that would address the short term water needs of the communities.

Director Holt noted in regards to infrastructure, the Broadband concerns and opportunities raised with the proposed merger of Time Warner Cable and Charter Communications.

Motion Made By: Legislator Rodriguez

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Litts

Text of Motion: **Resolved to approve Resolution No. 18** - Approving The Execution Of A Contract In Excess Of \$50,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Ulster County Economic Development Alliance Inc – Department of Planning

Resolution No. 18 Summary: This Resolution states the Ulster County Legislature has examined the contract with Ulster County Economic Development Alliance for the amount \$150,000.00, and hereby approves the contract in the form as filed with the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature or as modified with the approval of the County Attorney and Legislative Counsel

Discussion:

Legislator Rodriguez motioned to amend, with a friendly amendment from Chairman Maloney, the contract to:

Add Section E. to Schedule A to read as follows:

E. The EDA shall provide the Legislature's Economic Development Committee with reports of activity and expenditure quarterly or at the Committee meeting following the meeting of the Economic Development Agency.

Section D Amendment

D. Program Administration - UCEDA shall provide ~~oversight and administration~~ **administrative support** of County programs including, but not limited to the Revolving Loan Fund, Shovel Ready and Ready-to-Go programs

Legislator Berky seconded the motion.

In response to a question from Legislator Rodriguez, Deputy County Executive Crannell confirmed the EDA spent all but about \$1,000 of last year's contract.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Roll Call Vote: No

Voting In Favor: Legislators Berky, Delaune, Lapp, Litts, Maio, Maloney and Rodriguez
Voting Against: None
No. of Votes in Favor: 7
No. of Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Motion Approved

VOTE ON THE RESOLUTION WITH THE CONTRACT LANGUAGE AS AMENDED:

Roll Call Vote: No
Voting In Favor: Legislators Berky, Delaune, Lapp, Litts, Maio, Maloney and Rodriguez
Voting Against: None
No. of Votes in Favor: 7
No. of Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Approved with the contract language amended

GUEST PRESENTATION: Ulster Tourism/Focus Media – Rick Remsnyder, Director, Ulster County Department of Tourism

Director Remsnyder introduced Focus Media representatives Josh Sommers and Tony Morino as well as Kathy Nolan from the Tourism Advisory Board. He reviewed the activities of the Tourism office located at 20 Broadway on the Strand in Kingston. He noted they began contracting with Focus Media five years ago and that the tourism numbers have been up every year since.

Mr. Sommers provided a brief background on Focus Media and reviewed the handout provided, entitled Ulster County Tourism – February 4, 2016 – Presentation. He showed the video Taste of Craft Beverages – Ulster County [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eougf6izWQk>]

Mr. Sommers noted in 2014, they produced the places to stay and things to do videos; in 2015, they produced a craft distillery and golf video; and in 2016, they will be producing 30-second commercials as well as shorter videos for YouTube advertising that will allow for contextual relevant search activity. Director Remsnyder discussed their cooperative advertising activity for larger county events.

Legislator Berky inquired about the distribution of tourism events being highlighted, including the cooperative nature of the programs and how the decisions were made on what event to highlight. Director Remsnyder provided examples and highlighted their

work with the Ellenville Million group to assist in video production. He discussed the impact of the dual designation that the County has in the Regional Tourism entities.

Director Remsnyder highlighted the Ulster County Tourism Travel Guide had received a service industry advertising award for the sixth year in a row. He noted, other than the website, it was the biggest marketing tool. He noted last year's cover was used by New York State AAA.

Director Remsnyder reported the new Ulster County campaign, the "UC" campaign, received a gold service industry award. Mr. Sommers highlighted the new campaign was targeting a fresh audience. He noted the Ulster County Alive and Experience Ulster County campaigns were already out there and they were able to build upon them across multiple platforms. He noted in 2016, there would be a new UC Alive website. He stated the Facebook goal was for 10,000 likes by the end of 2016. Director Remsnyder indicated the website referral goal was to grow beyond the current 3,300 referrals and to get the actual booking percentages from the referral links. He noted the measurement of success was based on the occupancy numbers, the tourism dollars and the social media hits. Mr. Sommers highlighted the new website would be optimized to work by device. Director Remsnyder stated in 2016 they would produce a new hiking/trail guide and would target the large group/tour industry with anticipated growth on the website and advertising activities.

Legislator Rodriguez inquired where the money would be spent as indicated in the contract's schedule B, media. Mr. Sommers replied they would be increasing the digital services. He noted they anticipated producing a video and indicated they might need to drop the radio advertising. He stated they propose mixing TV commercials with website advertising videos. He noted the digital services were track able. Director Remsnyder noted the difference between the 1010 Wins ads versus the local cable and radio advertising costs. Mr. Morino highlighted the streaming media opportunities.

Legislator Berky asked how they were finding and identifying the target segment. Mr. Sommers replied they utilized Google Ad words which utilized term based searches. He noted the target geography was the New York Metro market. He stated they could track social media referrals through Facebook. He stated in the past year they went from 5,000 likes to 8,000 and that this was a 47% increase with 50% being directed to the Tourism website. He stated they were employing banner advertising that was targeting women as a social demographic.

Legislator Berky asked about benchmarks being built into the contract with understanding of the competition in the industry. Mr. Sommers noted the social media reports that indicated Ulster County was behind Sullivan County, surpassed them, and is now behind them again. He noted they review the number of plays the videos get each

week and that they are seeking a 6% growth in website video views. Director Remsnyder stated he would provide Legislator Berky with the numbers.

Chairman Maloney asked about the tourism dollars. Director Remsnyder stated they were the same or better.

Motion No. 2

Resolution No. 13

February 16, 2016

Motion Made By: Legislator Litts

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Maio

Text of Motion: **Resolved to approve Resolution No. 13** - Approving The Execution Of A Contract In Excess Of \$50,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Focus Media Inc – Department of Tourism

Resolution No. 13 Summary: This Resolution states the Ulster County Legislature has examined the contract with Focus Media Inc for the amount \$313,852.00, and hereby approves the contract in the form as filed with the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature or as modified with the approval of the County Attorney and Legislative Counsel.

Discussion:

Legislator Maio asked how this contract compared to last year's contract. Director Remsnyder replied it was the same within a couple of \$1,000.

Legislator Rodriguez reviewed Schedule B of the contract.

Legislator Delaune requested clarification of items 3 and 4 on schedule B. Director Remsnyder replied the amount would not be expended if commissions were received. Legislator Delaune asked if the retainer amount to the county of 15% was above the contracted amount. Mr. Sommers replied this was within the total contract amount. Director Remsnyder noted they spend up to the not to exceed amount. Mr. Sommers provided a review of typical industry compensation methods.

Roll Call Vote: No

Voting In Favor: Legislators Berky, Delaune, Lapp, Litts, Maio, Maloney and Rodriguez

Voting Against: None

No. of Votes in Favor: 7

No. of Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Approved

Motion Made By: Legislator Rodriguez

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Maloney

Text of Motion: **Resolved to approve Resolution No. 93** - Approving The Execution Of A Contract Amendment Causing The Aggregate Contract Amount To Be In Excess Of \$50,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Next Step Digital LLC – Department of Information Services

Resolution No. 40 Summary: : This Resolution states the Ulster County Legislature has examined the contract amendment with Next Step Digital LLC for the increased amount of \$30,000.00, and hereby approves the contract in the form as filed with the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature or as modified with the approval of the County Attorney and Legislative Counsel.

Discussion:

Legislator Rodriguez discussed requiring Department Heads to be in attendance. Deputy County Executive Crannell stated he was in communication with Legislative Chairman Ronk to solve this issue. Legislator Rodriguez expounded on his concern that neither the Deputy County Executives nor the Department Heads are attending committee meetings to discuss the resolutions being presented.

Roll Call Vote: No

Voting In Favor: Legislators Berky, Delaune, Lapp, Litts, Maio, Maloney and Rodriguez

Voting Against: None

No. of Votes in Favor: 7

No. of Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Approved

New Business

Chairman Maloney reviewed the Ulster County Legislators attendance at the recent New York State Association of Counties conference. He noted he attended a session on Broadband with Legislators Lapp and Loughran. He highlighted the Governor's initiative that was presented at this session and noted the ten regional councils will be distributing the RFPs for this initiative. He stated the initiative was on a fast track with the RFPs coming out on March 1st and required to be back from providers by April 15th. He stated the Governor's initiative was to seek the best value.

Legislator Rodriguez noted the county's Broadband study requested by the Legislature had been put on hold. He stated they know from the State and Time Warner Cable communications that there were errors in the number of the underserved areas. Deputy County Executive Crannell replied this issue was a high priority and that they work working on it weekly. He noted the market was changing rapidly and that nothing had changed since they last reported to the committee. Legislator Berky suggested the goal of accessibility and affordability for the underserved.

Deputy County Executive Crannell thanked the Legislators that were in attendance at the kickoff breakfast for the county's Solarize NY initiative.

Old Business:

None

Adjournment

Motion Made By: Legislator Litts
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Rodriguez
No. of Votes in Favor: 7
No. of Votes Against: 0

TIME: 8:40 PM

Dated the 18th day of February, 2016
Krista J. Barringer, Deputy Clerk

Minutes Approved As Amended on: March 1, 2016