

**ALLEGANY COUNTY BOARD OF LEGISLATORS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE****March 21, 2018**

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 9:31 a.m. by Chairman Curtis W. Crandall

LEGISLATORS PRESENT: Chairman C. Crandall, G. Barnes, J. Burdick (*arrived at 9:40 a.m.*), D. Decker (*arrived at 9:56 a.m.*) W. Dibble (*arrived at 9:35 a.m.*), K. Graves (*arrived at 10:40 a.m.*), B. Harris, J. Ricci, D. Root (*arrived at 10:30 a.m.*), P. Stockin

OTHERS PRESENT: C. Braack, S. Decker, R. Sobeck-Lynch

DEPARTMENTAL PRESENTATIONS:**Employment & Training**

Employment & Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch introduced herself and explained that her office is located down the street from the County Office Buildings in a building belonging to the former church that once housed the County Museum. An additional building just below that is used for training purposes.

Ms. Lynch explained the sources of revenue for her office. They receive revenue from the following sources:

WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act)

- Adult and dislocated workers \$195,000
- Youth \$131,500
- Administrative \$9,000

TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families)

- Summer Youth Employment Program \$163,000

Department of Social Services \$415,500

Division of Youth \$5,000

Allegany County \$35,000

Fund Balance \$85,000 (They don't usually need to use this.)

All of the money received comes through the Allegany-Cattaraugus Workforce Development Board in Olean. Funds are divided between Allegany and Cattaraugus counties based on population.

Ms. Lynch stated that anyone applying for temporary assistance through the Department of Social Services must register with her office. She said they truly want to find employment for these people. The unemployment rate for Allegany County in March is 8.6 percent.

She noted that the TANF money is used for the Summer Youth Employment Program. Her office has reached out to libraries in the County to find youth who might benefit from the program.

Employment & Training partners with several area schools/organizations for educating adults. They work with BOCES, Alfred State, Jamestown Community College, Literacy West, Southern Tier Traveling Teacher, and ACCORD, as well as other organizations.

Legislator Harris, referred to a brochure distributed by Ms. Lynch that contained statistical information about employment in Allegany County. It stated that 28 percent of jobs in Allegany County are in the public sector. He wondered if she knew how that compared to the rest of New York State. Ms. Lynch stated she didn't know but she could get that information for him. Chairman Crandall asked her if she had a list of the top employers in the County. Ms. Lynch listed the following employers in order by size.

1. Otis Eastern
2. Allegany County
3. Alfred State College
4. Alfred University
5. Ljungstrom ARVOS Group
6. Jones Memorial Hospital
7. Dresser-Rand, Siemens Government
8. Allegany Arc
9. Swain (seasonal)
10. Saputo
11. Houghton College
12. Empire Cheese
13. Cuba Memorial Hospital
14. L.C. Whitford
15. Wellsville Manor Care Center
16. ACCORD
17. Highland Park Rehabilitation & Nursing Center
18. Ask Chemicals

(These businesses employ 100 or more in Allegany County. There may be other businesses that have not reported.)

Legislator Barnes asked if the number of employees at Otis Eastern included those employed in Allegany County or in other locations around the Country as well. Ms. Lynch stated that they employ 100 people in Wellsville. Legislator Barnes remarked that many of their employees never see Allegany County. Legislator Dibble stated there are many who work elsewhere and come home to Allegany County on the weekends. Legislator Ricci noted that the brochure stated that 23 percent of Allegany County workers come from other locations (outside of Allegany, Steuben, Cattaraugus, Erie, and Monroe Counties); he wondered how many of the 23 percent are Pennsylvania residents.

Legislator Harris asked how County funding for these programs has changed over the years. Ms. Lynch stated that it hasn't changed much since she has been with the County. If the money isn't used, it goes back to the County. The group discussed the success rate for people finding jobs and staying employed long-term. They talked about the

number of people who cycle back through the system. Ms. Lynch said it's hard to come up with a number of people who come back through her office after finding employment. If they quit their job, there are consequences to any assistance they are receiving. Chairman Crandall asked about the availability of jobs. Ms. Lynch stated they've expanded their search, but they are finding areas with jobs available. Legislator Burdick wondered if the rise in minimum wage has made it more difficult to find jobs. Ms. Lynch said that most employers realize that's what they have to pay. There are a lot of entry level jobs. It's difficult to keep those jobs filled. Her office is working with them to help retain employees. Chairman Crandall asked if the training they provide covers work ethic. Ms. Lynch said they cover that in their employment assessment class. The group discussed the minimum wage going up and how it has impacted local businesses, especially restaurants. Many have noticed it costs more to go out to a restaurant than it previously did. The increase in the cost of wages has been passed on to customers. They talked about the increase in wage expense possibly being a factor in McDonald's in Wellsville going to a more automated system of customer service. The group discussed how customer service and the overall way of doing business has changed.

Historian/Records Management

County Historian Craig Braack gave a brief history on the origin of the position of County Historian. Franklin D. Roosevelt was New York State Governor during the late 1920s. He was a lover of local history and felt it was important to preserve that history. State legislation was enacted during that time requiring municipalities to have a historian. Prior to that, only very large cities would have historians.

Mr. Braack became County Historian in February 1985. From the 1980s through the mid-1990s he had many visitors who would come to the County Museum to look around and also get information for genealogy purposes. The County Museum no longer exists as it was demolished to make room for parking, and with the rise of the internet, he rarely gets a visitor looking for genealogy information. During the last legislative term, the Board voted to lend County historical artifacts to the Allegany County Agricultural Society to store and display at the Allegany County Fairgrounds in Angelica. It is a great venue for visitors to view these items. Mr. Braack also mentioned the museum in Andover which is operated by the Allegany County Historical Society.

Mr. Braack stated that since his official retirement, at which time he went from serving as full-time County Historian to part-time, the number of talks and presentations he gives has been declining. He noted that school curriculums have changed. He hasn't given a presentation in a school classroom in ten years or more. Many other groups which used to request presentations (Granges, Lodges, etc.) have folded. The group discussed the future of local history in the County and how it might be handled.

Legislator Barnes asked Mr. Braack when he was expected to give his next presentation on the Erie Canal. Mr. Braack stated that he wasn't scheduled to give one at this time but that it's a lengthy presentation that might not work in all situations. Legislator Decker remarked on what an asset this is and what an excellent job Mr. Braack has done; he suggested that it might be nice to make an announcement that Mr. Braack is available to give presentations. Chairman Crandall asked Mr. Braack to provide them with a list of his presentations. Legislator Harris asked about digitization of County history. Mr. Braack

stated that he's working on that. He has thousands of slides he's been working on scanning.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Legislator Stockin, seconded by Legislator Decker, and carried at 10:45 a.m. so that the regular standing committee meetings could be held.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah M. Decker, Journal Clerk/Deputy Clerk of the Board
Allegany County Board of Legislators