

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
January 16, 2019

APPROVED
February 20, 2019
ALLEGANY COUNTY
BOARD OF LEGISLATORS

Members Present: D. Root, G. Barnes, J. Burdick, P. Curran, W. Dibble, D. Healy, J. Hopkins, J. Ricci, C. Crandall

Others Present: S. Alsworth, L. Ballengee, D. Bigelow, T. Boyde, D. Decker, K. Dirlam, D. Fanton, K. Graves, G. Hanchett, B. Harris, S. Havey, K. Hooker, C. Knapp, R. Lynch, J. DiPasquale, B. Riehle, T. Ross, T. Shaw, P. Stockin, M. Washer

Media Present: C. Potter – *The Spectator*

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 2:02 p.m. by Planning & Economic Development Committee Chair Debra Root.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Legislator Dibble, seconded by Legislator Hopkins, and carried to approve the Planning & Economic Development Committee minutes of December 19, 2018, per the following requested amendment from Employment & Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch:

Change: *“Ms. Lynch stated, no, they are just doing their jobs.”*

To: *“Ms. Lynch stated, no, they are just doing their jobs, and they do them very well.”*

Armstrong Presentation

Armstrong General Manager John “Kirk” Beaver attended the meeting to provide an update on the status of the NY Broadband Program. Mr. Beaver has been with Armstrong for 34 years and currently operates out of Addison, NY. Armstrong has been in the telephone service industry for over 60 years and has been providing internet for over 21 years. Their average employee has 23 years of experience in the telecom field, assuring homes and communities are serviced by experts that get it done right the first time. Mr. Beaver noted that all Armstrong vehicles will have identification and employees should always be wearing ID badges. They ask that everyone help be the eyes for Armstrong, and if someone is doing something unsafe or something doesn't seem right, they want to know right away so they can correct the problem as soon as possible.

Mr. Beaver stated that the NY Broadband Project will be continuously worked on from summer 2018 through late 2019. The project is covering over 3,200 miles of construction, and they will have many teams moving through all of the build areas. Mr. Beaver briefly discussed project maps and areas that are currently being served, areas that are in process, and areas that are not currently being served. Mr. Beaver indicated they have over 110,000 pole attachments they are working to get permits for. Mr. Beaver noted that Armstrong contractors are going to bring a significant amount of money into the economy over the next year and a half needing food, gas, lodging, etc.

Legislator Graves asked if they are aerial or burial. Mr. Beaver indicated that burying lines is very expensive; however, poles are costly too. Legislator Harris asked when they expect to be installing in the Alfred area. Mr. Beaver stated it all depends on how the rest of winter goes; however, he anticipates to be in the Alfred area around springtime. Legislator Harris asked if they anticipate springtime for Grove, Burns, and Allen as well. Mr. Beaver stated they have a hub already in place in Canaseraga, Alfred, and Fillmore. They are just waiting to install fiber in them, and they have an aggressive team on this project. Legislator Barnes asked what the average home is getting for internet speed. Mr. Beaver stated they offer different packages ranging from \$59.95/month for 25 Mbps download and 4 Mbps upload to \$79.95/month for 100 Mbps both download and upload. Mr. Beaver noted they also offer a discount bundle package for both telephone and 100 Mbps internet for \$99.95/month. Legislator Barnes asked if they offer TV service. Mr. Beaver stated not at this; however, they do have ideas for down the road. Legislator

Fanton stated he recently spoke with an Armstrong customer out of Whitesville who receives 100 Mbps internet speed, and they are very happy with it. Committee Chair Root asked if they will be hiring any local people to help fill out the 40 additional teams they need. Mr. Beaver stated the teams are ready made and brought in; however, Armstrong will be in need of techs, adding they do have job postings on Indeed.com, and recently they hired two individuals who live in Allegany County. Committee Chair Root asked how someone goes about seeing if their house will be in a service area. Mr. Beaver stated they should visit <http://armstrongny.com/Home/Map> where they will be prompted to enter their address. From there the project map will zoom to their address, and if they are in a shaded area they are eligible for service. Legislator Dibble asked what their solution is in the event of a power outage for the elderly who have lifelines. Mr. Beaver stated they have battery backups they can provide. Legislator Ricci asked what the timeline is for the Cuba and Friendship areas, stating he keeps receiving questions from constituents, and he has no answer to provide them. Mr. Beaver stated they are currently looking at a piece of property in Cuba to place a hub.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Allegany County Economic and Industrial Development Agency Executive Director Craig Clark was unable to attend the meeting but submitted his monthly report to the committee for review. Dr. Clark is in Albany attending the NYS Economic Development Conference.

Crossroads Development Project

Planning Director Kier Dirlam stated they are receiving bids back for the fuel tanks and, they are being reviewed by the environmental consultant to make sure they are complete. Once that is done, they will move forward with the removal of the tanks and disposing of any materials.

Waterline Project

Mr. Dirlam stated that bids for the Waterline Project are out and due back February 4, adding there will be a pre-bid meeting next week for any contractors that would like to meet with the IDA and engineer.

Siemens – Dresser Rand

Dr. Clark remains in contact with Siemens and Curtiss Wright to look at their long-term needs to make sure we keep jobs here in Allegany County.

Tall Pines ATV Park

Mr. Dirlam stated they are having some preliminary talks with Tall Pines ATV Park to look at making the County a future site to bring more ATV activity into the County.

Tracewell Building

Mr. Dirlam stated they have seen some interest expressed in the Tracewell building, noting that the building is in surprisingly good shape, and Seneca Nation has done an excellent job maintaining it.

Hemp Facility

Legislator Harris referenced the \$150 million and 400 jobs commitment being made by Canopy Growth towards a hemp facility in Binghamton, NY. Legislator Harris stated as New York State begins to ramp up the legalization of recreational marijuana and increasingly subsidizing

industrial hemp, he hopes that Allegany County is included in those discussions to bring facilities like that into the County. Legislator Harris continued that this is an excellent example as to why, they as a legislature, should stay on the sidelines when it comes to taking a stance on whether or not they are in favor of legalizing recreational marijuana. Legislator Harris believes they may cause themselves damage by coming out too strongly against the concept, and while he is not necessarily in favor of coming out in support of its legalization, he thinks as a County, they are better off watching from a distance. Mr. Dirlam stated our local Cornell Cooperative is working on a hemp project to bring a facility of some sort into the County. Committee Chair Root clarified that the facility Mr. Dirlam is referring to is industrial hemp only which will produce a product to be used for other purposes.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Planning Director Kier Dirlam attended the meeting and submitted his monthly report to the committee for review.

Planning Board Annual Dinner

Mr. Dirlam stated the Planning Board Annual Dinner will be held Wednesday, January 16, at the Off Duty Club in Belmont with guest speaker Houghton College President Shirley Mullen.

Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Dirlam indicated that the Comprehensive Plan is about 80 percent complete, and it is his intent to get a draft to the Board mid-spring with final approval by the end of the summer. Legislator Hopkins asked what group is reviewing the plan. Mr. Dirlam stated the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Group that was created by the Board. Chairman Crandall asked what the requirement is for a public hearing on the update. Mr. Dirlam stated they held public forums in the first and third round. There were three sessions held, but unfortunately, the turnout was not good with only five people attending.

Tourism Website

Mr. Dirlam stated they are working out some bugs on the new Tourism website, and he plans to present it at the next meeting. Committee Chair Root noted that the website is currently live for those who would like to view it.

Spectrum

Mr. Dirlam indicated he recently had a meeting with a gentleman representing Spectrum who is hoping for more expansion throughout the County. Legislator Dibble asked if they have looked at the difference in cost between Spectrum and Armstrong services. Mr. Dirlam indicated they will more than likely be very similar in price.

TOURISM DEPARTMENT

Greater Allegany County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Gretchen Hanchett attended the meeting and submitted her monthly report to the committee for review.

Visitor Engagement Academy

Ms. Hanchett stated the training modules are complete, and they are in the process of reviewing and fine tuning the training program.

New York's Travel Expert

Ms. Hanchett stated that New York Travel Expert Josiah Brown is currently reviewing their Tourism marketing plan and budget to make sure everything coincides, and will come back with his suggestions on their next steps.

Legislative Breakfast

The 2019 Legislative Breakfast will be held Friday, January 25, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Reinhold Campus Center Dining Hall at Houghton College. Those who wish to attend should RSVP by January 21 at www.houghton.edu/legislative-breakfast, or by calling 585-567-9210. There is a \$12 registration fee that includes breakfast. Legislator Hopkins encouraged any new legislators who have not attended a Legislative Breakfast to try as they are very informative and a great opportunity to ask questions.

EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING DEPARTMENT

Employment and Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch attended the meeting and submitted her monthly report to the committee for review.

Job Fair

Ms. Lynch stated there will be an upcoming job fair held at Crossroads. Fifteen businesses, all with openings, will be attending, and a flyer will be sent out soon.

Kmart

Ms. Lynch stated they will be meeting with the Department of Labor and Kmart staff on February 15. Committee Chair Root asked if the 88 employees being affected is correct. Ms. Lynch stated that is also the number they are seeing.

Employment & Training Assistant

Employment & Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch requested permission to fill one full-time Employment & Training Assistant (AFSCME, Grade 12, Step: 2). This position is at the front desk in the Resource Room and will conduct initial interviews, counseling, and job development. The annual salary of this position is \$37,054.65 with benefits estimated at \$9,596. This position is funded 10 percent with Federal funds and 90 percent "other (DSS)" funds. This request was approved on a motion made by Legislator Healy, seconded by Legislator Hopkins, and carried.

Refer to Ways and Means

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:54 p.m. following a motion by Legislator Barnes, seconded by Legislator Ricci, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Meghan Washer, Confidential Secretary to Clerk of the Board
Allegany County Board of Legislators