

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**February 21, 2018****Not Approved**

March 21, 2018

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: T. Boyde, C. Clark, D. Decker, K. Dirlam, L. Gridley, G. Hanchett, B. Harris, S. Havey, K. Hollis, R. Hollis, M. Johnsen, C. Knapp, R. Lynch, J. Rayeski, J. Rayeski, Jr., B. Riehle, T. Ross, R. Shayler, P. Stockin, M. Washer

Media Present: C. Potter – *Wellsville Daily Reporter*

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 2:03 p.m. by Planning & Economic Development Committee Chair Debra Root.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Legislator Dibble, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried to approve the Planning & Economic Development Committee minutes for January 17, 2018.

Armstrong Communications

Armstrong Communications General Manager John Rayeski attended the meeting and presented to the committee their recent project that partners with the New York Broadband Project and Governor Cuomo to expand broadband internet to portions of Western New York that are considered underserved or unserved by other providers. Armstrong will be able to provide up to 1 GB of high-speed internet as well as Wi-Fi and home telephone service. This project will be worked on continuously through 2018 covering over 2,000 miles of construction with many teams moving through eleven areas for phases one and two.

Mr. Rayeski, who has been the General Manager for the last 45 years provided some history of his company. Armstrong Communications, a family owned business, has been in the telephone service industry for over 60 years and has been providing internet for over 20 years. They remain committed to their core values of enhanced customer service, the integrity of their systems, and an average employee has 23 years of experience in the telecom field.

Mr. Rayeski presented a project field map that represents approximately 1,500 miles of additional fiber that Armstrong has applied for and anticipates being awarded. This phase will allow them to serve more than 10,000 homes. Mr. Rayeski discussed their scope of services as well as what to expect to see from them throughout the County. All contractors and employees will have photo ID and badges and will be driving trucks that have signage displaying their logo.

Mr. Rayeski discussed the effect this project will have on the County's economic development stating if they accept phase 3 of this project, there will be hundreds of contractors throughout the County placing in excess of 3,000 miles of fiber. These contractors will need a place to eat, lodging, a place to fuel their trucks, and it will all be money spent in Allegany County. Mr. Rayeski continued that they recently bought a warehouse in Belfast, NY, and are also looking at a property near Seneca Nation to accommodate their plans of adding to their staff.

Committee Chair Root asked how long phase 3 will take to complete. Mr. Rayeski stated approximately one year; however, there could be a mandate placed that would require it to be done sooner. Mr. Rayeski noted that in order to use the state shared grant funds, they are only allowed to build and bid on census blocks where a provider has stated they will not or do not serve. To check your eligibility to receive services from Armstrong, visit www.armstrongny.com and enter your address in the Project Map. The website also contains packages and pricing for those eligible to receive services. Legislator Decker asked if they also offer cable. Mr. Rayeski

stated the grant only allows the funds to be used for broadband and telephone service; however, once it's built, with their own money they can use the fiber for cable. Committee Chair Root thanked Armstrong Communications for attending the meeting and providing an overview of their project.

Workforce Development Board Agreement

Clerk of the Board Brenda Rigby Riehle stated the Workforce Development Board agreement needs to be revised due to the unfortunate passing of the Cattaraugus County Chairman. This request was approved on a motion made by Legislator Dibble, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

Economic Development/Industrial Development Agency

Allegany County Economic and Industrial Development Agency Executive Director Craig Clark attended the meeting and submitted his monthly report to the committee for review. Dr. Clark introduced the members of the Industrial Development Agency Board that attended the meeting. Michael Johnsen, Chairman of the Board, Randy Shayler, Village of Wellsville Mayor, and Legislator Judy Hopkins. Rich Ewell, who also sits the board, was not able to attend the meeting.

Dr. Clark stated they are making good progress with Site Selectors, the Crossroads Development Project, as well as with PM Research. Dr. Clark noted that PM Research anticipates hiring 14 people in the first year and up to 70 in the following years, adding it's a great addition to our County.

Legislator Hopkins stated that she has received a lot of positive feedback on the Crossroads developer meeting and thanked Dr. Clark for hosting it.

Dr. Clark addressed the announcement of Dresser-Rand closing within the next two years, stating its awful news for the Wellsville community, the County, as well as the families and employees associated with it. Dr. Clark has spoken with our Federal and State Legislators, as well as Invest Buffalo Niagara regarding ways to assist us. Dr. Clark continued that plan A is to have part, if not all stay, with plan B being to find a company to occupy the facility. Dr. Clark went on to say that the one thing that is needed the most is a workforce which is a big highlight in this County. We have a highly skilled workforce from machinists to design engineers, and companies who are looking for available facilities like Dresser-Rand are not going to find a skilled workforce like ours anywhere else. Legislator Decker asked about the 250 employees that will be affected. Dr. Clark indicated that there are just over 300 employees, and the 250 employees affected are shop and manufacturing staff.

Planning Director, Kier Dirlam

Planning Director Kier Dirlam attended the meeting and submitted his monthly report to the committee for review. Mr. Dirlam congratulated Michelle Denhoff, Planning & Development Specialist, for completing the Leadership Allegany Program, stating it helped her grow in a positive manner that will pay dividends not only in their office, but with other endeavors throughout the County. Mr. Dirlam stated the shared services contractor is now in full swing, and they are working to schedule meetings with the towns and villages in the coming months.

Tourism

Greater Allegany Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Gretchen Hanchett attended the meeting and submitted her monthly report to the committee for review. Ms. Hanchett stated they held a press conference on February 16 where they became the media. Equipment was

brought in from Scott Productions, and they went live on the internet to make it known that they are in a Canadian marketing plan that will be radio, print, and digital advertising with several other counties. Ms. Hanchett noted that both Canadian and Buffalo stations tuned in. Ms. Hanchett stated the Tri-State Outdoor Expo in Pittsburgh was a good show for them to attend. Individuals were very interested in what our area has to offer (Swain, Tall Pines, hunting, fishing...etc.) and five people asked for realtor information. Ms. Hanchett noted that the cyber-security workshop on February 15 was well worth taking, and something important to share with employees.

Marketing and Advertising Plan

Greater Allegany Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Gretchen Hanchett discussed her three-year marketing plan with the committee. Ms. Hanchett indicated that this plan is not set in stone, and as things change, so will the plan. The following were highlighted as goals and visions of the plan:

- Strengthen the County's reputation as an active, vibrant place to visit.
- Increase first time visitors to our County.
- Develop and increase destination packages for visitors to extend their stay.
- Collaborate with Economic Development efforts in promoting Allegany County as a great place to visit and live.

2018 Annual Tourism Advertising Plan

Mrs. Hanchett also discussed her 2018 annual tourism advertising plan and highlighted the following goals:

- Promote a more positive image for Allegany County.
- Attend regional, state, and County travel shows, conferences, consumer shows, and festivals.
- Develop promotional campaigns.
- Develop and implement a digital marketing and social media plan.

Committee Chair Root congratulated Ms. Hanchett for putting these plans together, adding they are strategic thinking plans, and we will build into it as we go along.

Employment and Training

Employment and Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch attended the meeting and submitted her monthly report to the committee for review. Ms. Lynch stated business after hours will be held at the Welding & Testing Certification Center in Wellsville, NY. Legislator Barnes asked for an explanation of the 647 front door traffic referenced on the monthly report. Ms. Lynch stated that is how many people came in, adding it's a variety of people ranging from looking for a job or being mandated to come.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:58 p.m. following a motion by Legislator Dibble, seconded by Legislator Ricci, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

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