

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

July 17, 2019

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

Others Present: D. Bigelow, J. Bunk, D. Decker, K. Dirlam, D. Fanton, T. Glass, K. Graves, B. Harris, S. Havey, C. Knapp, R. Lynch, D. McDonnell, A. McKay, B. Riehle, T. Ross, P. Stockin, M. Washer

Media Present: C. Potter – *The Spectator*, C. Dutton – *Cuba Patriot*

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 Ricci, seconded by Legislator Burdick, and carried to approve the Planning & Economic Development Committee minutes of June 19, 2019.

New York State Department of Labor Market Analyst Presentation

NYS Department of Labor WNY Regional Economist Timothy Glass attended the meeting to briefly discuss the labor market information for Allegany County. Labor market information (LMI) refers to a variety of data associated with the supply and demand for workers such as information on the labor force, employers, industries, occupations, wages, and skills, etc.

Mr. Glass stated there are two monthly economic surveys which are the principal sources of monthly labor market information in every state as well as the nation. Mr. Glass focused his discussion on the two surveys; Current Employment Statistics survey and the Current Population survey.

Current Employment Statistics Survey

Mr. Glass stated that each month, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics surveys approximately 18,000 businesses of all sizes in New York State. This survey is designed to produce estimates of the number of payroll jobs with significant geographic and industry detail, and each job, whether full-time or part-time, is counted once. The key principal to this survey is to count jobs, not people. For example, if a person holds three part-time jobs, they are counted three times in this specific survey. Mr. Glass noted that both self-employed individuals and the agriculture industry are excluded from this survey. Cindy Dutton representing *The Cuba Patriot* asked why agriculture is excluded. Mr. Glass stated historically the industry has been excluded due to the fact that most working in that industry are relatives, hours are skewed, and some workers are as young as 14 or 15 years old. Committee Chair Root asked why self-employed workers are excluded if they are actually working. Mr. Glass stated they make up a very small percentage of the survey so the NYS Department of Labor has excluded them.

Mr. Glass presented the committee with two graphs showing the history of Allegany County non-farm employment as well as private sector employment dating back to May 1990. Mr. Glass noted that non-farm employment is both government and private sector jobs combined. In 2014 and 2015, Allegany County non-farm employment peaked at 15,900 and has since declined to 15,100 in 2019. Mr. Glass referred to the private sector employment for Allegany County stating that numbers also peaked in 2014 at 11,400 and have since declined to 10,600 in 2019.

Current Population Survey

Mr. Glass continued his presentation discussing the current population survey where approximately 3,100 households are surveyed in New York State every month by place of residence. Data from this survey is used in conjunction with the current employment survey as well as unemployment insurance claims to develop statistical models that estimate local area unemployment statistics. Statistics including employed, unemployed, or not in the labor force are based on a person's place of residence. For example, if a New Jersey resident works in New York City, they are counted once in the current employment survey for working in New York State, but are also counted once in the New Jersey current population survey based on their place of residence. Mr. Glass stated in order to be counted as part of the labor force a person must have actively looked for work in the preceding four weeks, and be currently available for work. Mr. Glass noted that minors younger than 16 years old are considered not in the labor force.

Mr. Glass continued that the civilian labor force excludes certain groups such as members of the military on active duty and persons confined to institutions such as nursing homes and prisons. Individuals who do not have a job and don't want one (i.e., full-time homemakers) as well as those who stopped looking (discouraged workers) are also excluded from the labor force.

Alternative Measures of Labor Underutilization

Mr. Glass stated there are six different measures of unemployment; U-1 to U-6, and the NYS Department of Labor primarily focuses on U-3 which is the total unemployed, as a percent of the civilian labor force. Legislator Harris referred to the U-5 measure and asked what a marginally attached worker is. Mr. Glass stated it is someone who works part-time, is underemployed, or not working up to their full potential, experience, and knowledge.

Allegany County Labor Force

Mr. Glass referenced two graphs: Allegany County Labor Force and Allegany County Employed dating back to May 1990. In 2010, the County's labor force peaked at 24,600 and declined rapidly to 18,900 in 2019. Mr. Glass attributed this decline to the "baby boomers" who are retiring, noting that businesses are still going strong in the area, but retirees are affecting our numbers. Allegany County's employment numbers peaked from 2010 to 2013 at 22,600, and have also significantly declined to 18,000 in 2019. Legislator Barnes commented on what excellent reports these are and asked if there is a reason for the significant reduction in our numbers over the last four years. Mr. Glass stated there is no definitive reason; however, he believes the "baby boomers" retiring in addition to people leaving the area are attributing to the reduction. Legislator Barnes asked how our numbers compare to neighboring counties. Mr. Glass stated of the five counties he covers, Niagara, Allegany, Cattaraugus, and Chautauqua are all down, noting that it appears to be a rural trend, and people are starting to gravitate back to city living. Legislator Barnes stated that our local plants are not employing people like they have in years past, and we haven't had anything come in to replace them. Legislator Barnes noted that it was a "real kick in the rear-end" when NYS outlawed fracking which would have been a boom to the Southern Tier.

Allegany County Age Distribution

Mr. Glass went on to discuss the County's age distribution chart that comes from the 2010 Census stating that our biggest age distribution is 15 to 24 years' old which can be attributed to our colleges. The next highest age distribution are those 75 years and older. Mr. Glass stated that projections from the census bureau indicate a decrease in population over the next 20+ years which is due to our aging population. Mr. Glass noted that there is good news in that the 15 to 44 age range will begin to steadily increase. Legislator Hopkins asked what data the projected

decrease in population is based on. Mr. Glass stated historical data and computations are taken into consideration, adding these reports are generated from a Cornell program on applied demographics.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Planning Director Kier Dirlam attended the meeting and submitted his monthly report to the committee for review. Mr. Dirlam stated the next Planning Board will be held on Wednesday, July 24, at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Dirlam briefly highlighted projects he continues to work on, and announced a Waterline pre-construction meeting that will be held on Friday, July 19, at 9:00 a.m. at the Crossroads Center. Mr. Dirlam stated they have a Summer Youth Employment Summer Intern in their office. She is doing great work, and Mr. Dirlam always appreciates the help.

Economic Development Administration (EDA) Project Priorities

Mr. Dirlam stated the Alfred Center for Technology Transfer Project and Crossroads Development Utility Project have been named the 2019 Economic Development Administration (EDA) Project Priorities. A motion was made by Legislator Healy, seconded by Legislator Hopkins, and carried to approve the Alfred Center for Technology Transfer and Crossroads Development Utility projects as the 2019 Economic Development Administration (EDA) Project Priorities. Mr. Dirlam indicated that committee approval is adequate, and it is not necessary for the Board to adopt a resolution making these designations.

Request to Fill Office Aide

Mr. Dirlam requested permission to fill one temporary Office Aide (Non-Union, \$11.10 – \$15.00 per hour). This position is necessary to augment their workforce and will perform and assist staff with current projects, allowing full-time employees to perform other duties. The annual salary of this position is \$5,040 and is not eligible for benefits. This position is funded 100 percent with County funds. Mr. Dirlam indicated they have a candidate with excellent credentials who is willing to come and work full-time from the end of August until Thanksgiving. Committee Chair Root asked what the individual's credentials are. Mr. Dirlam stated they are coming from Chicago and have their Bachelor's in Planning with a certificate in GIS. Legislator Graves asked if this position is in the Budget, and Mr. Dirlam stated, yes. This request was approved on a motion made by Legislator Burdick, seconded by Legislator Ricci, and carried. **Refer to Ways and Means**

EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING DEPARTMENT

Employment and Training Director Reita Sobeck-Lynch attended the meeting and submitted her monthly report to the committee for review. Legislator Stockin thanked Ms. Lynch for spelling out the acronyms in her monthly report stating it makes the report much easier to read through.

Summer Youth Employment Program

Ms. Lynch stated they have 60 youth located in 41 locations throughout the County. They started work on July 8, and things are going well.

Job Fair/Open Recruitment

Ms. Lynch stated there will be a job fair on Saturday, August 10, at the David A. Howe Library in Wellsville, NY.

The U.S. Census Bureau will be holding an open recruitment at the Employment & Training Office on August 7 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 pm.

Job Losses

Legislator Barnes referred to the three individuals on Ms. Lynch's report who were fired and asked if there is a way to track the reasoning behind their termination in case future employers want to know more about who they are hiring. Ms. Lynch stated they do not track that information; however, they can access it if they needed to.

Request to Fill Senior Employment & Training Counselor due to Vacancy

Ms. Lynch requested permission to fill one full-time Employment & Training Counselor (AFSCME, Grade 17, Step: Base – 7) due to a vacancy. All counselors have a full workload, and the increase in funding received requires the increase of services that cannot be provided by current employees. This position is needed to assist in meeting the WIOA and DSS contractual obligations for services. The annual salary of this position is estimated between \$40,611 and \$50,989 with benefits estimated between \$17,361 and \$21,798. This position is funded 30 percent with Federal funds and 70 percent with DSS funds. This request was approved on a motion made by Legislator Dibble, seconded by Legislator Curran, and carried. **Refer to Ways and Means**

Request to Fill Senior Employment & Training Counselor due to Retirement

Ms. Lynch requested permission to fill one full-time Employment & Training Counselor (AFSCME, Grade 17, Step: Base – 7) due to a retirement. All counselors have a full workload, and the increase in funding received requires the increase of services that cannot be provided by current employees. This position is needed to assist in meeting the WIOA and DSS contractual obligations for services. The annual salary of this position is estimated between \$40,611 and \$50,989 with benefits estimated between \$17,361 and \$21,798. This position is funded 100 percent with DSS funds. This request was approved on a motion made by Legislator Dibble, seconded by Legislator Ricci, and carried. **Refer to Ways and Means**

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. Ms. Hanchett briefly highlighted events she has recently attended.

Top Priorities

Ms. Hanchett stated they continue to work on their top two priorities. The 25 Must Do's is currently at 30, and they are working to get it down to 25. A2D Engagement Journey has notified Ms. Hanchett that they are third on the list, and she hopes to be launching it in the next couple of months.

Home & Sports Expo

Ms. Hanchett stated the Allegany County Home & Sports Expo will be held October 5 – 6 at the Alfred State College Wellsville Campus. Admission is free to the public, and there will be 50 booths as well as beer, wine, and specialty brew tastings.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Allegany County Economic Developer 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 attending a meeting in Washington, D.C., with his opioid committee. Mr. Dirlam indicated they are happy with how things are progressing at Crossroads, and they hope things keep moving positively.

Waterline Project

Mr. Dirlam reminded the committee of the Waterline Project pre-construction meeting that will be held on Friday, July 19, at 9:00 a.m. at the Crossroads Center. Legislator Barnes asked if the construction officially begins on Friday, July 19. Mr. Dirlam indicated it will begin very soon after July 19. Legislator Healy stated he will not be able to attend this meeting; however, he will be there in spirit and wishes he could make it.

Hotel Development

Legislator Barnes asked for an update on the hotel development and whether or not the original developer is still in the picture. Mr. Dirlam stated they continue to talk with the original developer who is still in play; however, they continue to look for assistance. Legislator Barnes asked if the new developer is fully funded. Mr. Dirlam stated that is currently getting worked out, adding until something is real and ready to be announced, he does not want to go any further than that. Legislator Havey asked if the July 12 hotel development meeting was productive. Mr. Dirlam stated it was, adding it made people smile.

Kmart Facility

Legislator Havey asked if there are any new updates on the Kmart site in Wellsville. Mr. Dirlam stated at this time there is nothing new and reminded the committee that it took the Olean Kmart site 18 months to fill. Committee Chair Root stated that Dr. Clark continues to meet with the Whitford Corporation.

Planning Board Appointment

Chairman Crandall plans to appoint Robert Thompson of Scio (District II, Amity) to fill the unexpired three-year term of William Emrick as a member of the Allegany County Planning Board effective August 12, 2019, and expiring December 31, 2021. This appointment was approved on a motion made by Legislator Dibble, seconded by Legislator Healy, and carried. **Prepare Resolution**

Broadband Update

County Administrator Debbie McDonnell stated that the Broadband Committee has met to look at the history of the Broadband Project and where it stands today. The next Broadband meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 24, and they plan to lay out where we are and how we're going to move forward. Committee Chair Root asked what kind of movement has been made on a maintenance agreement. Ms. McDonnell stated that as of today, she has agreed to reach out to CONNX to look at the proposal and ask for updated pricing. Ms. McDonnell also wants to look for other providers; however, the equipment and software is proprietary so they will more than likely have to go with CONNX. Ms. McDonnell continued that the maintenance agreement is a high priority to have in place so our systems are protected and someone is responding to any emergencies we may have.

Trails Task Force Update

Legislator Hopkins asked for an update on the Trails Task Force meetings. Committee Chair Root stated they have met three times and have invited two to three trail systems to each meeting to present their wants and needs. So far, the task force has met with the DEC, ATV trails, horse trails, the Greenway as well as the Genesee River Wilds, and they hope to meet with the snowmobilers and mountain bikers next. Ms. Root stated at this point the task force is fact finding to see where everyone is and how we can work cohesively to put together a comprehensive trail system for the County.

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 Barnes, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

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