

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & ENERGY COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN ROOM #318
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

Members: Chairwoman Scuccimarra, Legislators Gross & LoBue

Monday 6:30 P.M. November 18, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by Chairwoman Scuccimarra who requested Legislator Gross lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Chairwoman Scuccimarra and Legislators Gross and LoBue were present.

**Item #3 - Approval of Minutes – September 9, 2013
October 4, 2013**

The minutes were approved as submitted.

**Item # 4 - Update/Doing Business with Putnam County and the Empire State
Purchasing Group/Alex Mazzotta**

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated the seminar was held on October 24, 2013. She stated it was well attended, although she would have liked to see more.

Director of Purchasing Alex Mazzotta stated a PowerPoint Presentation was given at the seminar and the presentation was previously used by Rockland County. He stated he had attended their seminar, which is held annually and thought it was worthwhile, so he modified the PowerPoint to pertain to Putnam County. He stated the vendors who were in attendance had a lot of questions answered and left with a better understanding of how to do business with the County. Specifically, he stated the vendors learned about the laws around doing business with the County and how to get involved. He stated in his opinion it went well.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated a few months ago a gentleman came to a meeting with questions about the process of getting on the State bid list, and this was a topic covered by the seminar. She also stated the PowerPoint is on the County website.

Director Mazzotta stated that once the PowerPoint is taken off the main page of the website it will be placed under the Purchasing Department's webpage, so it will be accessible at all times. He also stated that a goal he had set for 2014 is to re-vamp the website and make it more user-friendly.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated she would like to make the seminar an annual event.

President of Putnam County Chambers of Commerce Bill Nulk thanked Director Mazzotta and stated he did a great job and many vendors continued the conversation once the formal discussion was over.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated she wished more municipalities were in attendance. She stated she followed up with letters to local businesses explaining the seminar.

President of Putnam County Economic Development Corporation Meghan Taylor also stated Director Mazzotta did a great job with the seminar. She stated anyone that had a question received an answer and the PowerPoint was very clear and she felt everyone left with a clear understanding of the process of doing business with Putnam County. She stated the EDC would have no problem hosting the seminar in the future. She stated the goal was to have a workshop that was interactive, and that goal was reached. She further stated the feedback she received was all positive.

**Item # 5 - Putnam County Economic Development Corp./President Meghan Taylor
a) Update/PC EDC Projects**

President Taylor stated she does not have much of an update for the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) as the State is still reviewing it, however she stated there will be an event held in mid-December where the awards will be given. She stated once she knows the exact date she will share the information with the Committee. She stated CFA applicants were contacted by multiple people within the state to verify information and things of that nature, which she felt meant the applications from Putnam are being looked at. She stated the Bull and Barrel Brew Pub that is being constructed in Brewster is coming along great. She stated approximately \$1 million is being spent on the renovation. She stated the Brew Pub will create 35 new jobs. She also stated there will be two soft openings in the first quarter of 2014 prior to the grand opening to the public. One soft opening will be for Elected Officials. She stated they are currently smoothing out some issues regarding signage in the Town of Southeast. She feels this will be a great tourist destination for the County.

Legislator Gross questioned if beer will be produced on site.

President Taylor stated it is a multifaceted operation where onsite there will be a restaurant, a brewery, and they have partnered with a distillery in Westchester that will distill their own specialty liquor.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated she is looking forward to the completion of this project.

President Taylor stated one of the priority projects in Brewster, Clear Solution Labs are moving forward and are looking and have an option on the former Watson Pharmaceutical building in Brewster. She stated they are waiting for the mid-December announcement from the State.

Legislator LoBue questioned if this was the window company.

President Taylor stated this company is the cosmetic manufacturer. She stated 250 jobs will be created at this company and there has been \$35 million in capital investment. She stated the IDA has been helpful in this project. She also stated another project, the GFS-Armaclad, the window company Legislator LoBue brought up earlier is experiencing a gap in funding. She stated this project will create 100-135 jobs. She stated the total capital investment for this project is \$13 million. She stated she also had an update for the Brewster redevelopment project. She stated the EDC has been meeting regularly to go over the comprehensive plan review for the village. She stated a lot of progress has been made in a short period of time.

Legislator LoBue stated the Village of Brewster has the final say on what goes on there. She questioned what their plan is.

President Taylor stated there is a committee that has been meeting since the beginning of the summer called Envision Brewster and was formed at the onset of the Village of Brewster being deemed an opportunity area. She stated there is also a Comp Plan Committee that has formed through the Village Board that is comprised of people with different areas of expertise.

Legislator LoBue questioned when an award would be given.

President Taylor stated the information she had received from the State indicated it will be in the middle of December. She also stated the Crossroads 312 retail project is the one to take place at the junction of 312 and Interstate 84. She stated the project will include a 148,000 square foot retail box, a 7,000 square foot restaurant, a 3,000 square foot bank, and either a 28,000 square foot retail box or a 150-room four story hotel. Throughout the project, there would be 150 construction jobs, 260 permanent jobs, and numerous traffic improvements to the area.

Legislator LoBue questioned if the hotel was capped at four floors.

President Taylor stated the feedback from the town board showed that they did not want it to be visible from Interstate 84.

Legislator LoBue stated a 150-room hotel is better than not having a hotel at all.

President Taylor stated as part of this project, the traffic improvements being discussed are great. She stated the improvements under consideration are at Route 6 and 312, North Brewster Road and 312, and Independence Way and 312. These improvements include widening roads, creating turning lanes, and placement of state of the art traffic lights.

Legislator LoBue stated Independence Way and 312 is the site of many traffic accidents.

Legislator Gross stated a key problem is the bridge over Interstate 84, which would require the State to add lanes. He also stated coming westbound on I-84 to exit 19, the road would come down the hill and lead to a second entrance. The problem here is the homes there and the residents' concern with the visibility of the lights from the businesses. He also stated Putnam County does not have a hotel.

President Taylor stated along with the construction of a hotel, opportunities then arise to hold events there such as corporate meetings and things of that nature.

Legislator LoBue stated having the hotel by I-84 is vital.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated the hotel would also keep tourists in Putnam County rather than them staying in Connecticut or Westchester.

Legislator Oliverio questioned what the status was on the hotel off Route 6.

Legislator Gross stated last he had heard it was going to become a Quality Inn Plus, however there was a lawsuit that settled recently. He stated there was an issue with some DEP items restricting the size of the original plan.

President Taylor stated the lawsuit Legislator Gross was referring to was settled within the last two weeks. She stated they are looking to move forward. She stated the need for a hotel has been evident since she was hired. She stated the EDC is in the process of creating a marketing packet to be sent to hotel establishments with the need from local businesses that will be bringing in individuals from out of town in order to show the demand for a hotel in the County.

Legislator Othmer stated the hotel off of Route 6 should be packed due to kids coming to the area to play hockey. He stated as of now, since there is no local option, they stay in Danbury.

Legislator Albano questioned if the same packet will be applied to the hotel that was proposed for Carmel.

President Taylor stated that is correct.

Legislator Albano questioned if the building that housed Watson Labs was occupied.

President Taylor stated that it is occupied by Silarx. She stated this company was awarded funding in the second round of CFA funding.

Legislator Albano questioned if the company purchased the space.

President Taylor stated she was unsure but would find out if it was purchased or if the company entered into a long term lease.

Legislator Othmer stated that it is a shame that a High School Reunion is difficult to hold in a town with no local hotel for out-of-towners to stay.

President Taylor stated that the Bull and Barrel Brew Pub has a room downstairs that can comfortably seat up to 220 people, which means large events can be held there, yet having a place to stay is an issue.

b) Email Regarding Projects Funded by the Economic Development Administration since the beginning of 2013/FYI

President Taylor stated the Hudson Valley Regional Council is the federal equivalent to Empire State Development. She stated one project was in the Hudson Valley at the Culinary Institute and the funding for the project came from the Hurricane Sandy Relief Fund that the Government put out.

Item # 6 - Putnam County Industrial Development Agency/Update/Neal Sullivan

CEO of Putnam County Industrial Development Agency Neal Sullivan stated he would like to bring business and jobs to Putnam County. He stated the lease has been signed so they, along with the EDC will be moving from 34 Gleneida to Fair Street, which will happen toward the end of November or beginning of December. He stated the move will help the IDA with costs and being close to the EDC is vital as they work very closely. He also stated the State is performing an audit of the IDA for the first time. He stated there are a few projects the IDA has been working on for a few years and they seem to be coming to fruition. He stated the IDA, which is a self-funded entity provides funding for the projects. He stated when deals are made, a fee is charged and that is how the IDA makes money. He also stated they have not had many deals and because of that, the CFO of the IDA and his predecessor have declined to take a salary. He stated some deals lined up are the projects President Taylor referred to earlier. These projects should make some money for the IDA.

Legislator LoBue questioned what the IDA charged for their services.

CEO Sullivan stated it is 0.5% of the total amount.

Legislator Gross questioned if the IDA does the research to get the bond proposals.

CEO Sullivan stated that is correct. He stated he works closely with President Taylor; she brings companies into Putnam County and then the IDA provides the financial incentives to stay. He stated some incentives offered are mortgage tax abatement, sales tax abatement, and bond funding.

Legislator LoBue stated in the past, sales tax abatement has been offered and when it expires, the company leaves. She stated she would like to go with the bonding which is more equitable.

CEO Sullivan stated there are guidelines when these incentives are offered for the company to meet in order to keep the incentives.

President Taylor stated there are fallback provisions that can be placed in the IDA contracts. She stated for example, if the company is awarded a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) for property tax and they move out at the end of the period, the fallback provisions would make the school district whole or partially whole.

Item # 7 - Approval/Re-Appointments/Putnam County Industrial Development Agency

CEO Sullivan stated he would like to wait on the two re-appointments to the IDA board as there are some other vacancies and he would like to appoint everyone at the same time.

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated she would like them to come to a meeting when they are ready for the re-appointment.

(After meeting, there was discussion and the re-appointments were forwarded to Audit meeting 11/26/13.)

Item # 8 - Correspondence/Transitioning into a Green Energy Economy: How Municipalities can Benefit/FYI – Duly Noted

Item # 9 - Unemployment Report/FYI

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated the unemployment rate in August was down at 5.8%.

Item # 10 - Foreclosure Report/FYI

Chairwoman Scuccimarra stated in October the foreclosure rate was 49 which is up from September.

Legislator LoBue stated year to date, the County is at 61 docketed foreclosures, where last year it was 49, which means it is trending up.

Item # 11 - Other Business

Item # 12 – Adjournment

There being no further business at 7:18 p.m. Chairwoman Scuccimarra made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator LoBue. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Beth Green, Administrative Assistant.