

Minutes
Planning & Economic Development Committee
November 13, 2024, 6:00 pm, Legislative Chambers
Livestreamed on YouTube
Gerace Office Building, Mayville, NY

Members Present: Chagnon, Larson, Dickey, Penhollow

Members Absent: Harmon, Gustafson, Johnson

Others: Lee, N. Quattrone, Martin, Ihrig, Zafuto, McCoy, Swan, Crow, Wurster, Aldrich, DeMarte, Barber, Obrien, Sisson, Sample

Complete video of meeting can be viewed on YouTube

Legislator Chagnon called the meeting to order at (6:00 p.m.)

Approval of Minutes (10/16/24) & (10/3/24 – Budget Review)

MOVED by Legislator Larson, SECONDED by Legislator Penhollow.

Unanimously Carried

Privilege of the Floor

Legislator Larson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, double Chairman, this evening. In 2025, let us resolve as a committee to honor the charter and the code and the legislature rules. I mentioned this at our legislature meeting voting on the budget. The charter calls for the legislature to set goals, objectives and measurements and submit them to the County Executive so he can use them in preparing his tentative budget every September. I don't know how many years the legislature has not been doing that but we did not do that in 24. As a committee, economic development committee, we're charged with setting goals, objectives and measurements for everything having to do with economic development in the Counties role in that Counties governments role in that. We have – one might think that everything's rosy economically in Chautauqua County, which unfortunately is not true. I'm going to hand everybody from the bureau of labor statistics employed persons in Chautauqua County and Civilian Labor Force in Chautauqua County. And I apologize. I did this off my own computer at home and I couldn't get the St. Louis Federal Reserve Board's print out here to go all the way to 2024, I'm not technologically that savvy but for tonight's purpose on terms of the challenge for our committee in 2025, employment in Chautauqua County is down from 64,000 in 2018 to 52,000 roughly in 2024. That's down about 19% of the labor force, and we often hear that employers are having trouble finding workers it's totally true. The main reason is our labor force is down from about 68,000 in 2008 to about 54,000 now, a drop of 20% in the size of the labor force. Our population is down in 2000, we still had 140,000 residents, 2010 it dropped by 5,000 to 135,000. In 2020 it was a disastrous drop of 9,000 more down to 126,000. Our committee should set goals and measure for those goals for economic development. We should have a goal for job growth in 2026, we should have a goal

for labor force growth in 2026. We should have a goal for population growth by the 2030 census. I might say that in terms of our labor force, trying to build it up, give it better skills, we have a representative, the President of JCC here tonight on other matters but one of the things our committee might take a look at is it's my understanding that the State does not give JCC money for job training and if I'm right on that, our committee should look at setting some goals and objectives of the County government itself supporting JCC financially for specifically job training. We could assist Wells with the job training for the extra 200 or so workers they look to employ, we could supply JCC with money to help train the 200 or so new employees that Cummins should have in the next year or two for example. We need our planning department to help us analyze what has happened to us and what we might do reverse the dramatic decline in population, employment and labor force. We don't at least in this calendar year, we haven't to my knowledge asked our planning department to give us insight on the state of our County economy, what's happened to us over the last 20 years and what we might do to improve our situation? The last matter I will use tonight under privilege of the floor is an example of this economic development committee has a duty to set economic development goals. One example would be setting a policy on solar farm development. This legislature rejected the possibility of a solar farm at the Dunkirk County Airport property even though it would have provided revenue to the County and the majority rejected it even though the County Executive had the resolution at his request. At the same time, our Chautauqua County IDA on which our committee chair sits by virtue of his office, at the same time our Chautauqua County IDA continues to *(inaudible)* solar power with payment of lieu of tax agreements. It was in the news this week that a couple of new solar farm pilot applications are being considered even though these solar farms and their pilots produce virtually no long term jobs. Some of the projects have become in for their pilot claiming they created half their job. So what is our economic development policy when it comes to encouraging solar farms? And that's the kind of policy making that the 1998 charter and the code and our current legislature rules call upon us to do. We are not to just come up here once a month and vote on resolutions that are submitted by the County Executive. The job and vision for us and the charter and the code and our own rules is much bigger than that and I will do what I can in calendar 25 to help our committee preform the work that we've been called upon for many years not to do each and every year. So I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the time.

Legislator Chagnon: Thank you. Anyone else for privilege of the floor? Seeing no one, we will move to our proposed resolutions.

Proposed Resolution – Evaluation and Prioritization of 2% Occupancy Tax Grant Program Applications – *Presented by Dave McCoy, Chautauqua County Watershed Coordinator and Nate Aldrich, Economic Development Coordinator*

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution – Request Inclusion of Proposed New JCC Athletic Complex in SUNY's Capital Request for the 2025-2026 Executive Budget – *Presented by Daniel DeMarte, President of JCC and John Barber, Interim CEO of the Jamestown YMCA*

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution – Authorize Agreement with Small Business Development Center at Jamestown Community College – *Presented by Nate Aldrich, Economic Development Coordinator*

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution – Authorize Agreement with the County of Chautauqua Industrial Development Agency for Attractions and Development of Tourism-Related Businesses – *Presented by Nate Aldrich, Economic Development Coordinator and Jason Sample, Marketing and Communications Coordinator for CCIDA and the Partnership for Economic Growth*

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution – Authorize Agreement with County of Chautauqua Industrial Development Agency for Business Development, Assistance, and Promotion – *Presented by Nate Aldrich, Economic Development Coordinator and Jason Sample, Marketing and Communications Coordinator for CCIDA and the Partnership for Economic Growth*

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution – Authorize Agreement with Chautauqua County Region Economic Development Corporation for Greenway Development – *Presented by Nate Aldrich, Economic Development Coordinator and Rebecca Wurster, Planning Coordinator for the Department of Planning and Development*

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution – Authorize Agreement with Chautauqua Region Economic Development Corporation for Tourism Development and Placemaking – *Presented by Nate Aldrich, Economic Development Coordinator and Rebecca Wurster, Planning Coordinator for the Department of Planning and Development*

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution – Establish Chautauqua County Sewer Agency Pursuant to Article 5-A of the County Law – *Presented by Dave McCoy, Chautauqua County Watershed Coordinator and Nate Aldrich, Economic Development Coordinator*

Unanimously Carried

Proposed Resolution – Establish Chautauqua County Water Agency Pursuant to Article 5-A of the County Law – *Presented by Dave McCoy, Chautauqua County Watershed Coordinator and Nate Aldrich, Economic Development Coordinator*

MOVED by Legislator Larson, SECONDED by Legislator Dickey to Table – Unanimously Carried to Table

Discussion – Update Regarding North Chautauqua County Water District – *Presented by Kitty Crow, Finance Director*

MOVED by Legislator Larson, SECONDED by Legislator Penhollow to adjourn.

Unanimously Carried (7:41 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted and transcribed,

Olivia Lee, Clerk of the Legislature/ Kristi Zink, Deputy Clerk of the Legislature