

**COMMITTEE MEETING
LAKE PLEASANT, NY
WEDNESDAY
SEPTEMBER 11, 2013**

**PTEDP COMMITTEE
MEETING
2:00 PM**

Present: Neil McGovern and John Frey

Also present: Bill Farber, Brian Wells, Bob Edwards, Brian Towers, Rick Wilt, Bill Osborne and Pete Klein

Neil opened the meeting with a discussion regarding the reshaping of the Tourism Office.

Bill Farber suggested that they look at the department and priorities and then look at the structure. If we need to discuss the applicants we can go into executive session. Bill also wanted to go through all the applicants with Kim and what we would like to respond back to each of them.

Brian Towers asked if there is a lot of repetition regarding tourism in Hamilton County with NY State, the County and the Chambers doing it. Neil stated there is.

Bill Farber stated that we need to look at whether there is a better way to interface with the towns. We already do a lot with the region in terms of campaigns, advertising and marketing.

Neil asked Bill Osborne if they farm out to the regional council. Bill Osborne stated the money goes to the region because there are significant financial benefits to us for doing that. The Adirondack Regional Council, which consists of the Tourism Directors from all of the counties, determines how to best spend the money from the matching funds. There are some differences of opinion between Lake George, Lake Placid and smaller county's such as Hamilton. Because of our size we benefit when regional campaigns are conducted. Some of those funds can be earmarked for snowmobiling, only two or three counties participate in the snowmobiling promotion, it's not a full region wide campaign. It does require someone to be in the decision making process.

Bill Osborne stated at the county level in terms of helping communities, what we have always done is the town takes the lead and we provide money, support, printing etc.

Bill Osborne stated the most important thing that the Board can do is create a structure, establish some very clear priorities.

Pete Klein entered during the discussion Neil had about the percentage of time that would be spent doing economic development and tourism.

The Board discussed how to set priorities and how to make those priorities flexible if need be.

Bill Osborne stated if they want to be successful in economic development then they clearly need to separate economic development from any other function and you have to give the economic developer priorities.

Bill Farber stated from the conversations we have had from the beginning of this, he has gotten the sense that they want economic developmental to be a focus. We also talked about possibly separating the department. If we did separate it out, would it be 10 hours per week, 20 hours per week?

Bill Osborne stated if you bring someone in to do economic development they will need good administrative support. He feels the office should be separated. Bill Osborne suggested that making one of the people in the office a tourism coordinator and the other becomes an economic development administrative assistant.

Brian Towers stated if tourism stood all on its own, what do we really need to have as a director? Bill Osborne stated you need someone with a strong consumer marketing background, who understands marketing and marketing strategy.

Brian Towers stated this sounds more analytical than someone who is more creative. Bill Osborne stated absolutely, because the creativity can be hired. Once you develop a strategy you can then go to the creative types for a marketing campaign. Bill continued to discuss marketing.

Bill Farber asked if this marketing can be done regionally. Bill Osborne answered yes,

Bill Farber stated what we need to explore is whether to add money to the budget and create two full time positions or if you want greater emphasis on economic development we need to figure out a way to free up dollars to put the emphasis there. One of the things that we didn't do particular well was having Bill Osborne go in twenty-seven different directions.

Neil asked Bill Osborne what is out there for Community Block Grants to augment a revenue line for an Economic Developer. Bill Osborne stated he doesn't know what is out there right now. There is some money in a revolving loan fund that we need to work on and also work on putting that money to work. A lengthy discussion continued.

Bill Farber asked Bill Osborne how many hours a week would be needed to do economic development. Bill Osborne stated approximately 20 hours and then in a year re-evaluate.

The members then started discussing lodging and what it would need to be for people to come, such as a destination lodge.

Brian Towers asked how they could fit the IDA into the scenario if they separated the department. Bill Osborne stated that the IDA could hire an Executive Director. Whoever is the Executive Director whether part-time or full-time works for the IDA and the County could help support the salary etc., other counties do it this way.

Bill Osborne stated that there are a lot of large counties who don't have an employee known as Director of Economic Development, many of them have an IDA or LDC; the discussion continued on contracting with the IDA.

Bill Farber asked Bill Osborne what his ideas are with the Tourism Department and how to make them successful. Bill Osborne suggested farming out the tourism and hiring a part-time Economic Developer. The publicity budget is around \$250,000 and that includes around \$86,000 from New York State in matching funds; he feels it will be close to that again this year.

Bill Osborne discussed doing an RFP for Tourism services from other counties and private businesses.

Bill Farber suggested going into executive session. He also suggested Bill Osborne put together a RFP for the Board to review.

A motion was made to enter into executive session to discuss applicants and personnel by Mr. Towers, seconded by Mr. Frey. Carried.

A motion to open session by Mr. Towers, seconded by Mr. Frey. Carried.
No action taken.

Before ending the meeting Bill Osborne stated that he has another issue. Dean needs snowmobile maps printed for the snowmobile show. There is \$10,000 in the budget that has not been used. We are going to need \$7,000 of that for snowmobile maps. Franklin County is kicking in \$3,000 and Warren County is a maybe, so it could be reduced even lower. After a short discussion the Committee approved Bill Osborne to order the maps and the County will pay the region by a resolution at the October 3rd Board meeting.

As there was no further business, the meeting ended.