

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT / PLANNING COMMITTEE

March 26, 2012

PRESENT:

Richard Keaveney, Chairman
Matt Murell
John Porreca
Ronald Knott
Michael Benson
Richard Scalera
Sara Sterling
Ellen Thurston
Arthur Bassin
Robin Andrews
Arthur Baer

ABSENT:

Elizabeth Young - notified
William Hughes
Jeff Braley- notified

ALSO PRESENT:

Becky Vinchiarello, Dep. Clerk
Kenneth Flood
Ronald Caponera
Dean Knox

Public: 1

Press: 1

Chairman R. Keaveney called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

A representative from Cornell Cooperative Extension will be attending the Committee next month. Any department that reports to this committee will provide a report upon request if any Supervisor is interested.

Agriculture -

Resolution Request – Authorization to appointment J. Lawrence Benson, Mallory Mort and Jim Waterhouse to the Farmland Protection Board for a four year term. Motion to approve by A. Baer, seconded by A. Bassin, motion carried. **Refer to Finance.**

The Farm Land Protection Plan was briefly discussed. The main goal of the plan will be to recommend farm land in the County that should be protected.

Economic Development –

Discussion ensued regarding the potential of building economic growth in the County through the Airport. K. Flood plans to put together a report of job potential in the County through this project.

Funding from the State and Federal Governments were discussed. K. Flood's office would be responsible for securing this funding.

A. Bassin expressed his concern that the study that was completed was a facilities upgrade rather than an economic growth tool. He would like to know what the quantified value will be to the County if they invest \$8-13 million into this project. He stressed the fact that public money cannot be spent for no return. The committee decided that K. Flood should extrapolate what the return will be in the years to come. They did agree that looking at the return on the investment would be very subjective.

Resolution Request – Authorization to accept the Columbia County Airport Business Plan 2011 Technical Report and authorizing the County to use the Plan to guide future operation and development of the airport. The Committee decided that the resolution should also state that within the next three months K. Flood will develop an outline/estimate of specific benefits to the County as a result of this project. Motion to approve as amended by A. Baer, seconded by R. Knott, motion carried. M. Murell Abstained. **Refer to Finance.**

It was announced that Richmore Aviation would be interested in jointly funding new hangers for the Airport.

K. Flood's two primary activates of the Airport will be water and sewer and economic development,

K. Flood added that a line regarding maximizing private investment should also be added to the resolution.

Nancy Costine will be the employee handing this assignment in K. Floods office. She will work on the grant writing, marketing, etc.

There will be no economic impact on the 2012 budget.

Total monetary amount to make improvements that would be applied to the Airport were discussed. The runway safety area would cost millions of dollars but most of this cost would be picked up by the Federal Government. Water and sewer would cost around \$850.00 to \$1million.

The alternative to developing the Airport would be privatizing or selling. It was questioned how long the County would have to commit to owning the airport if they were to acquire money from the Federal Government. A discussion would have to take place with the FFA to determine this. K. Flood will see if he can get a general answer to the question.

Updates:

CEDC will be holding their annual meeting tomorrow at Kozels at 8:00 a.m. Supervisors should have gotten an invitation to this.

Greenport crossings will hopefully open in May.

Flanders is doing well and they are currently looking for workers.

They should be closing on Premier Brands soon.

It was also reported that Economic Development Department is trying to double the number of small business microloans that they give out. They are not getting enough applicants.

It was announced that issues with DOT should be discussed at some point. Small businesses in the County have had very bad experiences with them. They need to talk with State Legislators and then go to the commissioner of DOT. K. Flood plans to write a letter to State Representative from an economic standpoint.

With no further business there was motion to adjourn at 5:55 p.m. by S. Sterling, seconded by A. Baer, motion carried.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/ PLANNING:

Richard Keaveney, Chairman

Robin Andrews

Arthur Baer

Arthur Bassin

Jeffrey Braley

Michael Benson

Matt Murell

John Porreca

Richard Scalera

Ronald Knott

William Hughes Jr.

Ellen Thruston

Jeffery Braley

Elizabeth Young