

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MAY 21, 2012**

PRESENT:

**Richard Keaveney, Chairman
Michael Benson
Elizabeth Young
Arthur Bassin
Ellen Thurston
Sarah Sterling
Arthur Baer
Jeffrey Braley
Ronald Knott
Matt Murell
Richard Scalera**

ABSENT:

**Robin Andrews, notified
William Hughes, Jr., notified
John Porreca, Sr.**

ALSO PRESENT:

**Gail DiCosmo, Clerk
Kenneth Flood
Bruce Bohnsack
Beth Horton**

PRESS: 3

Chairman Keaveney called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM

Economic Development: K. Flood

Broadband Consultant Request for Proposal – Guest: Bruce Bohnsack, G-Tel President/CEO:

B. Bohnsack spoke about affiliated Investors, ION w/maps, INOC’s primary mission is to provide unsurpassed, critical data and Internet services to owners and customers, also to provide a platform for its owners and customers to explore new technologies and expand their services into new markets and meet the needs of new customers. Discussion ensued on transitioning to Fiber Optics and servicing rural communities. It was stressed, that the County needs to have a plan in place before moving forward with any aspect of fiber optics. Also mentioned and suggested that the County take over the cell towers and lease the space to the providers, but we need a plan to proceed. The consensus of the committee was to meet with all providers, draft questions for the providers, and schedule a meeting.

Forwarded to committee was a Requests Proposals for Proposals: Broadband Engineering, Consultant Services, highlighting the background and statement of need, another key factor is affordability, based on the input K. Flood received by County Supervisors, they have agreed that availability and affordability of high speed internet access is vital to our County. Columbia County needs to explore how best to expand high speed internet access in the County. Through the Request for Proposal process, hoping to find a Broadband Engineering Consultant who will conduct a broadband feasibility study to determine the extent of the need and the most feasible broadband solution, with secure additional funding to implement the proposed broadband deployment strategies to provide the most optimal and feasible broadband access.

Cornell Cooperative Extension- Beth Horton

B. Horton distributed pamphlets on what her program 4-H does for families. i.e. Families growing together, this is in relation to Gardening for health living, learning about the roots, fruits, leaves, flowers, seeds and stems that we eat, and the School Age Enrichment Guide. She has 5 families from Columbia and 5 families from Greene County enrolled in the program. The cost is \$50.00 per family.

Agriculture:

Farmland Protection Plan: Distributed was a “DRAFT” of the Protection Plan, with goals and recommendations.

HVADC Activities: Update on USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant application, Hudson Valley Bounty “buy local”, HVADC will initiate the project by working with select groups of farmers and

institutions that have affirmed interest in the outcome of the project and are willing to donate limited staff and target up to ten commodities for delivery to eight institutions. HVADC will work with the farmers and institutions during the fall and winter of 2012 with the intent to launch the pilot project in 2012.

Consolidated Funding Applications 2012 Priorities:

**Water and Sewer Extension to County Airport/Sewer Plant Improvements/Water Tower;
Comfort Suites Hotel;
Copake Sewer Plant in Support of Catamount Resort;
Ski Resort Infrastructure;
Broadband Improvements;
Agriculture Project-Helping farmers be more Profitable-new program
Hudson Valley Creamer-Excelsior Program
Hudson/Claverack/Greenport Truck Traffic Flow Survey**

K. Flood will draft of a letter petitioning Columbia County to move to Region 1.

With no further discussion, a motion to adjourn at 6:35 PM by A. Baer, seconded by A. Bassin, motion carried.

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