

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING/
RECREATION, FORESTRY AND PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING
April 17, 2018**

Economic Development/IDA Director Eric Virkler reviewed his monthly report (attached).

Eric reported stalled negotiations with the Climax building purchase, awaiting contact from the sellers. It remains unknown whether the liens on the property will be resolved.

The Town of Lowville Planning Board is requesting an environmental impact statement for the proposed business park property relative to drainage concerns.

Eric is assisting a potential small business owner with inquiries from the Village of Lowville Planning/Zoning Board.

Eric reports that the IDA will assist to develop a publicity and marketing campaign for June as Dairy Month to recognize and educate about this vital Lewis County industry. Ryan Piche suggests a \$20,000 County Contingency appropriation to the IDA to support personnel expense for global marketing of Lewis County events. He specifically mentioned tourist promotion for the kayaking event, citing the County's woeful lack of marketing. Legislators Burns and LaChausse each indicated their support for the appropriation. Ryan Piche said he would pose the initiative to the Ways and Means Committee.

Eric reviewed the attached Economic Development Reserve fund report indicating expenditures for specific projects and reserves for others: \$77,000 for the business park project, \$100,000 to LCDC for the Lyons Falls mill demolition project, \$16,000 for United Cerebral Palsy building project that employs 15 people; and \$150,000 down payment for purchase of the Climax building. Business park development and purchase of the Climax building will essentially deplete available funds.

Eric cited zoning issues with the Village and Town of Lowville Planning Boards, noting challenges for business development with their cumbersome process and member turnover. He will be meeting with the Village Planning Board tomorrow in an effort to assist them and potential business owners. He suggests that part of the problem is they do not have the staff to properly address issues. Ryan Piche stated that Planning Director Frank Pace is always available and offers to assist them, but they have not availed his services. Their collective goal is to improve the efficiency of the zoning process.

The meeting adjourned at 9:22 a.m. by motion of Legislator LaChausse, seconded by Legislator Burns and carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Terry Clark, Clerk of the Board

County of Lewis
Economic Development Report
Eric J. Virkler
April 17, 2018

Old Business

- **Business Park:** The LCIDA continues to work through permitting and zoning process with Town of Lowville planning board. This has become more complicated than expected. The intent is to ensure progress on these issues prior to completing the acquisition of the property. The goal is to reach that point in the next three to six months. We are working on a grant funding application to assist with the Phase 1 buildout of an entrance into the park property.
- **Economic Development Funding:** The balance of the fund at March 31, 2018 is \$758,602. A summary will be attached with this report.
- **Wind Projects:**
 - The Denmark project is expected to move forward with full tower construction this summer.
 - Deer River is in negotiating stage with company and taxing jurisdictions. The next meeting is scheduled for May 3.
 - Maple Ridge Wind tax jurisdictions are in negotiations with the company on a renewal of the PILOT agreement. Next meeting is scheduled for May 9.
 - Discussions are continuing between the development companies and Fort Drum. We continue to connect with Fort Drum and monitor potential state legislation regarding this issue.
- **Climax Manufacturing.** The closing for the property acquisition is held up for legal issues. We are waiting information on when the process will move forward. We do continue to entertain interest is businesses seeking space in the building.
- **Business Leaders Breakfast.** The next breakfast is scheduled on May 10 at 8 AM at the Croghan Fire Hall. We will be featuring Lewis County small food producers.
- **Solar Projects.** A recent meeting was held with taxing jurisdictions related to proposed projects in the Towns of Turin and Martinsburg. The County was represented. The jurisdictions are in agreement to initiate negotiations with the company on a potential PILOT agreement for these projects. We will continue working with taxing jurisdictions in Denmark and New Bremen for the same purpose for additional proposed projects.
- **Lyons Falls mill redevelopment.** The LCDC was notified of successful funding, in partnership with the Village of Lyons Falls, for a \$440,000 Restore NY grant. This provides approximately \$1,600,000 of approved funding for the final phase of the cleanup project with one remaining funding request outstanding.
- **Agricultural projects.** We are engaged with two different entrepreneurs working on projects for value added dairy processing. We will continue to assist and encourage these individuals. We also are focused on any other efforts to enhance and grow our agricultural economy.

New Business

- **Ag Processing Center.** We continue to focus on the potential for a shared use facility that could benefit multiple value added agricultural processing operations, a commercial kitchen, cold storage, etc.

- Lowville Restaurant. Our office has been assisting a potential new restaurant project in the Village of Lowville and will continue to work through permitting challenges with that project.
- Small Business Contacts. We worked with five different small business owners or prospects during the current month.
- Dairy Month Publicity. We are planning to work with Lewis County Dairy Princess and Cornell Cooperative Extension to create a publicity and marketing campaign to support the local dairy operations in Lewis County. This campaign will be rolled out in June – Dairy Month.
- Economic Development Funding. As discussed with the Legislators at the April 3rd BOL meeting, the Economic Development reserve fund will potentially be fully spent in the near future if the Climax building and business park projects move forward. These funds were contributed from County appropriations in 2016 and 2017 totaling \$1,100,000. The attached activity summary reflects how these funds have been utilized. The committee can discuss this in more detail at the meeting. At a future meeting, I will present information on future needs for funding for economic development projects.

Lewis County IDA Updates

- Wind / Solar. As noted above, the LCIDA expects to be involved in potential PILOT agreements for wind and solar projects.
- Staff. The LCIDA has a new individual in our finance and administrative role.

Lewis County Development Corporation Updates

- Lyons Falls mill: See item above. The LCDC board has met and agreed to move forward with the final phase and will determine solutions for any funding gap if needed as the project progresses.
- The annual audit for the LCDC has been completed and required NYS PARIS reporting also completed.

Time and Budget Report

- March 2018 time summary for IDA, LCDC and County activity is available and can be provided upon request.

Meetings

- LCIDA meeting
- LCDC meeting
- Village of Lyons Falls meeting for County Economic Development discussion
- Wind and solar project meetings (4)
- JCC Center for Community Studies advisory board
- Workforce Development Board meeting
- North Country Alliance (2)

Mandates / Regulations

- Nothing new.

Lewis County Economic Development

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ED Reserve Activity

March 2018

<u>Project</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>2016-17 Actual Expenditure</u>	<u>2018 Expenditure</u>	<u>Expended To Date</u>	<u>County Reserve Committed</u>
Business Parks					
Land Options	5,000	5,000			
General Consulting	20,000	16,908			
Environmental and Engineering	60,000	44,391	3,891		30,000
Land Acquisition	700,000				80,000
Phase 1 Construction	465,000	250			
Total	1,250,000			70,190	
Lyons Falls Mill					
Demolition	200,000	100,000		100,000	
Lyons Falls UCP Project					
Funding assistance for infrastructure		16,208		16,208	complete
Economic Development Operations	50,000				
Other Prospective Projects					
Climax Building	1,463,000		155,000	155,000	645,000
TOTALS		<u>\$ 182,757</u>	<u>\$ 158,891</u>	<u>\$ 341,398</u>	<u>\$ 755,000</u>
	Beginning Balance	2016 Allocation		\$700,000	
		2017 Allocation		\$400,000	
	Remaining Balance			<u>\$758,602</u>	
	Unallocated, Available for other Projects				<u>\$3,602</u>