

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS & REAL PROPERTY TAX SERVICES

DATE: APRIL 22, 2019

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS: BRAYMER
SIMPSON
STROUGH
MCDEVITT
MERLINO
LOEB
HOGAN
HYDE

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR: DICKINSON

OTHERS PRESENT:

LEXIE DELUREY, DIRECTOR OF REAL PROPERTY TAX SERVICES
RYAN MOORE, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD
RYAN DICKEY 2ND ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY
FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISORS BEATY
DRISCOLL
FRASIER
GERAGHTY
LEGGETT
MAGOWAN
SOKOL
TAMMIE DELORENZO, ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
CHARLES WALLACE, ADMINISTRATOR, FIRE PREVENTION & BUILDING
CODE ENFORCEMENT
TARA DONADIO, SUSTAINABILITY PLANNER, CAPITAL DISTRICT
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
REPRESENTING THE ADIRONDACK LAKES ALLIANCE:
ED GREISMER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
JANE SMITH, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
BETH GILLES, DIRECTOR, LAKE CHAMPLAIN-LAKE GEORGE REGIONAL
PLANNING BOARD
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
MOLLY GANOTES-GLEASON, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Please note, the following contains a summarization of the, April 22, 2019 meeting of the Environmental Concerns & Real Property Tax Service Committee; the meeting in its entirety can be viewed on the Warren County website using the following link: <http://www.warrencountyny.gov/gov/comm/Archive/2019/environmental/>

Ms. Braymer called the meeting of the Environmental Concerns & Real Property Tax Service Committee to order at 10:31 a.m. Copies of the meeting agenda were distributed the Committee members and a copy of same is on file with the meeting minutes.

Ms. Braymer informed that since the last Committee meeting an employee of the Real Property Tax Services Department had unexpectedly lost her husband; she said she had sent flowers on behalf of the Committee and very nice thank you note was returned in response.

Commencing the agenda review, a motion was made by Mr. McDevitt, seconded by Merlino and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Lexie Delurey, *Director of Real Property Tax Services*, who presented a request to approve the list of chargebacks of taxes and refunds as provided by the County Treasurer's Office.

Motion was made by Mr. Simpson, seconded by Mr. Loeb and carried unanimously to approve the request and the necessary resolution was authorized for the May 17th Board Meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Moving on to the Information for Discussion/Review Portion of the Agenda, Ms. Delurey advised the first item listed, pertained to amending the Terms and Conditions of Sale authorized by Resolution No. 259 of 2017 to require that purchasers rehabilitate any building on the property and bring them into compliance with all State, County and Local standards for occupancy with 24 months. Mr. Geraghty expounded upon this item, explaining similar provisions had been enacted by the Town of Warrensburg in response to instances of properties acquired through the County's annual tax foreclosure auction remaining in disrepair following acquisition. A discussion ensued during which Charles Wallace, *Administrator, Fire Prevention & Building Code Enforcement*, advised the process used by his Office for the issuance of building permits and certificates of compliance and how they applied in these circumstances. Ryan Moore, *County Administrator*, also spoke about the verbiage included in the proposed resolution pertaining to the ability for written requests to be submitted to the County Administrator for an extension of the 24 month rehabilitation period; he also pointed out that the language indicated the County "could" commence legal action, not that they must. He apprised he was not objective to the extension process, but he did not know if he had the ability to deny an extension request or whether it was automatic once the \$250 fee was paid. Following further discussion it was consensus of the Committee for the County Attorney to review the draft and bring any changes she felt appropriate back to the next Committee meeting, as well as to provide further guidance on the legal action that would be required to re-acquire properties not in compliance with the proposed amended terms of sale.

Regarding Information for Discussion/Review Item Number 2, Ms. Delurey informed she was still waiting on information about Town of Chester Tax Map Parcel No. 104.10-4-5 and Town of Johnsbury Tax Map Parcel No. 133.8-1-27. She said she had sent a request to Atlantic Testing for a fee schedule and scope of services to perform asbestos testing on Town of Queensbury Tax Map Parcel No. 302.8-1-2. She mentioned the Department of Public Works already had a contract in place with Atlantic Testing that would cover the work needed.

Continuing the Agenda review, Ms. Braymer spoke about Assembly Bill A.5028-A, introduced by Assemblyman Englebright, which sought to amend the Environmental Conservation Law to expand the type of beverage containers eligible for a five cent deposit. Mr. Geraghty apprised it would help recycling and would generate more revenue. A brief discussion ensued during which Ms. Braymer apprised if the Committee was in agreement with supporting the proposed legislation, she could draft a letter for the Chairman to sign in time for approval at the next the Board Meeting.

Motion was made by Mr. McDevitt, seconded by Ms. Hogan and carried unanimously in favor of authorizing the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors to send a letter of support for Assembly Bill A.5028-A to the County's Legislative representative and the necessary resolution was authorized for the May 17th Board Meeting.

Moving on to the Environmental Concerns portion of the agenda, Tammie DeLorenzo, *Assistant to the County Administrator*, addressed the first item listed concerning septic inspection/State funding. She advised she had worked with the Department of Planning and Community Development on a grant in hope of being placed on the list of eligible Counties to receive funding to help homeowners with failing septic systems in Warren County. She mentioned NYSDEC (*New York State Department of Environmental Conversation*) was looking for water bodies where the water quality could be effected. Beth Gillis, *Executive Director, Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board*, notified in order to participate in the program homes had to be within a certain distance of the water and the funds were only available for permanent residence. Mr. Wallace recommended that they consider having a design specialist inspect the septic systems.

Motion was made by Mr. Simpson, seconded by Mr. Strough and carried unanimously in favor of authorizing the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors to send a letter to NYSDEC requesting that Warren County be identified as a participating County in the New York State Septic System Replacement Program and the necessary resolution was authorized for the May 17th Board Meeting.

Moving on to the second Environmental Concerns item, Plastic Bag Update, Ms. Braymer spoke of the New York State Plastic Bag Legislation that would take effect in March 2020. She indicated the law allowed the County to implement a five cent fee for paper bags. Mr. McDevitt suggested to keep the ban as simple as possible. Mr. Simpson indicated he was not in favor of imposing a fee. Mr. Strough mentioned there would be administration involved with a fee and he was opposed. Ms. Braymer notified the County would receive two cents from each bag purchased that was required to be used for the purchase of re-usable bags for those who could not afford them. Mr. Beaty voiced his opposition. Ms. Braymer advised the matter would be closed.

With regard to the final Environmental Concerns item, Clean Energy Communities, Ms. Braymer explained there was interest in Warren County becoming certified as a Clean Energy Community. She advised this required the County to have four out of the ten High Impact Items to be certified, adding the County was almost four complete already. She advised being a Clean Energy Community opened revenue streams, indicating the initial grant was \$5,000. She said it allowed more funding opportunities for the County and private entities. Ms. Braymer explained Tara Donadio, *Sustainability Planner, Capital District Regional Planning Commission*, was in attendance to speak about becoming a Clean Energy Community. Ms. Donadio informed she had been working on the program with the Town of Queensbury and the City of Glens Falls, who were Clean Energy Communities. She advised the program had been around for three years. She notified the large grants were expended and there were still \$5,000 grants available, advising additional grant money would become available. She explained the County needed four of the ten High Impact Items to be designated, expressing the program was available at all levels. She reviewed each of the ten High Impact Items and what each required. Ms. Braymer apprised the County already had Unified Solar which was number six on the list; however, she said, a resolution was necessary to adopt it. Mr. Wallace indicated he had only to add additional information to the solar applications and the process would be easy. Mr. Moore inquired if the only step required was to pass a resolution and Ms. Donadio replied affirmatively.

Motion was made by Mr. Strough, seconded by Mr. Simpson and carried unanimously to approve authorizing Warren County to apply for a New York State Unified Solar Permit and the necessary resolution was authorized for the May 17th Board Meeting.

Ms. Braymer advised the final High Impact Item she wanted to discuss was the Energize New York Finance Program. She pointed out it was first thought that they could not participate in the program because of private properties being included; however, she said this no longer applied and they should consider adopting the plan at next months meeting. She stated all the plan required was to track energy use, which she indicated the County was already doing. She mentioned after discussions with the director of the program it was made clear that the County was not responsible for any administration of the program, adding it would be a great opportunity for private, commercial and not-for-profits to have the ability to finance energy upgrade projects. She mentioned there were two negative aspects of the program, one being a possible foreclosure, indicating if the property was financed through a bank the bank could obtain the property to recoup their investment and the other being a capital provider who had to be in place because they were the ones doing the project instead of the municipalities. She acknowledged a capital provider could step in before the County foreclosed on a property or the property could be foreclosed on by the County and not sold which would leave the County responsible for making payments to the capital provider. Ms. Hogan pointed out that the bill would resemble a water bill and not a tax bill. Ms. Delurey indicated it was a bill that would have to be paid and Ms. Braymer remarked the bill would stay with the property. Ms. Donadio noted the bill would be submitted by the capital provider. Mr. Magowan commented there could be a potential offset when the solar power

was not used because it was transferred back to the utility. Ms. Braymer inquired what other projects were covered under the program and Ms. Donadio replied the program was for energy efficiency in general which included heating and cooling. Ms. Braymer advised a local law was necessary along with an intermunicipal agreement with the capital provider to be designated as a High Impact Item. Ms. Donadio informed the program navigated on a case by case basis, informing the County would only have to provide proof a law was passed for each case. Ms. Braymer added that they were also applying for the electric vehicle charging stations that at would be another High Impact Action Item. Mr. Moore indicated he spoken to Ed Bartholomew, *President, Economic Development Corporation*, regarding the overarching program and he said by getting the certification there would be additional grants available for the County as well as business owners. It was the consensus of the Committee to refer this item to the Legislative & Rules Committee to consider approval of the necessary Local Law allowing participation in the Energize New York program.

As there was no further business to come before the Environmental Concerns & Real Property Tax Service Committee, on motion made by Mr. Strough and seconded by Mr. Simpson, Ms. Braymer adjourned the meeting at 11:34 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Molly Ganotes-Gleason, Legislative Office Specialist