

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS & REAL PROPERTY TAX SERVICES

DATE: OCTOBER 28, 2019

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS: BRAYMER
 SIMPSON
 DICKINSON
 MCDEVITT
 LOEB
 HOGAN
 HYDE

OTHERS PRESENT:

LEXIE DELUREY, DIRECTOR OF REAL PROPERTY TAX SERVICES
CHRIS BELDEN, ASSISTANT COUNTY PLANNER
RONALD F. CONOVER, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
RYAN MOORE, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
MARY ELIZABETH KISSANE, COUNTY ATTORNEY
AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD
ROBERT TERWILLIGER 1ST COUNTY ATTORNEY
FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

SUPERVISORS: STROUGH
 MERLINO

SUPERVISORS GERAGHTY
 LEGGETT
TAMMIE DELORENZO, ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
MICHAEL SWAN, COUNTY TREASURER
REPRESENTING NEW YORK DEPARTMENT ENVIRONMENTAL
CONSERVATION:
 ERIC OBRECHT, REGION 5
 RUSSELL HUYCK, REGION 4
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
MOLLY GANOTES-GLEASON, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Please note, the following contains a summarization of the, October 28 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 Services Committee to order at 10:38 a.m.

Ms. Braymer indicated there were two individuals in attendance from the New York State Department Environmental Conservation, Eric Obrecht from Region 4 in Albany, and Russell Huyck from Region 5 in Ray Brook, whom were both from the Office of Remediation, and were present to talk about PFOS (*Perfluorooctane Sulfonate*) State-wide, along with details that were happening in Warren County and what was occurring at the State level.

Motion was made by Mr. Loeb, seconded by Ms. Hogan 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 Mr. Obrecht who informed emerging contaminants came to light in 2016 with the focus on PFAS (*Per and Poly Fluoroalkyl Substances*) in Warren County and they had taken several steps at the State level to address this type of contamination. He said the main cause of the contamination was from foam used to fight fires at various facilities, adding they looked into the locations that used that type of foam in relation to public and private water supplies and performed testing. He apprised they were testing superfund sites throughout the State, informing there were four or five located in Warren County. He described each location, and notified there were locations that were scheduled to be tested. Ms. Braymer inquired if they performed any specific water testing and Mr. Obrecht replied in the negative. He advised the Division of Materials Management oversaw 2,000 landfills that had been closed throughout the State. He informed there were some landfills that were tested and others that were

put on a list according to what waste they accepted, where they were in relation to water supply wells and how they were closed. He mentioned there were two landfills in Warren County that were scheduled to be tested.

Regarding the Floyd Bennett Memorial Airport, Mr. Obrecht explained in 2016 after the Airport submitted a survey they had conducted a private well survey in the area, along with two homes on Dean Road in Washington County, informing the homes had been positive for PFOS and had been treated. He apprised the water in those areas had been tested on a monthly basis and were treated as necessary. He stated as of July the NYSDOH (*New York State Department of Health*) proposed a drinking water standard of ten parts per trillion for each PFOS and PFAS that was currently under review. He indicated the Public Hearing that closed in September had resulted in over 5,000 comments. Mr. Leggett inquired if those contaminants occurred naturally and Mr. Obrecht replied in the negative, adding PFAS was associated with fire suppression foam and PFOS was associated with teflon that was found in cookware and wiring. Ms. Braymer asked what the current EPA (*Environmental Protection Agency*) advisory level was for those two contaminants and Mr. Obrecht replied seventy parts per trillion between both contaminants. Ms. Braymer reiterated that the NYSDOH proposal was to limit the contaminants to ten parts per trillion for PFOS and for PFAS and Mr. Obrecht concurred. He notified the NYSDEC (*New York State Department of Environmental Conservation*) was also working on setting new levels that would have an effect on discharges from businesses and sewage treatment facilities that would be finalized after the NYSDOH proposal was adopted. Ms. Braymer asked if the sewage treatment facilities had been tested and Mr. Obrecht replied they had been looked at in the past. Ms. Braymer inquired what steps were being taken to reduce contamination from fire suppression foam and Mr. Obrecht replied in 2017-2018 they had a program where they would work with communities to treat and destroy the foam. Ms. Braymer asked if the Airport used that type of foam and Mr. Obrecht replied they had it on the property, but he did not know if it was used. Ryan Moore, *County Administrator*, explained they were supposed to administrate a percentage of foam to water which was measured to reduce the amount of contamination. Ms. Braymer inquired if there was a replacement for the contaminated foam and Mr. Obrecht replied there was AFFF (*Aqueous Film-Forming Film*) which combined fluorocarbon and hydrocarbon surfactant. A brief conversation ensued.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Lexie Delurey, *Director of Real Property Tax Services*, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Commencing her agenda review, Ms. Delurey presented a request to authorize conveyance of lands offered at the public auction held on October 19, 2019 to dispose of certain lands acquired by Warren County pursuant to the Real Property Tax Foreclosure Action. She indicated there were three parcels that did not sell at the auction. She advised one parcel was sold and the purchaser had stopped payment on the check and the second highest bidder did not want to pay for the parcel. She informed she had spoken to the County Attorney and the Purchasing Agent to determine what to do next. Mary Elizabeth Kissane, *County Attorney*, notified the parcel could be sold on an on-line auction site. Ms. Delurey notified she would work with Auctions International. Regarding the other three parcels that did not sell, it was the consensus of the Committee to offer them to adjoining parcel owners.

Motion was made by Mr. Dickinson, seconded by Ms. Hogan and carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the November 15th Board Meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Continuing, Ms. Delurey introduced a request to designate the County Auditor to approve the New York State Real Property Tax Law correction of errors and/or applications for refunds less than \$2,500, for the term to commence January 1, 2020 and terminate December 31, 2020. Ms. Braymer inquired if checks had been received and Ms. Delurey replied that they had, adding she determined if action was required and any amount less than \$2,500 could be signed off by the County Auditor.

Motion was made by Mr. Dickinson, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the November 15th Board Meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Next, Ms. Delurey presented a request to delete the additional foreclosure charges on Town of Chester Tax Map Parcel No. 104.10-4-5.

Motion was made by Mr. Dickinson, seconded by Ms. Hogan and carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the November 15th Board Meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Concluding her agenda review, Ms. Delurey introduced a request to delete the outstanding taxes on Town of Queensbury Tax Map Parcel No. 309.5-1-1./121.

Motion was made by Mr. Dickinson, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the November 15th Board Meeting. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mike Swan, *County Treasurer*, remarked that one or two individuals stopped payment on checks submitted for parcels each auction. He explained they entered into a contract to purchase the property, put a deposit down and then they cancelled the check. He asked if action could be taken or if there were any legal recourse to obtain the deposit and buyers premium. Ms. Braymer concurred and stated she wanted to change the policy so they would no longer accept personal checks. Ms. Delurey notified the Auctioneer accepted the funds and distributed them to the County so they were accountable for the funds. A brief discussion ensued regarding certified checks.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Chris Belden, *Assistant County Planner*, who provided a recap of the Climate Smart Task Force meeting. He mentioned the meeting was productive, indicating the main discussion involved energy efficiency. He apprised one of the actions they wanted to take was to benchmark energy usage by creating a resolution or Local Law for County-owned buildings which encouraged municipalities to publicly disclose energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. He reported he had software which he had began using to benchmark energy usage. Mr. McDevitt inquired what action was required to begin an energy audit and Mr. Belden replied NYSERDA (*New York State Energy Research and Development Authority*) had a program that funded that type of activity that was different than benchmarking which involved a contractor performing the audit. He indicated the funding had a 50% match which required a contractor to be selected before applying for the funding. Mr. McDevitt asked if action could be taken and Ms. Braymer replied she would like Mr. Belden to investigate the matter further and present his findings at the next meeting.

As there was no further business to come before the Environmental Concerns & Real Property Tax Service Committee, on motion made by Mr. Loeb and seconded by Ms. Hogan, Ms. Braymer adjourned the meeting at 11:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Molly Ganotes-Gleason, Legislative Office Specialist