

**EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**(REMOTELY)
MONDAY, JUNE 15, 2020
3:30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Paul Ruskiewicz, Chairman
Barry Cheney, Joseph J. Minuta, James O'Donnell,
Rob Sassi, Joel Sierra, Kathy Stegenga, Laurie R. Tautel

ALSO

PRESENT: L. Stephen Brescia, Chairman
Katie Bonelli, Majority Leader
Thomas Faggione, Legislator
Janet Sutherland, Legislator
Peter Tuohy, Legislator
John S. Vero, Legislator
Antoinette Reed, Legislative Counsel
Harry Porr, Deputy County Executive
J. Daniel Bloomer, Director of Operations
Bill Fioravanti, Director, Economic Development
Amanda Dana, Tourism Director
Stephanie Kistner, Tourism Coordinator
Deborah Slesinski, Budget Director
Deanna Crawford, Budget Analyst

Chairman Ruskiewicz opened the committee meeting at 3:32 p.m. with a moment of silence and followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. All committee members were present.

Mr. Fioravanti was first on the agenda and addressed a few items that were not in his monthly report. He announced that they were in phase II of reopening with the Coronavirus and June 23rd is phase III. As of now, restaurants open for outside dining, salons and barbershops are open. The next phase will allow restaurants to open up inside, tattoo parlors and some personal care services. Some sectors are still unknown for example gyms. People are upset especially since it is still uncertain. It has been challenging with the state since some of the information comes in bits and pieces. They are trying to promote businesses on the county's facebook page. They have been pushing "buy local" which is more important than ever. The businesses need to play by the rules so they do not get shut down. They have been assisting these businesses with reopening plans and providing any resources they might need. They partnered with the Orange County Chamber of Commerce and the General Services Department to use the buying power of the county to help local businesses acquire Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Mr. Cheney asked if Mr. Fioravanti was in contact with the Department of Transportation regarding closure of streets with the outside dining for restaurants. The closure would allow additional seating in the street and near the parking meter locations.

Mr. Fioravanti responded that he has not been involved with any discussions about using a right of way.

Mr. Cheney mentioned that the Village of Warwick was preparing an application now and it seemed to be straightforward, he was curious if the county did anything to make the process easier. He was confident it was going to work out well.

Mr. Fioravanti stated that they were waiting for a directive to come out of the Governor's office, they are waiting for some type of blanket order that would ease the zoning and code restrictions. It seems that local municipalities need to pass their own law or temporary resolution to allow these regulations. He added that the municipality needs to be on board as well.

Mr. Cheney stated that right now most businesses have certain abilities within the restaurants but do not have the ability to sell liquor in the middle of the street so the municipalities would need to go through a process to get permission from the State Liquor Authority (SLA). It seems like a good opportunity for businesses to give them the best chance they can get to keep the business going.

Chairman Brescia mentioned that the Village of Montgomery waived the street permit process at a meeting they held last week and some businesses took advantage of it. There were a few restaurants that had tables set up on the sidewalk as long as they did not completely block people from walking by. Some places have tents set up outside.

Mr. O'Donnell stated that he was at Long Beach, Long Island last weekend and every bar was packed on the sidewalk. They must have a local ordinance in the City of Long Beach on Long Island because there were places that do not sell food that had tables and chairs outside. It was like it was mid-summer, the places were very crowded. He heard that the Governor was upset with the Hamptons and talked about the open container law. The State Liquor Authority needs to be clear because you cannot have it both ways.

Mr. Fioravanti stated that he was out by the Waterfront in Newburgh on Thursday and it was mobbed. There were a lot of people walking around without masks and he did not see masks in hands. Newburgh wants to close off Liberty Street but he was concerned about that and people will be standing everywhere. You are supposed to be seated at a bar type set up or at table, you cannot stand in between. The SLA allows the extension of your liquor license to go to the outer premises. There can be municipal laws barring that which would need to be lifted by the local town or village board. He added that to put a mask on when walking around people is not hard to do, no one likes it, but you need to.

Mr. O'Donnell mentioned that on the boardwalk in Long Beach, there is a sign with about 5 to 6 things to do, one is to wear a mask. Two weeks ago about 65% of the people were wearing a mask, this past Saturday, about 10% and it is crowded. He was being contacted by the senior center that they want to start up with exercise classes but he advised that it falls under gyms which is phase IV. If Mr. Fioravanti heard something about that to please let him know. He was also contacted by the GNN Riding Club regarding horse shows and was going to give Mr. Fioravanti their information to see if he can provide them some guidance.

Ms. Stegenga stated that the outside dining is only contingent on the Governor's order. As of now, the municipalities are passing temporary permits and not going through the zoning or planning department. There have been a lot of requests for these businesses to stay open all summer long rather than wait on the Governor and the municipalities cannot supersede that. She asked if there was a plan in place to avoid these businesses from being shut down.

Mr. Fioravanti stated that these businesses can get an extension on the liquor license through the SLA and it takes about a month.

Mr. Fioravanti provided a monthly update on Economic Development (see original minutes).

Ms. Dana was next on the agenda and briefed the committee on her role since the pandemic began. She has worked closely with Bill Fioravanti, Steve Knob and Lynn Cione basically like an economic development taskforce and made their first priority to connect businesses to resources. Now they are working on reopening plans and hopefully it will be a safe transition.

Ms. Dana provided a quarterly update on Tourism (see original minutes).

Mr. Cheney made a motion to set the
Public Hearing for 2020-2021 OCCC
Budget, seconded by Ms. Tautel.

Ms. Reed stated that after speaking with the Orange County Community College, they plan to set the public hearing to on the 2020-2021 OCCC Budget for August 6, 2020 at 3:15 p.m. before the regular Legislative Session at 3:30 p.m.

On the motion of Ms. Tautel, seconded by Mr. Minuta, the meeting adjourned at 4:22 p.m.