

**EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

**MONDAY, JULY 15, 2019  
4:00 P.M.**

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

ALSO

PRESENT: L. Stephen Brescia, Chairman  
Katie Bonelli, Majority Leader  
Thomas J. Faggione, Legislator  
Antoinette Reed, Legislative Counsel  
Harold Porr III, Deputy County Executive  
Langdon Chapman, County Attorney  
Damian Brady, Sr. Assistant County Attorney  
Kerry Gallagher, Deputy Commissioner, Finance  
Johanna Porr, County Historian  
Dr. Kristine Young, President, Orange County Community College  
Linda Dauer, Vice President of Admin., Orange County Community College  
Agnes Wagner, Comptroller, Orange County Community College  
Fred Watson, Chairman, OCCC Board of Trustees  
Sister Peggy Murphy, Vice Chairwoman, OCCC Board of Trustees  
Ralph Martucci, Trustee, OCCC Board of Trustees  
Bill Fiovoranti, Director, Economic Development  
Laurie Villasuso, Chief Operating Officer & Exec. V.P., Industrial Dev. Agency  
Vinnie Cozzolino, Managing Dir., Industrial Development Agency  
Mary Ellen Rogulski, Chair, Industrial Development Agency  
Alex Betke, Lobbyist, Industrial Development Agency  
Maureen Hallahan, President, CEO, Orange County Partnership  
Deanna Crawford, Budget Analyst

Chairman Ruskiewicz opened the committee meeting at 4:00 p.m. by asking everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. All committee members were present with the exception of Legislators Sierra and Stegenga.

Chairman Ruskiewicz advised the committee that the order of the agenda has changed and Orange County Community College will go before the I.D.A.

Ms. Porr informed the committee that they were planning for the commemoration of the Semiquincentennial of the War of Independence event throughout the eight years of the conflict. United States Congress passed a resolution in 2016 stating that the entire country will celebrate the Declaration of Independence 1776 in 2026 as a Nation. They created a Semiquincentennial Commission on a federal level in order to do this. They have contacted all of the state historians and she was asked to be the lead of the Hudson Valley and she will be organizing the roundtable discussions and the planning process for the Hudson Valley. During

the discussions some major concerns the people of New York State had was that it did not seem right to celebrate just one day. The legislation on the federal level gave leeway to local communities to celebrate their own events. On the state level they wanted to celebrate all eight years of war and not just on the one date. County Executive Neuhaus will be drafting an executive order that will put a commission together to help during the planning process. These events that happened took place in all of our small communities in Orange County so they would need to be involved. It would be nice if the County Legislature would be in agreement to celebrate all eight years, not just one day. She handed out a timeline of important dates as to what happened year to year (see original minutes).

Mr. Ruskiewicz asked if there were funds for the commission being formed and for the event.

Ms. Porr stated that she is asking for \$5,000 to be added to the funds for hiring consultants in order to start planning this.

Mr. Minuta thanked Ms. Porr for the update and all the information. He agreed that it should be more than just one day and suggested that they dedicate an entire month to the celebration so they can see revenue within the community.

Ms. Porr noted that she was hopeful that it would take place on the anniversary of each event. She mentioned that young kids that are in elementary school now will be graduating high school when this all comes to an end so there is potential for a lot of school projects to be based on adding a component each year as time goes on.

Mr. Sassi inquired about signal fires and recalled that Orange County played a big role in that.

Ms. Porr responded that they can look into that.

Ms. Porr stated that there are two old oil paintings of Goshen that were in the County Clerk's Office for decades but when the move took place they ended up being stored in the basement of the 1841 Courthouse which is the worst place they can be. They need conservation and they need for someone to look at them and check the condition of them.

Ms. Tautel mentioned that Fort Clinton was not listed on the timeline of events which was another important historic site, which Ms. Porr noted.

Mr. O'Donnell stated that whatever is needed to get the oil paintings removed and repaired just let them know because it is important. He asked if Ms. Porr can provide historical background on the Heritage Trail at the next committee meeting.

Ms. Porr replied that she will provide the historical update on the Heritage Trail next month.

Mr. Fioravanti presented a monthly update on Economic Development and an overview on Foreign Trade Zones (FTZ #37) (see original minutes).

Ms. Halahan presented a quarterly update on the Orange County Partnership (see original minutes).

Dr. Young provided a presentation on the Orange County Community College 2019-2020 Budget Request.

Ms. Dauer addressed the AY 19-20 Budget Challenges, AY 19-20 Budget-Revenue Assumptions, Full-Time Equivalent Budget vs. Actual, AY 19-20 Budgeted Revenues, AY 19-20 Budget-Expense Assumptions, Salaries & Benefits, AY 19-20 Proposed Budget (see original minutes).

Last on the agenda was Ms. Rogulski to discuss the IDA and the Heritage Trail. She addressed the unfortunate incident that took place with the Heritage Trail. She wanted the committee members to understand the amount of effort that the IDA and staff made to make this happen and she wanted them to know why it would be illegal for the IDA to vote in favor of this. The reason is because it is considered a grant, not a project. If the county took the money in 2015 or 2016 or even the beginning of 2017, it probably would have been okay because the rules did not change. The statute has changed significantly since that time and the oversight in management of the ABO has also changed. In 2015 the IDA approved the funding of the Heritage Trail which was considered economic development which at that time was sufficient, but it no longer is. They instructed their management staff along with their lobbyist, Alex Betke, to investigate this to see if there was a way the IDA can still do this. Mr. Betke met with Mr. Pearlman, Executive Director of the ABO, to explain the issues and how it was already approved prior to 2015. The new statute does not provide for any grandfather provisions so there was no legal way for them to get out of it.

Ms. Rogulski asked that Mr. Betke discuss the conversations with Mr. Pearlman.

Ms. Reed stated that the committee should enter executive session pursuant to section 1051d for potential litigation. Members of the Legislature relied on this information and relied on the vote from the IDA for monies to come to the Heritage Trail Project. The Legislators asked about potential litigation, that was the reason for executive session.

On the motion of Mr. Minuta, seconded by Mr. Cheney, the committee went into executive session at 5:45 p.m.

On the motion of Mr. O'Donnell, seconded by Mr. Sassi, the committee went into sub-executive session at 6:22 p.m. with Legislative Counsel and Legislators only.

Legislator Cheney left the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

The committee came out of sub executive session at 6:40 p.m. and reconvened executive session.

On the motion of Mr. Minuta, seconded by Ms. Tautel, the committee came out of executive session at 7:01 p.m.

On the motion of Mr. Minuta, seconded by Ms. Tautel, the meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.