

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING TOURISM/AGRICULTURE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING March 3, 2026

### **ATTENDEES:**

**Legislators:** Ron Ciotoli, Keith Flesher, Jake Brown, David Cantella, Tracy Monell, Jo Ellen Rose

**Staff:** Brittany Woodburn, Linda Sampson, Jackson Bailey

**Guests:** Dr. Kristi Snyder, Tioga County Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE)

Legislator Flesher called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M.

Committee Chair Ciotoli arrived at 1:03 P.M.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING (ED&P):** Agenda and attachments previously emailed.

### **I. MINUTES**

- A. Approval of minutes from February 3, 2026 – Legislator Flesher asked for approval of the minutes from the February 3, 2026, meeting. Legislator Brown made a motion to accept the minutes from the February 3, 2026, meeting, seconded by Legislator Cantella. All were in favor.

Ms. Woodburn reported the following:

### **II. FINANCIAL**

- A. 2026 Budget
1. Economic Development
    - Year-to-Date Budget is tracking.
  2. Planning
    - Year-to-Date Budget is tracking.
  3. Sustainability Management
    - Year-to-Date Budget is tracking.

Ms. Woodburn reported that Dr. Pratt recently received the 2024 reimbursement payment from the state for her position.

### **III. OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. Reports**

1. Cornell Cooperative Extension – Dr. Kristi Snyder – Monthly report previously emailed and is in the committee packet. Dr. Snyder was in attendance and reviewed her

monthly report highlighting Agricultural Resource Group, Community Connections, Agriculture Outreach Programs, Horticulture Outreach, Collaboration & Research, Master Gardeners, 4-H Youth Development, Family Resource Center, Smart energy Choices, and WIOA Youth Employment Program/Workforce.

Dr. Snyder distributed a list of Seed-Share Events being held around the County. CCE has received free seed packets that they can pass on to the public. CCE is also growing some seedlings in their greenhouse and will be encouraging people to start a home garden. Master gardeners will be available for questions. The first event is March 14<sup>th</sup> in Owego at the Coburn Free Library.

Dr. Snyder reported CCE has established a new Entrepreneur and Leadership Club being led by Legislator Brown and attendance has been good so far. Legislator Brown reported the group seemed to be engaged and mentioned several business visits and events are planned.

2. Tioga County Tourism – Monthly report previously emailed and is in the committee packet.
3. Tioga County Soil & Water Conservation District – No report this month.

#### B. Grants

1. Active Grants – See attached EDP Grant Tracking spreadsheet. Ms. Woodburn highlighted the following:
  - a. CDBG Public Facilities – Catholic Charities – Ms. Woodburn had some newspaper articles on display regarding the ribbon cutting ceremony that was held February 6<sup>th</sup> for the food truck, Tioga F.R.E.S.H. (Food Resources Everyone Should Have). The food truck is a community kitchen on wheels based at Catholic Charities, Nichols, NY and will operate Tuesday to Friday, 11:00AM – 1:00PM and will rotate locations throughout the county. Ms. Norton spoke at the ribbon cutting. This has been a successful project and ED&P will work with them on spending what's left of the grant funds because the project came in under budget.
  - b. ESD Restore NY Round VII – Tioga Trails – This is the \$1M grant that was awarded a number of years ago for Tioga Trails. The Land Bank will be acquiring the property on 48-50 Lake Street as a rehabilitation project and the closing should be later this week. The Land Bank will partner with the IDA on this project. There is a little over \$500,000 from DRI funding that can be used for this project. ED&P will be actively looking at other funding sources for this large project.
  - c. CDBG Public Facilities – Stone House – ED&P received the structural report from Mr. Hammond, and it has been passed on to the construction manager. Looking to set up a time for the construction manager to come look at the property. ED&P has been working with Liz Myers regarding the office space/square footage DSS will need.
  - d. Congressionally Directed Spending Requests – These requests have been announced, and Senator Schumer is now accepting preliminary requests for

New York based projects for 2027. They are due March 22<sup>nd</sup>. ED&P will be helping a few organizations regarding their requests.

Regarding the Equipment Lease grant, Ms. Woodburn reported a couple of applications came in with no success.

C. **Economic/Community Development** – Ms. Woodburn reminded the committee that Tioga County is a federally designated Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP) zone. Tioga County is one of 5 REAP zones in the United States. We get special funding set aside from the USDA Community Facilities program and we compete with Sullivan County for those funds. If they don't get used by Tioga County or Sullivan County, they become available to Vermont. Ms. Norton has done a great job outreaching to municipalities to see who may be interested in applying. Ms. Norton has found the following:

1. USDA Community Facilities
  - a. V. Newark Valley – Interested in applying for funds for a plow truck.
  - b. T. Newark Valley - Interested in applying for funds for a plow truck.
  - c. Spencer Volunteer Fire Department – Interested in applying for funds for a tanker truck.
2. DRI – Owego – Reallocated funds request has been made to the state and ED&P is expecting approval in the next few weeks.
3. NY Forward – Village of Waverly
  - a. Small Projects Fund – Thoma continues to outreach; only two applications submitted. They continue to look for more projects.
  - b. Public Projects – A meeting was held regarding two public projects: East Waverly Park and Broad Street Streetscape enhancements. For the East Waverly Park they are looking to add a splash pad, new pickle ball courts, moving and improving a basketball court, add a playground, a batting cage, a walking trail, and make improvements to the T-ball, softball and baseball fields. ED&P will be looking for additional funds for these projects.

D. **Land Bank**

1. FY 2025 Audits for Land Bank, IDA and LDC – ED&P changed audit firms requiring more work for documentation. Auditors will begin field work on March 16<sup>th</sup>.
2. 247 Main Street, Owego – Schematic design has been shared with the Land Bank Board. It was approved with a few minor revisions and will go out to bid soon.
3. 121 Providence Street, Waverly – Construction is underway. Painting almost complete. Installing kitchens and bathrooms next week.

E. **Workforce Development**

1. AMT – Alliance for Manufacturing and Technology is launching a new program, RAISE Southern Tier. They received grant funding through Southern Tier 8 and Appalachian Regional Commission. This program covers services, training and technical support for manufacturers looking to explore and implement new technologies, including AI training. ED&P has been asked to reach out to our small

and mid-size manufacturers. Ms. Schnabl and Ms. Yelverton have been working on this project.

2. Twin Tiers Regional Job Fair – Waverly Central School District will be holding this event on March 20<sup>th</sup>. Expecting 50-70 employers, hundreds of job seekers and students from Waverly and other Tioga County School Districts.

F. Planning

1. 239 Reviews –

- a. 2026-004: Village of Owego, Site Plan Review and Special Use Permit, ValuAuto – The applicant plans to add and operate a NYS DMV-licensed vehicle dismantling and retail operation to their existing business located on Southside Drive. Per requirement in the Village of Owego zoning code, dismantled vehicle parts will be stored within the newer garage on site for tow trucks. Staff advised the County Planning Board to recommend approval of the site plan review and special use permit, and the County Planning Board voted to recommend approval of the site plan review and special use permit.

Ms. Woodburn apologized as she realized this was the incorrect review and will send the correct 239 Review after this meeting.

2. 2026 Annual Agricultural Districts inclusion requests – One inclusion request was received from landowner, Eric Johnson. The public hearing was held last month. The resolution to authorize this request is listed below.

G. Sustainability Management

1. Private Hauler Outreach – Dr. Pratt distributed reminders to private haulers in Tioga County for their permit application and a recycling/garbage reporting worksheet by the submission deadlines.
2. Waste Reduction Education & Outreach – Dr. Pratt continues with promotional and educational outreach, as well as website improvements and mini-documentary videos. Dr. Pratt is working on a mini-documentary with the Owego School District Green Team on reducing waste and a mini-documentary with Waverly Schools on an interesting eel project.

3. 2026 YTD – Updates available in May or June

a. Paid to Broome County	2026	2025
i. HHW	\$ 0.00	\$11,239.55
ii. E-Waste	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,006.25
b. Towns/County(E-waste)	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,167.25

H. IDA

1. FY 2025 Audit – Spoke about earlier.
2. Façade loan requests – Two façade loan applications received. One will be reviewed at the IDA Board meeting tomorrow and the other next month.

Not on the agenda, regarding the Rail with Trail Project, ED&P is looking to fill a \$150,000 funding gap and will be submitting a request to ARC through Southern Tier 8 for this. It looks like we have a pretty good chance on receiving. The ST8 Board made

a formal recommendation to submit it as one of their priority projects and it should make the timeline.

#### **IV. PERSONNEL**

- A. Administrative Coordinator – Lisa Williams started February 9<sup>th</sup> and is doing a great job.
- B. County Planning Director – incumbent retirement – Elaine Jardine’s retirement date was February 28<sup>th</sup>.
- C. County Planning Director – new appointment – Sara Zubalsky-Peer begins in this position March 7<sup>th</sup>.
- D. Deputy Director – Megan Schnabl will be out on maternity leave beginning March 23<sup>rd</sup> and will be returning mid-June.
- E. Salary ranges for department positions- Ms. Woodburn continues to work with Personnel on the salary ranges for the Community Development Specialist position and the Deputy Director position.

#### **V. RESOLUTIONS**

- C10-Ag District Inclusion Owego Nichols District 2
- C19-Appoint Member (Myers) to the Broome-Tioga Workforce Development Board
- C28-Appoint Member (Zubalsky-Peer) to STERPDB

After reviewing the above resolutions, Ms. Woodburn asked this committee for support to move the resolutions forward. The vote to support the above resolution follows:

- Legislator Ciotoli – yes
- Legislator Flesher – yes
- Legislator Brown – yes
- Legislator Cantella – yes

#### **VI. PROCLAMATIONS - N/A**

#### **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further topics of discussion or questions, the meeting was adjourned at 1:40 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Linda Sampson  
Administrative Assistant, Economic Development & Planning