

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & ENERGY COMMITTEE MEETING
Held Via Audio Webinar
Pursuant To Temporary Emergency Orders

Members: Chairman Gouldman, Legislators Montgomery & Sayegh

Thursday

July 23, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 P.M. by Chairman Gouldman who led in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislator Montgomery, Legislator Sayegh and Chairman Gouldman were present.

Item #3 - Discussion/Memorandum from County Executive Odell regarding Film Production

Chairman Gouldman stated New York City is looking to connect with Putnam County to find possible locations that could be used for filming. He stated Putnam County is beautiful, that should be shared with the world. He stated there are many possible sites that the County could offer including churches, courthouses, libraries, etc. He stated he has invited Tourism Director Tracey Walsh and Putnam County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) President Kathleen Abels to speak more on this topic.

Director Walsh stated bringing in more film production was at the top of Tourism's 2020 priorities, prior to the pandemic. She agreed with Chairman Gouldman that Putnam County has a robust list of sites that could be used. She stated shortly after she took this position, she worked with a group that needed a quiet suburban street at night. She stated in February 2020, the County was approached about a documentary series being produced by A&E that was looking for small town halls and beautiful courthouses. She stated she believes our courthouse is the most beautiful one in the state. She stated just yesterday she received a call about a CBS documentary. She stated Senior Deputy County Attorney Anna Diaz is the contact in the Law Department who works with the film producers and the Sheriff's Department handles the traffic control. She stated New York City believes that when the city reopens, there will be a higher demand for locations than they can accommodate. She stated herself, along with the County Executive and Deputy County Executive, had a conference call with Ariana Caplan, Senior Advisor, Intergovernmental Partnerships in the NYC Mayor's Office and it was very productive. She stated this is a great opportunity for the County.

EDC President Abels stated this is a golden opportunity, especially with the loss of sales tax revenue due to the pandemic. She stated New York State is very friendly to film and television productions. She stated the people who come to work on the productions spend money in the area and it brings excitement. She listed some potential locations in Putnam County, such as the Village of Brewster train station, Tilly Foster Farm, and the Historic Courthouse. She stated Putnam County has it all and should not overlook this opportunity.

Director Walsh stated they are working on a production webpage, similar to the Dutchess County's, so that productions can research the area. She stated this is a way to support our local businesses.

EDC President Abels noted that after the conference call, they proactively sent pictures of potential locations to the Mayor's Office.

Chairman Gouldman stated he agrees with the points made by Director Walsh and EDC President Abels. He suggested people reach out if they have a unique room in their home.

Director Walsh stated there is a spot for people to submit their property.

EDC President Abels stated it can be very lucrative for the sites as well as ancillary businesses.

Chairman Gouldman stated it is a win-win situation for Putnam County.

Legislator Sayegh stated this is very exciting and she is glad the County is moving forward.

Legislator Montgomery stated the Hollywood on the Hudson group has been involved with productions.

Legislator Jonke thanked Director Walsh and EDC President Abels for their hard and diligent work. He stated this is something that can draw excitement. He stated when the movie "A Quiet Place" was filming in Pawling, he met with the Supervisor and heard just how excited the residents were.

Legislator Albano agreed with Legislator Jonke. He stated this is very exciting and interesting.

Chairman Gouldman thanked Director Walsh and EDC President Abels. He stated he looks forward to this potential opportunity. He stated if any audience member has a place in mind or an idea, to please reach out to the Legislative Office at (845) 808-1020.

Item #4 - FYI/Unemployment Report – Duly Noted.

Item #5 - FYI/Foreclosure Report – Duly Noted.

Item #6 - Other Business

Chairman Gouldman stated there is a request to add other business to the agenda, but since there is no representative from the Health Department on the line, he does not believe it would be appropriate to have that discussion.

Chairman Gouldman made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Sayegh.

Legislator Montgomery stated she would like to make a statement. She stated the open status of our economy depends on maintaining low rates of COVID-19 transmission, as well as the

expertise of a qualified epidemiologist and public health officer in the Health Department. She stated this is essential in keeping Putnam County open and thriving, while keeping the public safe. She stated we need to ensure these responsibilities are being carried out. She stated it is not public health or the economy, it is public health and the economy.

Chairman Gouldman noted that there was correspondence today indicating that the Public Information Officer position has been filled. He stated that is a good thing. He stated hopefully the other positions will be filled soon.

Item #7 – Adjournment

There being no further business, at 6:58 P.M., Chairman Gouldman made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Sayegh. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Ed Gordon.