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## **Guest Presentation – Ulster County Broadband Plan**

Chairman Briggs invited Department of Planning Director Doyle to updated the Committee on the Ulster County Broadband Plan. Department of Planning Director Doyle deferred the presentation to Deputy Director White.

Department of Planning Deputy Director White noted Resolution No. 346 of 2014 requested the County Executive develop a plan on a 1, 3 and 5-year timeline to figure out gaps in the County's broadband system and how to address both the residential and commercial ends. He noted the County has issues with unserved and under served areas. He noted there are business corridors where there may not be the speeds, the affordability, the reliability, or the redundancy that is needed. He stated a working group was formed that included Department of Information Services Director Sylvia Wohlfahrt and Technology Engineer Thomas Hynes, budget office representative, Business Office Director Suzanne Holt, Department of Planning Director Dennis Doyle and himself. He stated they put out an RFP for a consultant that would complete a gaps analysis and feasibility study. He stated this would verify and give an accurate portrayal of where infrastructure has been deployed and areas that infrastructure is not deployed. He stated that would explore speed issues by completing speed tests around the county. He noted they would establish a standard to strive for. He noted the Governor's grant, expected to be released next year, is seeking a 100 MB download capacity and they review would assess where in the County they would be able to meet that. He noted they would examine business case scenarios for how they should deploy additional broadband. He noted the opportunities sought would leverage the state level grant funding to bring in private service providers to build out on the network and reach projects that are currently identified as not infeasible. He stated five proposals were received from the RFP and they narrowed it down to 3. He stated they hope to select a vendor by the end of the week and to come under contract by the end of January. He noted all the proposals came in under the \$75,000 budgeted in contingency. He noted in the future, they anticipate applications to other funding opportunities. He stated the Governor's grant may only be for residential areas.

Director Wohlfahrt and Deputy Director White highlighted the anchor institution stakeholder groups of industries that are major users that would be identified and work with the consultant included hospital, schools, colleges, tech entrepreneurs and BOCES. Deputy Director White noted they would also be assessing the residential services. He reiterated the development of accurate maps and fact checking the existing data of where infrastructure is deployed.

Legislator Archer inquired into the consultant's completing a pole by pole survey of the county's infrastructure. Deputy Director White noted a meeting the working group had with Time Warner Cable and Lightower. He stated they would seek proprietary agreements with the providers to access the data they need to verify the information as well as outreach to entities such as the libraries to obtain individual access abilities. Legislator Archer discussed first hand experience she had with providers and their own data. She noted the only verifiable data came from the Town of Rochester's highway employee pole-by-pole assessment. Deputy Director White concurred the need to outreach to and use the first hand knowledge of the Town Supervisors. Legislator Archer noted the difference between running a business on a smart phone (wireless) and on the internet (wired). Deputy Director White highlighted the options of hybrid systems. Legislator Archer highlighted white technology and push systems. Deputy Director White noted the need to identify incremental projects with costs assigned. He noted the projects needed to be feasible and with the best return on investment. He stated the study would enable the County to determine where to go in the future.

Legislator Archer noted the municipality had banked the franchise fees to facilitate last mile issues. Deputy Director White noted the state grant is a dollar for dollar match.

Legislator Bartels inquired into the Town of Rochester's methodology in doing the pole by pole assessment. Legislator Archer replied the highway department segmented the Town based on their work areas and documented what was on the pole and what was missing. She noted they all returned to compile the information at the end of the day. Legislator Bartels emphasized this as a critical aspect of bringing local supervisors in to participate in the needs assessment. Deputy Director White requested the Legislators assistance in getting the word out.

Legislator Litts asked about the impact with the new LiFi system coming out in the next year or so that will be 10 – 100 times faster than WiFi. He noted it is LED based and just announced last Thursday. He indicated it would not be good to move forward with infrastructure that is potentially outdated in two years. Deputy Director White replied the needs assessment was not limited to WiFi. Legislator Litts noted as it was based on light, the identified gaps would not be accurate. He stated as long as you could get electricity, you could get LiFi. Legislator Archer noted this would still be an issue in regards to it not being wired and would still have upload and download capability issues. She noted bandwidth would still need to exist to accommodate the number of users. Legislator Litts noted that with faster speeds, the bandwidth could be less. Deputy Director White stated they would ask the consultants to look into LiFi and noted they did not want to have stranded assets in two to five years.

Legislator Bartels recommended adding the film industry, a growing industry in the County, to the list of stakeholders. Deputy Director White requested Legislators share names and contact information of those that should be included in the needs assessment.

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**Motion No. 2**

**Resolution No. 461**

**December 15, 2015**

**Text of Motion:** **Resolved to approve Resolution No. 461** - Approving The Execution Of A Contract Amendment Causing The Aggregate Contract Amount To Be In Excess Of \$50,000.00 – Essex Technology Group Inc – Information Services

**Motion Made By:** Legislator Litts For Discussion

**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Allen

**Resolution No. 461 Summary:** This Resolution states the Ulster County Legislature has examined the contract amendment with Essex Technology Group Inc for an increased amount of \$15,000.00, and hereby approves the amendment in the form as filed with the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature or as modified with the approval of the County Attorney and Legislative Counsel.

**Discussion:** Director Wohlfahrt noted this is a technology vendor they keep on retainer to assist with upgrading the operating system on their mini computer. She stated the amount allocated is similar to the amount spent this year but that there was no obligation to spend it at all. She noted they upgraded the mini computers last year and anticipate using the vendor next year for the migration of Lotus Notes off the system and into the cloud.

**Roll Call Vote:** No

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Allen, Archer, Bartels, Briggs, Litts, and Maloney

**Voting Against:** None

**No. of Votes in Favor:** 6

**No. of Votes Against:** 0

**Disposition:** Carried

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**Motion No. 3**

**Resolution No. 466**

**December 15, 2015**

**Motion Made By:** Legislator Litts For Discussion

**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Allen

**Text of Motion:** **Resolved to approve Resolution No. 466** - Approving The Execution Of A Contract Amendment In Excess Of \$50,000.00 Entered Into By The County – International Business Machines Corp – Information Services



Intent, the EAF and documentation aforesaid to the interested agencies, the Legislature shall become the Lead Agency under SEQRA for this project and establishes Capital Project No. 459 “Ashokan Rail Trail” for \$1,000,000.00 and that the 2015-2020 Capital Fund Budget is amended to increase Appropriation line #HH 7197-0459-4300-4355 (Engineering Services) by \$550,000.00 and Revenue line #HH 7197-0459-3200-2397 (Intergovernmental Charges - Capital Projects, Other Gov’t (NYC DEP Grant)) by \$550,000.00

**Discussion:** Legislature Litts noted the Ulster & Delaware Corridor Advisory Board had just received the consultant’s report and felt this resolution might be premature. He stated he wanted to make sure it was in harmony with the findings of the advisory board.

Legislator Archer stated she too was still reading the consultant’s report. She stated the report indicated the one section identified for trail only was around the Ashokan. She did not feel the action should be held up as there already exists a memorandum of agreement with the NYC Department of Environmental Protection, the Legislature already voted for this section and even the consultants are saying it is the best use for this section. Legislator Litts replied he would like the consultants to have a clear scope of services and did not think they had yet vetted out the consultant’s report to a place where they could amass a clear scope of services. He felt postponing the resolution one month or two would not have a great impact on the capital project. He did not want to have the County expend money on design work done only to turn around and have a different approach to the scope of services.

Legislator Bartels noted the DEP money was in the bank. She indicated she shared Legislator Litt’s concerns and was not ready to move forward in deference to the Ulster & Delaware Corridor Advisory Committee. She wanted to see the outcome from the Board’s work.

Chairman Briggs noted the resolution had two other committees to go through. Legislator Allen stated the urgency in passing had to do with the grant writing process. Legislator Litts reiterated the money was in the bank and that there were no additional grants.

Deputy Director White indicated they had received communication from Legislators who wanted to vote on this action in December and if it did not pass the committee, they would not be able to vote on it. He noted the County’s policy currently supports this action and if following the work of the Ulster & Delaware Corridor Advisory Board’s report, they change the policy, they can pull the resolution. He reiterated there were some Legislators that were leaving the legislature and wanted to vote on the resolution. He stated the resolution takes the money from the bank and puts it in an established capital project for the purposes of design and engineering activity only. He indicated

they would need to come back to the Committee three or four times before there was any construction done. He stated it established the County as the lead for SEQRA so that they can begin the environmental work. He indicated they would hope to bring a vendor in under contract to begin the work in April and May. He indicated they anticipated the Board's report being in at the end of November so that the Legislature could vote on it in December but that the Legislature changed the timeline. He noted this was a baby step forward. He highlighted the various points he would have to come back to the Committee for approval. He noted he respected the Board's work and did not put the RFP for the engineering work out back in May or June as planned.

Legislator Litts noted as a designer, it is not typical to design the superstructure until you design the foundation. He reiterated putting the vote off a month is not detrimental to the project but that it would design the foundation before designing the superstructure.

Legislator Provenzano stated she would be very disappointed if she was not given the opportunity to vote on this piece. She stated she felt everyone was in agreement and that delaying the resolution a month did nothing but take away an opportunity that they had been working on for a long time. Legislator Litts replied he had a sign at his office that stated "Do It Right, Do It Once". He stated he has sat through many Legislative meetings where items were rushed through, including the resolution for this Ashokan Rail Trail. He felt they should take the time to think through this action properly, logically and with the right progression. He stated the extra month would not affect the capital project.

Ms. Nolan stated this was the recommendation from the Alta Study done in 2005. She noted while it might seem new to some, this was not new in the planning process.

Legislator Rodriguez noted in the new year there would be new Legislators that would need to get up to speed whereas this Legislature has been dealing with it for two years, if not more.

Legislator Allen noted his funding comment was confused with a different element, which did have reimbursable grants. He asked what the impact would be to the capital plan if the resolution was held up a month or two. Deputy Director White replied it would delay putting the RFP/RFQ out. He noted they stopped the process due to the Ulster & Delaware Corridor Advisory Board's work back in April and that without the Advisory Board, they would have submitted this resolution back in May of this year. He concurred with Legislator Rodriguez that a new Legislature may want to restart the entire process. Legislator Archer expressed a desire to leave seeing there is something accomplished.

**Roll Call Vote:** No  
**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Allen, Archer, Briggs, and Maloney

**Voting Against:** Legislators Bartels and Litts  
**No. of Votes in Favor:** 4  
**No. of Votes Against:** 2  
**Disposition:** Carried

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**Motion No. 5**

**Resolution No. 481**

**December 15, 2015**

**Motion Made By:** Legislator Bartels  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Allen

**Text of Motion:** **Resolved to approve Resolution No. 481** - Establishing The Ulster County Legislature As Lead Agency Under The State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) For The Installation Of A Solar Project On The Ulster County Resource Recovery Closed Landfill In The Town Of Ulster – Department Of Planning

**Resolution No. 481 Summary:** This Resolution states, pursuant to 6 NYCRR Part 617.6(b) (3) of the Regulations pertaining to Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law of New York State (SEQRA), the Ulster County Legislature hereby declares its intent to serve as Lead Agency for the above recited project and that the Ulster County Legislature has determined, after review of the criteria contained in 6 NYCRR Parts 617.4 and 617.5, that the project is an Unlisted Action. The Resolution indicates that the Ulster County Legislature will conduct a coordinated review and circulate its Notice of Intent to serve as Lead Agency, together with the EAF and accompanying documentation to all interested and involved agencies pursuant to 6 NYCRR Part 617.6(b) (2) (i) and 6 NYCRR Part 617.6(b) (3) and that pursuant to 6 NYCRR Part 617.6(b) (3), at the conclusion of an otherwise unchallenged thirty (30) day period following the date of transmittal of the Notice of Intent, the EAF and documentation aforesaid to the interested agencies, the Legislature shall become the Lead Agency under SEQRA for this project.

**Discussion:** Department of Planning Director Doyle stated, in response to questioning from Legislator Maloney, they did expect any problems. He stated there were a couple of permits from the Department of Environmental Conservation that may require amendments but that they expect it would be allowed to occur.

Legislator Bartels inquired into the solar city lease agreement and asked if the County had run the numbers for actually purchased it's own system. Deputy County Executive Crannell replied the landfill site agreement was structured to allow the County to buy the project in six years. He noted the college chose to have a flat rate for the life of the power purchase agreement. Legislator Bartels requested to see the analysis. Deputy County Executive Crannell replied he would send this to her. He noted they were prepared to present to the Energy and Environment Committee and/or provide Legislator Bartels with a private tour.



Legislator Maloney inquired into the conceptual plan. Department of Planning Director Doyle replied the layout was in draft form. He stated it would be well screened and would be located at the top of the landfill. He noted there would be limited visibility from the road systems.

**Roll Call Vote:** No  
**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Allen, Archer, Bartels, Briggs, Litts, and Maloney  
**Voting Against:** None  
**No. of Votes in Favor:** 6  
**No. of Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** Carried

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**New Business** None

**Old Business:** None

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**Announcements:**

Chairman Briggs thanked Legislator Archer for her time and dedication to the Committee and expected she would still be around helping out with the Broadband issue.

Deputy County Executive Crannell reported a couple of attendees from the recent tech-entrepreneur micro campaign were planning to relocate to the County.

Legislator Maloney noted he had contacted Deputy County Executive Sudlow several times and inquired into bus service to Ulster Gardens. Deputy County Executive Crannell replied they were working on it and that there were some routing issues.

**Adjournment**

**Motion Made By:** Legislator Litts  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Archer  
**No. of Votes in Favor:** 6  
**No. of Votes Against:** 0

**TIME:** 6:40 PM

**Dated the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of December, 2015**  
**Krista J. Barringer, Deputy Clerk**

**Minutes Approved on: January 19, 2016**