

**Organization River Area Council of Governments****Board Executive Board****Date and Time Tuesday, July 16 2002 at 7:00 PM****Place Village of Carthage Municipal Building, 120 S Mechanic St., Carthage NY 13619****Contact [Chris Vargulick](#) Town Clerk Phone (315) 493-3240 Fax(315) 493-2900****Minutes**

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**TO:** Mayors/Supervisors and Boards of the T/Champion, T/Wilna, V/Carthage and V/West Carthage**FROM:** Chris Vargulick, Council Secretary**DATE:** July 18, 2002**RE:** Minutes from July 16, 2002 River Area Council of Governments meeting**Members present:** M. Bezanilla, T. Buckley, M. Franchini, W. McIlroy, M. Sligar, P. Smith, and T. Stewart**Members absent:** J. Smith

Chairman McIlroy called the meeting to order at 7:00PM at the Village of Carthage Municipal Building.

Motion by M. Sligar, seconded by T. Buckley to approve the minutes for June 18, 2002, as presented. Ayes-7, Nays-0. Motion carried.

Chairman McIlroy opened the meeting for public comment. No one from the public spoke.

**Reports**

The Council reviewed the Circuit Rider's monthly report and discussed the status of the CDBG and the availability of applications. Ms. Amyot responded that applications could be distributed at this time but that monies will not be available until all agency comments are complete. Historical comments are pending.

Ms. Amyot informed the Board that there is interest in pursuing a countywide designation as an Empire Development Zone. Any application to be considered for an EDZ designation must originate at the county level.

The State has announced a new round of funding for a wide range of projects including business, tourism and downtown development. The window of application is small with a deadline of August 12<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Amyot encouraged each RACOG community to apply for a matching grant with the 2002 "Main Street New York" Downtown Development Initiative. Each community has been identified as being eligible under the park improvement initiative. The Empire Opportunity Fund is for projects costing a minimum of \$500,000. Eligibility requirements will be studied to determine if the pool project would meet the established criteria.

**Old Business**

- W. McIlroy reported that the Village of Carthage has requested additional information to study prior to making a decision concerning the railroad depot.
- Council members discussed their board's reaction to approaching the school district to discuss a joint project to construct a pool facility. Motion by T. Buckley, seconded by T. Stewart to forward a letter to the Superintendent of Schools to update him on the status of the study and request a meeting with him or his designee to discuss the district's position relative to constructing new facilities. Ayes-7, Nays-0. Motion carried.
- Council members reviewed a draft of the application to NYSDOT for technical assistance in traffic engineering and transportation planning. No changes were suggested.
- The Town of Champion submitted its appointees to the sub-committee to study regional issues relative to a retail mega-store. The Village of West Carthage announced that they did not intend to appoint representatives to the sub-committee. The item will be placed on the August agenda to give the Town of Wilna and the Village of Carthage time to make appointments.

**New Business**

- Karen Delmonico, president of the Greater Watertown-North Country Chamber of Commerce, presented information concerning the Chamber's energy alliance. As Chamber members, the RACOG community's municipal facilities would be eligible to participate in the buying pool for electricity and natural gas for the purpose of reducing energy costs. Employees of the municipalities would also be eligible for participation in the electric pool only. Each community may participate independently regardless of action taken by the other RACOG communities.

Ms. Delmonico informed the Council that a presentation would be made on Friday, August 16<sup>th</sup> at JCC to discuss the Destiny USA project involving the expansion of the Carousel Mall complex in Syracuse. Ms. Delmonico commented on the local opportunities that present themselves even with mega-store development.

- David Alteri and Jan Maas presented a slide show and power point presentation about the revitalization, over the past 30 years, in the Village of Sackets Harbor. Both presenters emphasized the importance of planning; celebrating your history; using consultants; taking advantage of internal resources; participating in funding programs; setting high standards; sensitive in-fill/restoration/compatible signage; prioritization; and believing in the community and its future. The presenters recognized the value of the cooperative efforts of RACOG and encouraged collaborations with both Black River and Olympic Trail communities.
- Motion by M. Franchini, seconded by T. Stewart to authorize an application for the Niagara Mohawk Community Renaissance Award for recognition of the RACOG website. Ayes-7, Nays-0. Motion carried.

The Council recognized Kate Pickert, the Watertown Daily Times local reporter, for her fair and comprehensive coverage of the RACOG communities during her tenure with the paper. Ms. Pickert is leaving the area to continue her education at Columbia University. Ms. Pickert thanked the Council members for their accessibility and recognized them for their commitment to their communities.

Motion by T. Stewart, seconded by M. Sligar to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15PM.

**The next meeting of the River Area Council of Governments will be held on Tuesday, August 20, 2002 at 7:00PM at the Village of Carthage Municipal Building.**

Christina Vargulick  
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RACOG Secretary