

patrons and revenue. However, the initiative is dependent upon approval by Albany State officials.

Lewis County is being set up as a vendor for the Massachusetts ATV conference, at which Jackie will present development of the Lewis County trail system.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING/
RECREATION, FORESTRY AND PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING
July 17, 2018**

Economic Development Director Eric Virkler reviewed his attached report.

In relation to the business park, if the Town of Lowville indicates interest to be the lead agency, the NYSDEC will make the final decision.

The CFA application for the \$200,000 CDBG application for a small business/loan grant funding program is due by 7/27/18. A contract will be required for the IDA to administer the CDBG grant/loan program on behalf of the County.

Eric reported meeting with town of Denmark and New Bremen officials about prospective solar projects, specifically suggesting a generic flat amount policy to be followed for all solar projects. Legislator Burns relayed comments from the Town of Denmark board last evening where they noted that solar projects do not generate a lot of tax revenue for municipalities.

Frank Pace informed that NYSERDA has an established table for solar PILOT's that allows up to \$6,000/yr. that could be utilized. Real Property Tax Director Candy Akin has been working to develop a uniform schedule for assessing solar projects. However, each Town appears to be making their own decisions and negotiating parameters for respective projects.

Eric Virkler listed the advantages of solar projects being that agriculture property owners garner leases and payments, the developer company makes a profit and increases job opportunities during construction; and municipalities receive five-to-six times as much revenue than that received for agricultural land.

Frank Pace also informed that residents and businesses located within the vicinity of a solar project are eligible for 10% reduction off their monthly electric supply charges. Moreover, it provides an opportunity for farmers to diversify, while enhancing their profit margin.

In response to Eric's suggestion for County officials to urge Towns to utilize a uniform assessing policy, Legislators King and LaChausse each expressed strong support that each Town government should make the decision for their locale.

County of Lewis
Economic Development Report
Eric J. Virkler
July 17, 2018

Old Business

- **Business Park:** The LCIDA has withdrawn its current applications with the Town of Lowville. This is a step back, but we hope will lead to a smoother and timelier path forward compared to the direction the process had been taking. LCIDA staff and board do not believe the cooperation and understanding of the project from the Town of Lowville Planning board was in place to effectively complete the SEQR review process. We had been presented a scope of work for an Environmental Impact Statement to finalize the SEQR review that was going to take thousands of additional dollars and significant staff effort. We are immediately beginning to move forward with a refined approach to complete the next steps for approval for this property as a business park.
- **Economic Development Funding:** The balance of the fund at June 30, 2018 is \$750,424. A summary will be attached with this report.
- **Wind Projects:**
 - The Denmark project is expected to move forward with full tower construction this summer.
 - Deer River is in negotiating stage with company and taxing jurisdictions.
 - Maple Ridge Wind tax jurisdictions are in negotiations with the company on a renewal of the PILOT agreement. The most recent negotiating session was a complicated discussion and the parties still have significant work to do to reach agreement. The next meeting is planned for July 26.
- **Climax Manufacturing.** The closing for the property acquisition is held up for legal issues. The seller's attorney has presented a method to resolve this situation and this is beginning to move forward. We do continue to entertain interest in businesses seeking space in the building.
- **Regional Economic Development Council.** CFA applications are due to NYS on July 27. We are not aware of private business applications that might be submitted. It is possible there will be some and there possibly will be municipal applications we are not aware of. Economic Development staff will be submitting an application on behalf of Lewis County for a CDBG small business grant program.
- **Rail Corridor.** We have continued to engage the owner of the rail corridors to determine the potential to acquire certain sections for potential future use for recreation or other purposes.

New Business

- **Company visits.** Economic development staff will be visiting our larger manufacturing companies over the next couple of months. Our intent is to provide any resources and assistance to support their businesses and to ensure they can put a face to the name. We visited Otis Technology in June and County Manager Piche and Legislator Osborne attended that visit.

Lewis County IDA Updates

- **Wind / Solar.** As noted above, the LCIDA expects to be involved in potential PILOT agreements for wind and solar projects. The IDA has received PILOT applications for five separate solar projects from

one company. An informational meeting with towns of Denmark, New Bremen and Croghan will be held on July 12 to discuss how a PILOT agreement would work for this type of project. If these projects and PILOT applications move forward, the County will be participating as an involved taxing jurisdiction in negotiations with the developer.

Lewis County Development Corporation Updates

- Lyons Falls mill: The final phase of the project will kick off later this year. The LCDC is continuing to seek additional funding sources, but expects to complete the necessary work with the current funds committed.
- An agreement to lease the High Falls building on the mill property is moving forward with a dairy processing entrepreneur. This individual intends to complete building renovations and hopefully begin production later this year.

Time and Budget Report

- June 2018 time summary for IDA, LCDC and County activity is available and can be provided upon request.

Meetings

- LCIDA meeting
- Private business meetings (3)
- Wind and solar project meetings (3)
- North Country Alliance
- Presentation provided to Brownfield redevelopment conference
- Regional Council meetings and committees (2)

Mandates / Regulations

- Nothing new at this time.

Lewis County Economic Development

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ED Reserve Activity

July 2018

<u>Project</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>2016-17 Actual Expenditure</u>	<u>2018 Expenditure</u>	<u>Expended To Date</u>	<u>County Reserve Committed</u>
Business Parks					
Land Options	5,000	5,000			
General Consulting	20,000	16,908			
Environmental and Engineering	60,000	44,391	3,891		30,000
Land Acquisition	700,000				80,000
Phase 1 Construction	465,000	250			
Total	1,250,000			70,190	
Lyons Falls Mill					
Demolition	200,000	100,000		100,000	
Lyons Falls UCP Project					
Funding assistance for infrastructure		16,208		16,208	complete
Economic Development Operations	50,000				
Other Prospective Projects					
Climax Building	1,463,000		163,178	163,178	645,000
TOTALS		<u>\$ 182,757</u>	<u>\$ 167,069</u>	<u>\$ 349,576</u>	<u>\$ 755,000</u>
Beginning Balance		2016 Allocation		\$700,000	
		2017 Allocation		\$400,000	
Remaining Balance				<u>\$750,424</u>	
Unallocated, Available for other Projects					<u>(\$4,576)</u>