

SPECIAL SESSION
(July 27, 2023)

Thursday

11:00 AM

A special session of the Wyoming County Board of Supervisors was held at the Wyoming County Government Center in the Board of Supervisors' Chambers located at 143 North Main Street, Warsaw, New York with all Supervisors present except Supervisors Grant, T/Bennington; Roberts, T/Genesee Falls; May, T/Orangeville and Jacoby, T/Wethersfield. Also present were Clerk to the Board of Supervisors, Cheryl Ketchum, Deputy Budget Officer and resident Army National Guard Veteran, D. Nikiel; J. Bragg, Wyoming County Sr. Planner and L. Aures, Administrative Assistant (Planning).

At 11:00 AM Chairwoman Ryan, T/Warsaw, called the special session to order and asked everyone to stand and join Ms. Nikiel in the Pledge of Allegiance.

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING ~

In accordance with Resolution Number 23-369 passed by this Board of Supervisors on July 11, 2023 relative to a grant application the County intends to submit to the New York State Housing Trust Fund Corporation as represented by the New York State Office of Community Renewal through the Community Development Block Grant Program/ Community Planning to fund a Wyoming County Housing Study/Needs Assessment in a maximum amount of \$50,000.00.

- *Sr. Planner Bragg offered the following commentary:*

Wyoming County will use \$50,000 in CDBG funds to prepare a Housing Study and Market Analysis. The total project cost will be \$52,650.00, of which Wyoming County will match up to \$2,650.00 in local funds.

Nearly 66% of the housing stock in Wyoming County is owner-occupied, and 76% of homes in Wyoming County are over 40 years old. Mobile homes in the county are in poor condition, and lot rents are increasing. It is estimated, by Community Action of Wyoming County, that 46% of households who rent in Wyoming County are overburdened. As 1940 is the median year of construction for houses in Wyoming County, there are high instances of both lead and asbestos contamination. Without the resources invested towards this issue, housing stock will continue to deteriorate, and the population living in them will be forced to live in unsafe, substandard housing in their community.

In April 2020, Wyoming County hit a record unemployment rate of 16.9%, putting 3,000 people out of work. In 2023, the unemployment rate is at another all-time low since 2019. Yet there continue to be labor shortages reported by businesses in the county. It has taken two years to regain the labor force needed to meet the job demand with a significant reduction in experienced labor retiring or opting out during the Covid Pandemic.

There is job growth in the manufacturing, agribusiness, and tourism sectors. Unfortunately, there is an imbalance between where jobs are located, and housing is available. Not only is there an inadequate housing supply, but the available housing often needs improvement. Employers in metals-based manufacturing have experienced a 400% increase in jobs since 2010, but positions

are going unfilled due to the unavailability of nearby housing. Housing remains a costly barrier to self-sufficiency and independence for low-income households and workers who need to commute to these jobs.

Wyoming County recognizes the benefits of access to quality housing on residents' overall quality of life, the strength of neighborhoods and communities, and economic growth and resiliency. Throughout Wyoming County, housing continues to be a stumbling block for family and community prosperity. This countywide Housing Study and Needs Assessment will:

Inventory existing housing stock by construction type, value, property class, age, and condition. Analyze unmet housing needs and determine any significant causes for the lack of median and low-income housing that meets contemporary needs and standards.

Develop a strategy for addressing identified housing issues to satisfy the ever-changing needs of working professionals, agricultural workers, senior citizens, and the underserved.

One of the benefits of the approach proposed by Wyoming County is that it is a countywide evaluation. Housing and related patterns and issues continue beyond municipal or county borders; therefore, data collection, analysis, and priority actions must recognize this reality. This Housing Study and Needs Assessment will aid in improving the safety of homes and the resiliency of businesses.

- **Public Comment**

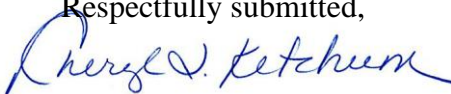
There was no one from the public in attendance but several Supervisors asked Sr. Planner Bragg questions about what the funding would provide for and other Supervisors expanded on Sr. Planner Bragg's answers in support of this grant application, what it would mean for the towns and the county.

CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING ~

A motion was made by Supervisor Leuer, T/Middlebury, seconded by Supervisor Berwanger, T/Arcade. All Aye. Carried

There being no further business to come before this Board, Senior Supervisor Berwanger, T/Arcade, adjourned the meeting about 11:18 AM with a rap on his desk.

Respectfully submitted,



Cheryl J. Ketchum, ^{CMC}
Clerk to the Board