

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/EDUCATION,  
TOURISM AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF THE ULSTER COUNTY  
LEGISLATURE, HELD AT ULSTER COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE, ON THE  
14<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF APRIL, 2004**

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**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

WAYNE HARRIS, Chairman  
FRANK FELICELLO, Deputy Chairman  
PETER LOUGHRAN  
JOSEPH ROBERTI  
TRACEY BARTELS  
SUSAN CUMMINGS  
SUSAN ZIMET

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

PETER CARAFANO, Director, Ulster County Tourism  
PATRICIA JACOBSEN, Deputy Director, Ulster County Tourism  
DR. DONALD C. KATT, President of Ulster County Community College  
GORDON H. HOWATT, Dean of Administration, Ulster County Community College  
GEDDY SVEIKAUSKAS, for Friends of the Pierson House  
LOWELL THING, for Friends of the Pierson House  
HALLIE ARNOLD, The Daily Freeman  
DENNIS DOYLE, Director, Ulster County Planning Department  
BILL TOBIN, Ulster County Transportation Council  
GLENN GIDALEY, Shingbliss Associates  
NIKKI KOENIG-NIELSEN, Shingbliss Associates  
CYNTHIA RUIZ, Director, Ulster County Rural Transportation  
GREER SMITH, President of Transart Group  
GLADYS COOPER, Board Member of Transart Group  
LEE REIDY, Executive Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension  
CHESTER STRAUB, Executive Director, Ulster County Development Corporation  
PATRICK MC COOEY, Ulster County Area Transit  
JANET CRISPINO, Recorder

A quorum being present, Chairman Harris called the meeting to order at 5:30pm and announced that two RFPs had been received, one from Friends of the Pierson House, sponsored by Friends of Historic Kingston, and one from Transart. He distributed copies of each RFP to the Committee members. The purpose is to find the best use for this building. Some of the suggestions have been to return Cornell Cooperative Extension to the building, or to use it as a Tourism Information Center, among others.

Chairman Harris announced at this time that due to the Graduation ceremony at the Community College, the May meeting of this committee will be held on Monday, May 17<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm at the offices of Cornell Cooperative Extension, Westbrook Lane, Kingston, NY.

Chairman Harris then recognized Glen Gidaly of Shingbliss Associates who gave a brief history and overview of the Pierson House including its various structural problems. He said Buildings & Grounds asked his firm to look for some outside funding, as this may be the oldest standing building in the County of Ulster. He said if a Not-for-Profit Corporation leases the building they might be eligible for some funding.

At this time a presentation was made by Geddy Sveikauskas and Lowell Thing representing Friends of the Pierson House and Friends of Historic Kingston. He said their goal is to encourage people to get excited about what this building shows us about our heritage. Mr. Thing said of the more than five hundred stone houses in the County, only a few are available

for the general public to walk through. Mr. Sveikauskas did not exclude using the building for meeting rooms, offices for Historians or lecture rooms and said it should not be just a museum. Leg. Roberti asked about parking and Chairman Harris said it is minimal. Questions were also raised by several Legislators about looking to the County for funding. Chairman Harris said that besides bringing the building up to Code, the County would be responsible for building maintenance and utility costs. He said he would try to set up a tour on May 17<sup>th</sup> at about 4:30pm before the next meeting of this committee.

A presentation was then made by Greer Smith, President and Gladys Cooper, member of the Board of Transart Group. They advised that Transart was looking to establish exhibitions of art and history documenting the lives of African Americans living in the region. They are also looking to fill a void in establishing scholarship for multi-cultural tourism. Their goal is to collaborate with Ulster County to gain African American tourists. Chairman Harris asked about expectations for County funding and Ms. Smith said that they would expect the County to fund the balance of renovations and to carry insurance on the property. She said there would be some operating costs requested but she could not quantify them at this time.

At this time Chairman Harris said the Committee would do an evaluation of the RFPs and get together before the May meeting to see how we are going to proceed. A decision should be made by the end of May or early June.

Chairman Harris recognized Peter Carafano, Director of Ulster County Tourism, who advised that he had nothing new and in the interests of time would not be reporting at this meeting. He said his office was attending this meeting to get some information on the RFPs. Chairman Harris discussed the RFP packets and advised that the disclaimer attached needed to be signed and returned to the Chairman.

The presentations being concluded, Chairman Harris recognized Cynthia Ruiz, Director of Ulster County Rural Transportation, who presented a Resolution to amend the JARC/CST Program to June, 2006 to accommodate leftover federal funding of \$649,000. After a brief discussion, a motion to approve the Resolution as presented was made by Deputy Chairman Felicello and seconded by Leg. Loughran. There being no further discussion a voice vote was taken and the Resolution as presented was unanimously approved.

Ms. Ruiz reported that a Groundbreaking for the new Transit Center would be held on May 7<sup>th</sup> at 11:00am. A reception would follow at Hillside Manor which was being sponsored by the construction engineers.

On Lester Lines, Ms. Ruiz said she had met with D.O.T. in Syracuse and they have agreed to allow us to collect funds and also we would use JARC funding. Currently awaiting an inter-municipal agreement between Orange County and Ulster County to take over that service in July.

On Special Services, a request was received for transportation was received from Hurley Heritage Society for their Stone House Day to be held on July 10<sup>th</sup>. Also, a request for the Rosendale Street Festival, which will be August 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. A motion to approve these Special Services was made by Leg. Loughran and seconded by Leg. Cummings and upon voice the requests were unanimously approved.

Ms. Ruiz also advised that there was an opportunity for Not-for-Profit corporations to advertise on the inside of the buses. She then introduced Patrick McCooley, Dispatcher and Operations Coordinator for Ulster County Area Transit who described his duties and responsibilities. In reply to a question, he said communicators used in the buses are provided by NY Communications. Ms. Ruiz said Mr. McCooley had created our database, which is a model for databases across the state.

The report of Ulster County Rural Transportation being concluded, Chairman Harris recognized Chester Straub, Executive Director of Ulster County Development Corporation who distributed a letter from IDA to the Chairman which covers a PILOT Agreement for Birchwood Village on Flatbush Avenue in the City of Kingston.

He said there are still some small approvals that are needed. Mr. Straub said Birchwood Village would consist of eighty units in a twelve building complex with a Community Center. It will be managed by The Kingston Housing Authority. The total project cost is \$10 million and will be targeted towards income in the 31-50% of median income range. There will be housing set aside for veterans and single parent households. The PILOT Agreement would be for 10% of rents received on an annual basis implemented over a thirty to fifty year period. Mr. Straub said he would come to the Legislature as there is a standard uniform policy. There are provisions for the IDA to deviate from the standard schedule, but that deviance needs the approval of the Legislature. He would like to come back to the Committee in May for formal approval. Leg. Felicello asked if Ulster County residents will get first opportunity and Mr. Straub said they would.

The report of Ulster County Development being concluded, Chairman Harris recognized Dr. Donald C. Katt, President and Gordon H. Howatt, Dean of Administration representing Ulster County Community College. President Katt reported that Gov. Pataki had just appointed a new member to the College's Board of Trustee. She is Ms. Barbara Santoro from New Paltz and she replaced Roger Mabie who was on the board for twenty-five years. Pres. Katt said Ms. Santoro is an excellent addition to the Board, having served on the New Paltz Board of Education and as an Ulster County Legislator.

Pres. Katt also reported on the water situation at the College and said the pressure tank had been taken off line. He said corrective measures were taken and the water was repeatedly tested and is still contaminated with solvents. He said it would cost about \$25,000 to replace the tank. The college attorney has been informed and it is inconceivable that a manufacturer would supply equipment with this type of defect. The pressure tank will not go back on line until the problem is corrected.

At this time Dean Howatt presented the following Resolution:

"Amending Capital Project # \_\_\_Ulster County Community College Updated Facilities Master Plan Campus Reconstruction, Various Buildings and Infrastructure Phase III- Authorizing Construction – Ulster County Community College."

Dean Howatt said this Resolution covers Phase I of the College's Capital Plan. He said the 2004 Ulster County Capital Fund Budget would be amended to increase Technology Equipment by \$435,492 and increase the Campus Reconstruction and Renovations by \$5,474,000. Total Serial Bonds Authorized by the County would be for \$5,909, 492 of which 50% has been approved for reimbursement by the State.

Dean Howatt reviewed the health and safety needs of the College for which this funding is sought. An addition is planned for the Gym to make the exercise room handicapped accessible as it is currently downstairs and we would need to install an elevator. Also this would make it possible for people to enter both sides of the gym without walking across the gym floor. In addition, the counter balancers and rigging in the Theater are over thirty years old and must be upgraded. The Theatre is used year-round by many Community groups. The college also needs a new telephone system. We currently have very poor communications ability, which becomes a problem for people working at night.

Leg. Loughran asked how many RFP's were received. The Dean advised that these are not based on bids yet and will be further refined by the Architects. He said the numbers are changing, as will the projects. The projects will be bid by the County Purchasing Department. The Architect does the bid specifications and then we know the price. At this time the Committee will vote again. He advised that the first expenditure contract will be to the Architects, which will be based on State Construction Formula for Architects with an estimate "not to exceed". In reply to a question from Leg. Loughran, Dean Howatt said the percentage paid to architects was about 8-10%.

President Katt said on the last project we went to twenty different firms and bids came in higher than the architect's estimates, which was quite a concern. Deputy Chairman Felicello said prices of materials are going up every day and we don't know what prices will be at the appropriate time, and he hopes we can afford it. Leg. Cummings said this Resolution is for approval by the County to bond the entire package because it has already been approved by the State. Dean Howatt said everything depends on what needs to be done first.

Leg. Bartels asked if the Committee had the right to turn down a bid package. There followed a general discussion of bid practices and bonding by the Treasurer's Office. Leg. Zimet asked if the college used just architects or did they also use engineers. Dean Howatt said we also use engineers; however, there are a lot of small projects where we do not need engineering services. He said if we go with a construction manager we will also have to bring that before this Committee. There followed a general discussion of the interaction between architects and engineers.

At this time a motion to approve the Resolution as presented was made by Leg. Felicello and seconded by Leg. Cummings and upon voice vote the Resolution was unanimously approved.

President Katt advised the Committee that Sen. John Bonacic had secured an appropriation of \$75,000 for up-grades to our computers and it was his understanding that Sen. Larkin will be securing similar funding.

On enrollment, President Katt said summer session applications are up about 10% for twelve FTEs. He said there is also an increase in applications for the Fall Semester. Current projections show 35-60 FTEs above last year.

Dean Howatt said the architects' proposal would be ready by the May meeting. Also he will be sending to the Committee the 2004-05 Budget. A Public Hearing on this budget has been scheduled for June 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Dean advised that the college might have a request for an increase of about 3%.

At this point Dean Howatt gave a Power Point Presentation on Community Colleges in Cayuga County, New York and in Jacksonville Florida on how they have constructed satellite technology centers. After the presentation, Leg. Bartels asked about the Ames property in Highland. Dean Howatt said he understands that Ames is dealing with a real estate developer, and there may be a tenant for 30,000 square feet of space. That leaves about 20,000 square feet of space, which is a little small for our purposes.

The report of Ulster County Community College being concluded, Chairman Harris recognized Lee Reidy, Executive Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension, who advised that on April 29<sup>th</sup> they would be hosting their annual Volunteer Appreciation event and will be inviting all Legislators. The event will be at the Ulster County Fairgrounds and there will be a presentation by Ms. Stissen-Cohn on the Ulster County Poorhouse. Starting time is 7:00pm and it will be a dessert reception.

Regarding the planned Open House, Ms. Reidy said she would not be rescheduling, as the Legislators are very busy now, and trying to bring them together at one location is next to impossible. Remarking on the Persen House, Ms. Reidy said that when her offices were located in that building they were very crowded, and they would have to have more space.

The report of Cornell Cooperative Extension being concluded, Chairman Harris recognized Dennis Doyle, Director of The Ulster County Planning Department who presented a proposed Resolution for a public hearing on the amendment of the Agricultural Districts. It is now scheduled for June 2<sup>nd</sup>; however, he could hold it on a Legislative meeting night. Mr. Doyle advised that there are currently 66 landowners who have requested being added to the Agricultural Districts. The Agricultural Farmland Protection Board is still working out acreage. This is a new procedure under the Agriculture and Markets Law. He gave an explanation of the procedure. In reply to a question from Leg. Cummings, Mr. Doyle said there was no limitation on the number of acres, which could be in an agricultural zone. He said farmers could petition to be added to a particular agricultural zone. They can get in once a year but cannot get out for eight years as there is a tax advantage to being in an agricultural zone.

A motion to approve the Resolution as presented was made by Leg. Loughran and seconded by Leg. Bartels and upon voice vote the Resolution was unanimously approved.

Returning to his report, Mr. Doyle discussed EDA grants and advised that the Flood Plain Mapping kick-off meeting would be on April 28<sup>th</sup> in the Legislative Chambers at 1:00pm and at 6:30pm.

He distributed the Annual Estimates of the Population, which, as of July 1, 2003 was at 181,111. He said the figures were not yet down to a district level.

Mr. Doyle then introduced Mr. Bill Tobin, Principal Planner of the Ulster County Transportation Council who distributed to the Committee the Executive Summary of The Ulster County Transportation Plan and gave a presentation showing the urbanized areas of the County. He said the County is now running a transportation systems model looking at problem areas of the County. The County now has a long-range traffic plan, which needs to be updated. The transportation system model has to reflect twenty years. The Transportation Council is also working on a transportation improvement plan, which is a five-year program. He said this would cost approximately \$6 million per year. Mr. Tobin said he would be looking for State and Federal transportation funding.

Continuing, he said that the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) operates by consensus of affected parties. There is a Technical Committee and a Policy Committee. He said Federal and State officials are pleased with the progress made to date.

Deputy Chair Felicello, directing a question to Mr. Doyle, said he was concerned about the growth in the southern end of the County. Mr. Doyle said he has met with the officials of the Town of Marlborough, and they have a standing offer to meet and obtain technical assistance. He also advised that two seminars were given, one in the fall and one in the spring, on the responsibilities and duties of Planning Boards.

Mr. Doyle said the Ulster County Planning Board does review site plans and amendments to zoning statutes and does make recommendations. He discussed the procedures for presentations before the Planning Board. He said the issue has to come from the Town, Village or City. There followed a general discussion on growth and population changes within the County.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Leg. Felicello and seconded by Leg. Loughran and Chairman Harris declared the meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Janet Crispino, Recorder