

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 15<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2004.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT OR EXCUSED:

NONE

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

GORDON H. HOWATT, Dean of Administration, U.C. Community College;  
LEE REIDY, Executive Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension;  
PETER CAROFANO, Director of Ulster County Tourism; PATRICIA  
JACOBSEN, Deputy Director of Ulster County Tourism; DENNIS DOYLE,  
Director of Ulster County Planning Department; JENNIFER SCHWARTZ,  
Deputy Director of Ulster County Planning Department; HALLIE ARNOLD,  
Daily Freeman; DAVID DONALDSON, Ulster County Legislator; CHESTER  
STRAUB, Executive Director, Ulster County Development Corporation;  
CYNTHIA RUIZ, Director of Ulster County Area Transit; GARY GAILES,  
Principle and TERRESA BAHNER, ESQ., both appearing on behalf of  
CROSSROAD VENTURES; and JANET CRISPINO, Recorder

A quorum being present, Chairman Harris called the meeting to order at 5:40pm, and recognized Cynthia Ruiz, Director of Ulster County Area Transit, who introduced a proposed resolution authorizing a new position of Auto Mechanics' Helper. She explained the necessity for this position to be created. Thereafter, a motion to approve the resolution as presented was made by Leg. Felicello and seconded by Leg. Loughran. Upon voice vote the resolution as presented was unanimously approved.

Ms. Ruiz also advised that a tour of the new garage will be on October 28<sup>th</sup> at 3:30pm. She said the building is proceeding on schedule and on budget.

The report of Ulster County Area Transit being concluded, Chairman Harris recognized Teresa Bahner, Attorney and Gary Gailles, one of the principals of Crossroads Ventures and advised that they would be speaking regarding the September Resolution supporting full adjudication of this project.

Ms. Bahner spoke at length giving a background on the project and the opportunities for public comment at numerous public hearings. There is currently an Issue Conference before an Administrative Law Judge. This judge walked the site, the trails and the communities involved including Phoenicia, Margaretville, etc. The judge has to look at all of the matters involved and decide which, if any, of those issues are substantive. This project is opposed by the NYC Department of Environmental Conservation, The Sierra Club, and some others. She said the burden of proof is on those who oppose the project.

In referring to the September 9<sup>th</sup> Resolution, Ms. Bahner felt that the previous Resolution passed by a previous Legislature, was quite different. She wants to assure this Legislature that they are working on doing everything they can to protect all parties.

Chairman Harris asked about the issues involved. Ms. Bahner said there was an issue about a mining permit and said no such permit is necessary. There are also objections that the developer failed to account for all sources of wastewater. There are also issues involving traffic, visual effects, community character, forest preserve, storm water, pesticides, etc. A lengthy discussion followed, after which Ms. Bahner advised that if the resolution supports a “full adjudication” of all matters, that means you are filing a late petition for party status asking to participate in the review. Leg. Cummings asked if this Committee wanted to have that type of administrative review.

Chairman Harris asked if anyone was interested in a motion to reconsider and amend the September Resolution. Mr. Carofano said there will be Legislators who will not support it. He said there already was a commitment from the Legislative body by Resolution dated December 10, 2003 at which time 31 Legislators voted for and one against.

Leg. Zimet said the September 9<sup>th</sup> Resolution asks for a full Legislative review of all issues. Chairman Harris said he believed that at the time there was a question of timeliness and that all of this would have come out if this issue were discussed more fully. Ms. Bahner gave a timeline of these proceedings and said the Administrative Law Judge would not begin his adjudication until sometime in February. She believes there should be a decision by the end of February or early March, 2005.

Chairman Harris said this is an Economic Development Committee and one of the big concerns we need to have is to get business into the County. Mr. Straub said UCDC took a position similar to the County’s original position; however, they found the economic impact to be positive but still wanted an evaluation. He said as that process unfurled UCDC participated in it. He attended several public hearings and saw the response by the Judge as being one of thorough and conscientious evaluation. He said the process lends itself to the issue. He said the September Resolution sends mixed messages. This project will have a significant impact on the entire County as a whole. He is concerned

about conflicting signals; on one hand trying to promote tourism and on the other passing Resolutions opposing development. Mr. Straub said that by using the language in this Resolution you create the impression that every project is going to have an extended procedure to follow.

Leg. Cumming said she would like to amend the Resolution passed in September. Chairman Harris said Frank Murray, Esq., the County Attorney advised the Committee to do a motion to reconsider. This motion should come from this Committee to the full Legislature and a member of this Committee should still have to present it. A motion to reconsider the September Resolution was made by Leg. Cummings and seconded by Leg. Roberti. Chairman Harris distributed copies of Attorney Murray's opinion. Leg. Bartels said she did not think Frank Murray should draw up any Resolution without the consent of all Legislators. Chairman Harris advised that he had met with Mr. Murray and requested his opinion.

A motion being on the floor, Chairman Harris asked for a voice vote and the results were:

For the motion: Leg. Roberti, Cummings and Harris;

Against the motion: Leg. Zimet, Bartels and Loughran.

The motion did not pass and Chairman Harris indicated he would bring it on before the full Legislature.

This matter being concluded, Chairman Harris recognized Dennis Doyle, Director of the Ulster County Planning Department who had one action item, a Resolution for the appointment of Michael Larsen to the Ulster County Planning Board from the Town of Denning and the appointment of the alternate, Archie Ackerly. He distributed the resumes of the appointees. A motion to approve the Resolution as presented was made by Leg. Loughran and seconded by Leg. Cummings. Upon voice vote the Resolution as presented was unanimously approved.

At this time Mr. Doyle introduced Jennifer Schwartz, the new Deputy Director of Ulster County Planning. A brief synopsis of her background was given and Ms. Schwartz said she takes a particular interest in this Committee because the focus of her work has been economic development and consumer affairs. Ms. Schwartz said she also has a background in historical preservation and looks forward to working with everyone.

Mr. Doyle also advised the Committee that a workshop meeting of the Ulster County Transportation Council would be held on October 5, 2004 at 4:00pm here at the college. He said there was also a long-range transportation plan meeting tomorrow, which is an 8-month project. He also reported that he has received a request from the Charter Commission to act as a resource for the Commission. He has indicated to them that we can spare a limited amount of time and are currently in the process of designing a web Site for the Commission.

Mr. Doyle said Planning is also working with Cornell Cooperative Extension and with the Farmland Development Board who are trying to make up for a shortfall in connection with the purchase of development rights for the Davenport and Misner Farms in the Town of Marbletown.

Also, Agricultural District #1 is coming up for its review and he hopes to have everything in place before the October meeting. Giving a housing update, Mr. Doyle said Planning is in the process of entering into a contract with a Housing Consultant for a Housing Strategy Report. He also advised that he is currently going to an audit with the Governor's Office of Small Cities. He said we have a potential conflict of interest with an employee that must be disclosed at a public hearing. He is also requesting an attorney to determine if there is any conflict.

The report of the Ulster County Planning Department being concluded, Chairman Harris recognized Chester Straub, Executive Director of Ulster County Development Corporation who advised that on October 22<sup>nd</sup> the Business-to-Business Showcase will be held in the Elting Gymnasium here on campus. This is the first year that the County-wide Chamber of Commerce is the lead agency.

Mr. Straub also advised that press releases have been issued on the October 5<sup>th</sup> special commission on the economic future of Ulster County. The press release was issued today and gives the full agenda and confirmed speakers. There will be four separate panels and at last count there are about 23 presenters. There will also be a session which is reserved as a public comment period.

Mr. Straub said he had met with members of the Democratic caucus and distributed copies of materials used at that meeting.

The report of Ulster County Development Corporation being concluded, Chairman Harris recognized Lee Reidy, Executive Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension who distributed brochures on "In Your Community", "New York's Agricultural Districts" and "Agricultural Assessments". She also advised that the Small Farms Expo is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday at the Ulster County Fairgrounds. She said this is a tri-State cooperative program and believes tickets have been sent to all Legislators.

Ms. Reidy also discussed the 21st century programs in Kingston schools, which will continue through a grant from Kevin Cahill. This program will continue at J.F. Kennedy School and George Washington School both of which fall under Title I schools.

Ms. Reidy said the Annual Meeting will be on October 21<sup>st</sup>. Friends of Extension will also be recognized. This year they are Herb Heckler, Donald Doyle and Gary and Diane Kleitz. Cornell Cooperative Extension will also be looking to enter into a contract with the Department of Environmental Protection on the Esopus Creek Corridor Plan, and she distributed a brochure on this subject.

In closing, Ms. Reidy said her budget had been submitted and if there were any questions she could be contacted at any time.

The report of Cornell Cooperative Extension being concluded, Chairman Harris recognized Gordon H. Howatt, Dean of Administration of Ulster County Community College who thanked the Committee and the full Legislature for the passage of various Resolutions last Thursday. Dean Howatt said he is starting to work with the architect and may have a shovel turning opportunity to dig into the tennis courts shortly.

Dean Howatt reported that the college started off the Fall semester with another heavy enrollment. Projections are that we may be up 5%. The college is, however, suffering with a net loss of \$35 per FTE but since things have not yet stabilized we don't know where we will end up at this time.

The college is beginning the Fall semester with all new technology. There are 950 new PCs with Windows XP obtained with the support of the County, the State and with two member items.

Dean Howatt distributed the college's "Calendar of Special Events, Fall 2004" and made particular mention of the Howard C. St. John Lecture Series to be held on Wednesday, October 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:30am. The speaker will be Michael Gallis, nationally renowned expert on metropolitan regional development.

The college is looking at a reorganization of the academic areas. Also, said the Dean, we are taking another look at resident apartments for students. These would be operated by a separate agency because the college cannot operate residence apartments. In reply to a question from Mr. Carofano, Dean Howatt said they are looking at 100 to start and may go to 200. He also said the college may be looking at a small sewer treatment plant but that would be a part of the whole study.

The report of Ulster County Community College being completed, Chairman Harris recognized Peter Carofano, Director of Tourism for Ulster County.

Mr. Carofano said he had done some partnering with Cornell Cooperative Extension on the Small Farm Expo and had also worked with Ulster County Development Corporation doing some joint advertising. He also discussed some recent events, including the New Paltz/Woodstock Arts & Crafts Fair held on Labor Day weekend, and also A Taste of New Paltz which was held last week. He said the Garlic Festival is coming up the last full weekend in September. There is also a Tattoo Festival this weekend in Woodstock.

Mr. Carofano said he attended a Tour Operator's meeting in Manhattan with Patty Jacobsen. Ulster County is going to be getting Tour Operators up here to look at all of our attractions. There followed a general discussion of bus tours and partnering with other areas of the State.

At this time Chairman Harris presented a proposed Local Law to establish a Tourism Department separate from the Legislature. He advised that technically Ulster County has no Tourism Department. Mr. Carofano said his Department does not have rote responsibilities. We are always doing different things and new matters to get into. He said when you wear two hats, one side might interfere with the other. He has been looking for the Legislature to create an official Tourism Office for at least five years and he brought it up again about a month ago. It is very important at this point in time that we establish an official Tourism Office dedicated to the promotion of tourism. He distributed copies of the proposed Local Law.

Leg. Donaldson said he supports this idea. He said it does not make sense that the Director of Tourism is also the Public Information Officer. The Public Information Office should be handled by the Deputy Clerk of the Legislature.

Leg. Cummings reminded the Committee that Transportation used to be under Planning and now it is an entity of its own.

A general discussion involving personnel structure and salary followed. Thereafter, a motion to approve the proposed local law establishing an official Office of Tourism of Ulster County was made by Leg. Loughran and seconded by Leg. Zimet.

Leg. Cummings asked the effective date and Mr. Carofano said he would go on the agenda for the November public hearing. At this time a voice vote on the motion was taken by Chairman Harris and the motion was unanimously approved. It will now go the Personnel Committee for approval. Mr. Carofano thanked this Committee, and the entire Legislature for their help and support in connection with this proposed Local Law.

The report of Ulster County Tourism being concluded, Chairman Harris recognized Peter Loughran who gave a report on the proposed Tourism Information Center. He said he had met with Dennis Doyle, Mark Cunningham, Harvey Sleight and all other interested parties. He said Harvey gave an estimate of \$1,850,000. At this time we want Harvey to meet with Dave Sheeley to revise the budget to reflect actual costs to do the work.

At this meeting, Mr. Doyle said the property is owned by the Department of Transportation and by the NYS Thruway Authority and consists of two separate parcels. New York State appraises it at \$250,000 but we still have to wait for the Thruway to come back with the price at which time we will schedule another meeting that hopefully will be prior to the October meeting of this Committee. By that time the DPW will have better figures. Mr. Doyle also said he does not know if the award will be reduced because we are trying to reduce the size of the project.

Mr. Loughran said it was his understanding that we would be looking at a modular; however now we are still working with the architect. He would still like to look into a modular. Leg. Donaldson said they did look at the log cabin and the building itself, but with no electricals, it would cost more than the architect's scaled back version.

The report on the Tourism Center being concluded, a motion to adjourn was made by Leg. Roberti and seconded by Leg. Loughran and Chairman Harris declared the meeting adjourned at 7:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Crispino, Recorder