


Date: September 11, 2012

SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE:



Kevin Roberts, Chairman



Hector Rodriguez, Deputy Chairman



Craig Lopez



Richard Parete

Kenneth Ronk

Today's Date: October 15, 2012

Social Services and Ways & Means Committees

Joint Meeting Minutes

DATE & TIME: September 11, 2012 @ 6:00 PM
LOCATION: Library Conference Room, County Office Building
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chairmen Kevin Roberts & Richard Gerentine
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Krista Barringer, Deputy Clerk and Frank Reggero, Senior Legislative Staff
PRESENT: Legislators Donald Gregorius, Wayne Harris, Craig Lopez, Mary Beth Maio, James Maloney, Jeanette Provenzano, Hector S. Rodriguez, and Kenneth J. Ronk.
ABSENT: Jeanette Provenzano and Richard A. Parete,
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes
OTHER ATTENDEES: Legislative Counsel Erica Guerin and Chris Ragucci, Town of Ulster Supervisor James E. Quigley, III, Philip Gurrieri, Daily Freeman Reporter Patricia Doxey, and County Attorney Representatives Susan Plonski and Roland Bloomer.

- Chair Roberts called the meeting to order at 6:20 PM

Discussion: Safety Net

Chairman Roberts noted the safety net discussion has been a long process for the Social Services Committee and thanked the Committee for helping out. He thanked the Chair of the Ways and Means Committee for assisting in meetings and phone calls to Town Supervisors. He felt this was a problem that would not be solved by the Committee at this time. He stated this was more than a Legislative/Executive, Republican/Democrat, County/Town problem but a problem that has been forced down on the County by a State Government that has out-of-control spending. He stated he spoke with the County Executive an hour before the meeting and he was asked by the County Executive to not put anything down as a resolution for this month. He stated the County Executive indicated he was working on several options and did not want hands to be tied with any resolutions or distract from the process. He stated at this time the Committee would not put forth a resolution to move forward.

Supervisor Quigley spoke on behalf of the Town Supervisors and Mayors Association and noted the result from a special breakfast meeting held the last week of August was a letter to the Chairwoman of the County Legislature, County Executive and State Legislative Representatives in Albany. He reminded the Legislature that the Town budget cycle is one that requires the Town Supervisors to present to the Town Boards a tentative Town budget by September 30, 2012. He highlighted that budgets will be out prior to the submission of the County budget; without any communication from the County government to the Towns suggesting no potential solutions or how it may impact the Town. He stated he was reinforcing that in 2010 the Towns set their budgets for 2011 and then the State Legislature make an adjustment to the cost sharing ratio which caused the Towns to seek relief from the County Legislature. He requested consideration be given to the developing plans in relation to Safety Net at the County level and the timing of the Towns presentation of their budgets.

Chairman Gerentine replied the Legislative branch of government is not forming a budget at this time and thus, the Legislature does not have any way to provide the Towns information regarding Safety Net. He noted he was aware of the letter submitted and he took the liberty to call the County Executive and seek his ability to do anything prior to the release of his budget proposal. He specifically asked if the County Executive would meet with the Town Supervisors to provide some indication of what he is proposing. **Chairman Gerentine** reported the County Executive indicated a meeting was held with the Town of Woodstock Supervisor. He noted he spoke with the Town of Woodstock himself and was told by Supervisor Wilber that there was no additional information provided at the meeting. **Chairman Gerentine** indicated the only thing they could do is wait to see what the County Executive proposes and then the Legislature can set policies or make decisions. He noted the biggest point to the discussion was that everyone should be contacting their State representatives as they were the ones that changed from the 50/50 split to the 71/29 percent split without any conversations with the Counties or Towns or Cities. He stated the County and municipalities should be knocking on Albany's door and indicating the local communities have their own problems and they just added to this problem.

Legislator Gregorius noted Ulster County is one of two States in the United States that hasn't had the State take over these costs. **Legislator Bernardo** indicated the State is going in the wrong direction. **Legislator Gregorius** suggested the County may want the relief from the State since they just unilaterally solved their problem by handing it to the County. **Legislator Bernardo** concurred that it was the State's mandate. **Legislator Gregorius** suggested the State be held accountable and trying to talk to the State about accepting this so it does not have to come back to the property tax. **Chairman Gerentine** suggested the Committee draft a resolution from the Legislative body with these concerns and in conjunction with the Town Supervisors Association to request relief from the mandate. **Legislator Bernardo** noted she, Legislator Maloney, and Legislator Loughran were leaving tomorrow for the New York State Association of Counties Fall Seminar and suggested they speak with other Counties about this issue.

Legislative Counsel Chapman noted the Senate has passed legislation year in and year out but it has not moved out of the Assembly.

General discussion progressed among Committee members.

Adjournment:

Chairman Roberts requested a motion to adjourn and this was received from Legislator Rodriguez. Legislator Maio seconded the motion which was carried. The meeting ended at 6:30 pm.

Dated the 11th day of October, 2012

Krista J. Barringer, Deputy Clerk, Ulster County Legislature

Minutes Approved on: