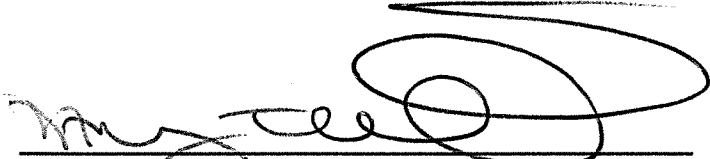


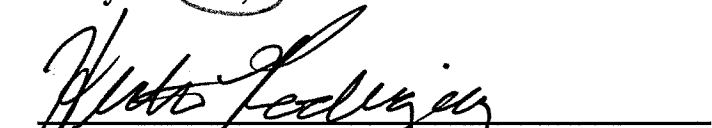
Date: July 8, 2013

**SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE:**



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Mary Wawro, Chairman



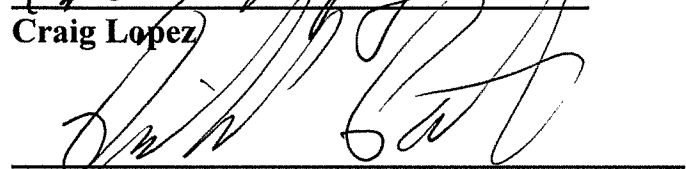
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Hector Rodriguez, Deputy Chairman



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Craig Lopez



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Richard Parete

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Kenneth Ronk

Today's Date: August 5, 2013

## **Social Services Committee**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**DATE & TIME:** July 8, 2013, 6:30 PM  
**LOCATION:** Karen L. Binder Library, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, COB, Kingston, NY  
**PRESIDING OFFICERS:** Chairmen Mary Wawro  
**LEGISLATIVE STAFF:** Deputy Clerk Krista Barringer  
**PRESENT:** Legislators Craig Lopez and Kenneth Ronk  
**ABSENT:** Legislators Hector Rodriguez and Richard Parete  
**QUORUM PRESENT:** Yes

**OTHER ATTENDEES:** Legislative Counsel Erica Guerin, Deputy County Executive Kenneth Crannell, Department of Social Services Deputy Commissioner Cynthia Biesel, Department of Social Services' Day Care Unit Supervisor Maria Ruffner, Department of Social Services' Temporary Assistance Unit Director Marijane Knudsen, The VOICE: CSEA Day Care Union Representatives Elizabeth White, Jane Alsdorf, and Heidi Jo Brandt, and Deputy Comptroller Joseph Eriole  
Chairmen Wawro called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM.

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#### **Motion No. 1 RESOLVED To Approve the Minutes of the Joint Health & Personnel and Social Services Committee meeting held June 3, 2013**

##### **Discussion:**

Legislator Ronk noted he was not in attendance at the June 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting and was unable to vote on the minutes. Chair Wawro stated the vote on the minutes would be held over until the next meeting of the Social Services Committee.

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#### **Motion No. 2 Resolution No. 185 – July 23, 2013**

**Text of Motion:** Resolve to Approve Resolution No. 185 - Authorizing The County To Pay For The Cost Of The Safety Net Program Thereby Relieving The Various Municipalities Of Responsibility For Payment

**Motion Made By:** Legislator Ronk

**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Lopez

**Resolution No. 185 Summary:** This Resolution authorizes, pursuant to the provisions of Section 72 of the Social Services Law, the County of Ulster to pay sixty six percent of the local share of the Safety Net Costs effective January 1, 2014, and effective January 1, 2015, the County of Ulster hereby agrees to pay one hundred percent of the local share of the cost of the Safety Net program and that any outstanding charges yet to be paid to the County by any municipality for costs associated with the Safety Net Program shall continue to be due and owing, and shall be paid by the respective municipality. This Resolution is rescinded and deemed null and void the next first day of January should the local Ulster County Sales and Compensating Use Tax rate (the County portion not the State portion) becomes less than 4% and/or unless Assembly Bill 5130 of 2013 (introduced by Member of the State Assembly Frank Skartados) or Senate Bill 4516 of 2013 (introduced by Member of the State Senate William Larkin) becomes law in a manner enabling the local sales and compensating use tax for Ulster County to be at a rate of 4% on December 1, 2013. This Resolution authorizes and directs the Finance Commissioner notify the Clerk of the Legislature if at any time the County portion of the Ulster County Sales and Compensating Use Tax falls beneath 4% and authorizes and directs the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature to send a certified copy of this resolution to each Town Clerk in Ulster County and to the Mayor and Clerk of the City of Kingston within ten days after the adoption of this resolution. This Resolution authorizes the Commissioner of Social Services and the Commissioner of Finance to take any and all steps necessary to implement this resolution.

**Discussion:**

Legislator Ronk stated he was unhappy Assemblyman Cahill brought the County to the point it was at. He felt it was a more responsible position to only take over the next third portion of Safety Net if it was financially viable for the County. He stated the potential loss of \$22 million was the reason he was supporting the Resolution.

Deputy County Executive Crannell stated he felt Legislator Ronk's comments were well founded and noted an Albany spin on the situation that the County as putting the burden on the Towns and the City of Kingston. He stated it was Albany which, in the 1940's, allowed the County the option to take over the burden from the Towns and City. He stated the State did not vote to take over the Safety Net costs at a State level and he discussed what he felt was Assemblyman Cahill's vote to increase the local burden.

Legislator Lopez stated considering the sizeable Safety Net tax bill faced by the Town of Wawarsing, the Town Supervisor and he were fairly happy to that it will take affect.

<b>Roll Call Vote:</b>	No
<b>Voting In Favor:</b>	Legislators Lopez, Ronk and Wawro
<b>Voting Against:</b>	None

**No. of Votes in Favor:** 3  
**No. of Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** Carried

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**Motion No. 3                      Resolution No. 209 – July 23, 2013**

**Text of Motion:**                      Resolve to Approve Resolution No. 209 - Approving The Execution Of A Contract Amendment In Excess Of \$50,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Department Of Social Services

**Motion Made By:**                      Legislator Ronk

**Motion Seconded By:**                Legislator Lopez

**Resolution No. 209 Summary:** This Resolution reports the Ulster County Legislature has examined the stated contract amendment with Lasalle School and approves the contract amendment in the form as filed with the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature or as modified with the approval of the County Attorney and Legislative Counsel.

**Discussion:**

Legislator Ronk stated he was pleased to see this as the first contract that the Legislature will be voting on individually. He noted it was something he and Legislator Bartels were interested in seeing happen. He felt this would give individual attention to financial matters that haven't received that level of attention in the past. He felt this was one way that the Charter gives the Legislature power and hopefully, the Legislature will be exercising that power.

**Roll Call Vote:**                              No  
**Voting In Favor:**                          Legislators Lopez, Ronk, and Wawro  
**Voting Against:**                            None  
**No. of Votes in Favor:**                    3  
**No. of Votes Against:**                    0  
**Disposition:**                                Carried

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**Motion No. 4                      Resolution No. 210 – July 23, 2013**

**Text of Motion:**                      Resolve to Approve Resolution No. 210 - Approving The Execution Of A Contract Amendment In Excess Of \$50,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Department Of Social Services

**Motion Made By:**                      Legislator Ronk

**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Lopez

**Resolution No. 210 Summary:** This Resolution reports the Ulster County Legislature has examined the stated contract amendment with the Devereux Foundation and approves the contract amendment in the form as filed with the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature or as modified with the approval of the County Attorney and Legislative Counsel.

**Discussion:** None

**Roll Call Vote:** No

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Lopez, Ronk, and Wawro

**Voting Against:** None

**No. of Votes in Favor:** 3

**No. of Votes Against:** 0

**Disposition:** Carried

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**Motion No. 5                      Resolution No. 211 – July 23, 2013**

**Text of Motion:**                      Resolve to Approve Resolution No. 211 - Approving The Execution Of A Contract In Excess Of \$50,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Department Of Social Services

**Motion Made By:**                      Legislator Lopez

**Motion Seconded By:**                  Legislator Ronk

**Resolution No. 211 Summary:** This Resolution reports the Ulster County Legislature has examined the stated contract with SCO Family Services and approves the contract amendment in the form as filed with the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature or as modified with the approval of the County Attorney and Legislative Counsel.

**Discussion:**

Legislative Counsel Guerin noted this was a new contract but had a start date of January 1, 2013. Deputy County Executive Crannell replied it was a standard foster care program contract and he would attempt to get the information regarding why it was a new contract with a start date of January 1, 2013. Legislator Ronk noted this question could be asked at Caucus as the County Attorney's Office would be in attendance.

**Roll Call Vote:**                      No

**Voting In Favor:**                      Legislators Lopez, Ronk, and Wawro

**Voting Against:** None  
**No. of Votes in Favor:** 3  
**No. of Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** Carried

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**New Business:            Comptroller’s Day Care Audit/Review**

Chair Wawro felt what was found in the Comptroller’s Day Care Audit was not surprising given the limited staff and complexity. She stated she took offense at the careless title of the press release that was distributed as she felt no one was careless and noted the complicated process that the day care providers and Unit face. Legislative Counsel Guerin noted the process is still a manual one and highlighted the limited resources to meet the requirements.

Day Care Unit Supervisor Ruffner stated her Unit exceeded expectations in the final results of the audit. She noted it was a six month audit and reported there were no overpayments, only recoupable payments. She stated there was an approximately 0.01% error rate. She noted the Unit was surprised by the press release and stated she had already addressed this with Comptroller Auerbach. She stated she presented the facts to Comptroller Auerbach and based on the facts, he agreed the title was inappropriate. She stated he agreed to put out statement to recant the remarks. She state the Unit appreciated this but that it meant nothing if it was not put out to the public. She stated the *New York Times* level audit with a *National Enquirer* level press release was degrading to her staff and after 25 years with the County, she would not accept it. She stated they were a staff of seven that is now cut down to a staff of four, with no clerical support.

Ms. Ruffner noted there is an automated system, KinderTrack, that they have wanted to purchase but have been unable to obtain as it was deemed unaffordable. She stated they were doing manual bills and re-bills.

Ms. Ruffner reiterated the findings were exceptional for what they have, what they deal with and for the monies that they are given to do the work. She stated the press release was and will be addressed by the Comptroller. She highlighted the Department’s desire to work with the Comptroller as a team to serve the taxpayers of Ulster County to the best of their abilities.

Chair Wawro highlighted the purpose of the audit to tweak and find areas of improvement. Ms. Ruffner stated she felt the auditors were exceptional and worked with the unit for six months to understand the intricacies of the program.

Ms. Ruffner noted their relationship with Family of Woodstock was just increasing on the computerized system was highlighted in the report as they were still doing manual paper entries at the time of the audit review. She noted it was computerized by the time the auditors were meeting with them.

Chair Wawro asked if Family of Woodstock provides services for only family day care. Ms. Ruffner clarified they also serve legally exempt child care with licensing and home inspections. She stated everything, including group day care licensing applications, comes through the Day Care Council. She noted Family of Woodstock provides the day care inspections for legally exempt providers, which is 80% of their population. She stated all others receive inspection from the State agency. She noted Family of Woodstock will now inform the Unit when a day care closes via the computer. Ms. White stated the Child Care Facility System (CCFS) has all the information in one location. Ms. Ruffner stated their provider enroller just received access to CCFS at the end of the year and they are now up-to-date.

Ms. White stated she was a family day care provider as well as an auditor with the New York State Comptroller's Office before becoming a Union Representative for providers. She concurred with Ms. Ruffner regarding the Ulster County Comptroller's audit findings. She noted the recommendation is to not do the process manually but to go through the CCTA (Child Care Time and Attendance) portal. She stated KinderTrack is CCTA when KinderTrack replied to the State's RFP and was hired. She noted other Counties were already using the KinderTrack system and the understanding that the integration would be less costly across the State. Ms. Ruffner noted the CCTA system is a complicated, intricate, detailed program for those that did not already have it. She noted initially when they rolled out KinderTrack there were a many problems with those Counties that did not already have KinderTrack, including staffing and input of data. She noted there was a fast rush to use the Stimulus money that was available for the program. She stated there have been a number of tweaking and updates to where they are now able to implement the program. She noted there are still significant error rates occurring and was not foolproof. She stated it was time consuming to enter all the data. Ms. White noted the system has an in-built fraud detection system and was labor intensive initially but once the information was added the first time, the cost reduction resulted at updates and recerts as the provider inputs all the data. Ms. Ruffner stated they had five providers use the system last month and two, who had been using it for quite some time, dropped out due to a lack of support system. She stated they have 29 out of over 300 providers attended a training held at a provider meeting last month; of which 28 signed up to use the system. She stated they have a goal of 25% of providers using the system by September 1<sup>st</sup>. She stated until every provider is using it, they will continue to have to input every bill.

Ms. White reported some Counties using the system are seeing 95% provider participation when they used it as a push toward direct deposit and one system for payments. Ms. Ruffner noted this County was already using KinderTrack. She noted Counties using a Kobolt system, which is severely outdated, are finding difficulties with the transition to KinderTrack due to various coding errors.

Ms. Ruffner stated the providers are resistant but that they are pushing it. She noted the desire to have everyone on the same system with the same fees across the board. She noted the positive outcome of being paid more often with more accuracy.

Chair Wawro asked if the Unit had access to the Family of Woodstock's database for the food program as they could see who is using the online system for the food program. Ms. Ruffner stated they have a number of providers that still do not have computer access and highlighted the Union's availability of a \$500 computer grant.

Deputy County Executive Crannell credited the Comptroller for taking on the Day Care Unit audit, given the complexity of the process.

Ms. Ruffner noted the audit was only on the low income day care program.

Deputy Comptroller Eriole stated their office was not afraid to come and has met with the Unit. He stated the sense of the auditors was it was an almost a perfect audit and highlighted the relationship with the Unit and the result as testimony. He stated the report revealed and clearly stated the overall performance of this Department and this limited staff with a complicated process was exceptional. He hoped the response received from the Unit would be the model of how all units respond to the audit and exemplified how the process should work. He stated they regretted the wording of the press release title and any morale issues it may have caused. He stated the Comptroller was not pandering to obtain votes. He stated they were willing to do a look back at the report. He noted they agreed with this discussion and concurred that they were proud of the audit, the results, and the Day Care Unit as a whole.

Ms. Brandt stated she is a licensed group child care provider and felt the press release was unfair to the Department as well as the Professional Providers. She noted the majority of providers go above and beyond to meet the regulations and then some. She applauded the providers on the low error rate. She stated she welcomed any invitations to go into the homes of her colleagues to help them learn the new system. She noted the provider is doing all the input in this system and the availability of swipe cards which would allow them to keep data in real time; something she recommends to all providers. She stated the parents sign the attendance sheet monthly and that this results in two pieces of paper maintained to



verify attendance. She stated a finding in the audit resulted in her owing \$148. She highlighted the issue with providers signing a contract for five years and only being given the change of rate form at the time of contract renewal. Ms. White noted some Counties send the notice for rate renewal in with their checks. Ms. Ruffner stated the agreement is for five years and the rate is for two years. She noted if providers do not change it after two years, it remains the same and affects staffing ability, etc. She noted with CCTA, the market rates will be listed and automatically generated. She stated after the audit they did do a blanket canvas of the providers to seek updated rate information and they have inputted all the new information into CCTA. Ms. White discussed the constant improvements that are ongoing with the CCTA system and highlighted the authorization/eligibility letter with the parent schedule included on the letter that will be coming out in the future.

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### **Adjournment**

**Motion Made By:** Legislator Ronk

**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Lopez

**No. of Votes in Favor:** 3

**No. of Votes Against:** 0

**TIME:** 7:14 PM

**Dated the 16<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2013**

**Krista Barringer, Deputy Clerk**

**Minutes Approved on:**