

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE  
ON ARTS, EDUCATION, TOURISM & COMMUNITY RELATIONS, HELD AT ULSTER  
COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE ON THE 13<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF DECEMBER, 2006

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUSAN ZIMET, Chairwoman  
BRIAN CAHILL  
ALAN LOMITA  
MARY SHEELEY  
WAYNE HARRIS  
FRANK FELICELLO  
GARY BISCHOFF

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

CLAIRE BURLINGHAM, Dean of Administration, Ulster County Community College  
KATHRYN PUGLISI, Acting Director, Ulster County Office for the Aging  
SHERRI BRITTAIN, Executive Director, Ulster Arts Council  
MARK REYNOLDS, Southern Ulster Times  
JANET SALANITRI, Recorder

Ulster County Office for the Aging:

A quorum being present, Chairwoman Zimet called the meeting to order at 5:35pm and conveyed the thanks of this Committee and of the full Legislature to Kathryn Puglisi, Acting Director of the Ulster County Office for the Aging who is retiring. Chairwoman Zimet presented Ms. Puglisi with the "Pride of Ulster County" award. Members of the Committee each conveyed their appreciation for Ms. Puglisi's dedicated service and for her compassion for the senior citizens of Ulster County.

Ms. Puglisi said she is leaving with mixed feelings but also is looking forward to retirement. She said she would be available to help in the transition in any way possible. She read to the Committee several letters from seniors regarding the services rendered by her office. She thanked the Committee and the County for allowing her the opportunity to work in her position.

A general discussion followed on the problems of senior citizens who still owned and lived in their homes and were having problems with maintaining them.

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Chairwoman Zimet then discussed the budget process and the proposed joint effort of Office for the Aging and the Department of Social Services. She said it will not be a formal consolidation but will consist of some shared services.

Aging will move back to its former location where Social Services is located, and will have its own entrance and signage. The Adult Services division of Social Services will also be there and it is hoped they will both start working on the "Point of Entry" program. She stressed that the Office for the Aging will remain a stand-alone department. Ms. Puglisi said that as long as there is a Director and it is a stand-alone agency, none of the grants will be affected. She also said that currently there is some duplication of services and this will be a good move. Ms. Puglisi advised that she had just attended a training session on SAMS, which is the new computer program the State is requiring by April 1<sup>st</sup>. Also, she said, the State had just finished its evaluation of her department and advised that Ulster has a wonderful program and staff.

Chairwoman Zimet said that at some time in the future this Committee might want to put together a small sub-committee to meet once every three months or so to follow the progress of "Point of Entry". Leg. Cahill said that is one of the main agenda items on the Advisory Council of Office for the Aging.

In reply to a concern voiced by Leg. Cahill as to the cost of relocating an office, Chairwoman Zimet said there is a line item in the budget to cover the move.

#### Ulster County Community College:

The report of the Office for the Aging being concluded, Chairwoman Zimet recognized Dean of Administration Claire Burlingham of Ulster County Community College who advised that the college exceeded its budget projections on enrollment for the Fall 2006 semester.

The Dean discussed the Winternet semester which runs from December 17<sup>th</sup> through January 12<sup>th</sup>, just before the Spring semester begins. These are on-line courses and include Business Law, Psychology and, the most popular, Modern Japan.

Dean Burlingham reported that next week the Board of Trustees will be approving 161 students for January 2007 graduation. She said the Registrar's Office has been more active in reaching out to students who don't even know that they are eligible for graduation.

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The Capital Campaign is on track with the Student Lounge complete and the grand reopening of Quimby Theatre scheduled for March 10<sup>th</sup> and featuring a performance by the Ulster County String Quartet. The design phase for the labs and the gymnasium are also on track.

Dean Burlingham reported that the College has been working with the County regarding implementation of the Voice Over IT system. She advised that we are just going with the Internet protocol; however, there will be some land lines in Security with enough back-up to take care of any loss of service.

In reply to a question from Leg. Sheeley, Dean Burlingham said the biggest reason the College never did anything with programs such as Physical Therapy or Radiology, is that the start-up costs are tremendous.

Leg. Felicello asked the status of the student housing proposal. The Dean replied that the Board of Trustees is committed to doing whatever it reasonably can about the water system. The College is currently looking into all other options such as bringing water to the campus. She discussed the various meetings with the neighbors and the general public, and water and the affect on area wells was the number one concern. The Dean also advised that the closest access point to us for bringing in water is at the High Falls bridge. She said the College has had engineers do water studies, and we have to decide if we want to make an investment, since anything we do will affect the neighboring properties.

There followed a general discussion of the problems experienced by other Community Colleges who have built student housing as well as possible solutions.

Recorder's Note: Dean Burlingham amended her report at the end of the meeting and it is included here for continuity:

Dean Burlingham advised that the College did do preliminary water studies and they indicated that there was sufficient capacity to support the residence halls but there was no guarantee there would not be an affect on the neighbors.

Ulster County Office of Veteran's Services:

The report of Ulster County Community College being concluded, Chairwoman Zimet advised the Committee that Terry Breitenstein of the Office of Veteran's Services was not able to attend this meeting due to family illness; however, she had spoken with him and he advised that

December was the busiest month in his office and he hoped to come before this Committee at the January 2007 meeting and discuss how his office is going to move forward.

Ulster County Tourism:

Chairwoman Zimet also advised that Director of Tourism Rick Remsnyder is meeting tonight with several International writers who are visiting the area, but had advised her by telephone that things are moving forward with the Tourism budget. She said that included in the Tourism budget was \$12,000 for R.S.V.P. program. These funds were for reimbursing volunteers who manned the caboose for meals and mileage, and these funds were cut. Mr. Remsnyder is trying to work out how they can man the cabooses.

Leg. Lomita said R.S.V.P. has put in a request for the \$12,000 to cover these costs and the matter is pending. Leg. Sheeley said the Chamber of Commerce in her area always paid the cost of the R.S.V.P. volunteers for the five months the caboose was open. She thought the requested amount was a little high for the amount of time involved.

Leg. Felicello said the caboose from Highland was moved to Milton at their request and now the Town Board doesn't want it any more. The Town of Marlboro owns the caboose and they want to give it back. Leg. Cahill said Mike Berardi is aware of this and the County is working on it.

Cornell Cooperative Extension:

At this time Chairwoman Zimet advised the Committee that Lydia Reidy, Executive Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension was in New York City at a conference and would not report at this time.

Ulster County Arts Council:

Chairwoman Zimet recognized Sherri Brittain, Executive Director of Ulster County Arts Council, who distributed cards regarding health insurance being offered through Ulster County Arts Council which she stated has the lowest premium in Ulster County.

She also discussed the negotiations with the Dyson Foundation which partially funds through grants the Highland Cultural Center, and the possible merger of the Highland Cultural Center

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with the Ulster County Arts Council. She referred the Committee to the web site [www.ulsterarts.org](http://www.ulsterarts.org) for a survey to help advance the needs of the Arts in Ulster County, to help individual arts professionals in Ulster County, and to help arts and cultural organizations in the County.

Ms. Brittain said she had spent much of last month traveling around the County doing an arts industry assessment of the needs of the arts community which this organization can focus on. She said her organization also wants to be more self-sustaining.

Ms. Brittain said she is currently working on a business plan that is looking to build the Arts as an industry in Ulster County. She will have more information on that after the first of the year, but hopes to be able to bring more cultural tourism dollars into the County.

Chairwoman Zimet said UCDC had \$30,000 in its budget for a Creative Economy Assessment and believed Irene MacPherson was familiar with it. The Committee agreed that Chairwoman Zimet would contact Ms. MacPherson on this matter with an eye towards working together as a County.

Ms. Brittain said that in the event the merger goes through, part of the funding would be used to move into an Incubator space. She said they need to be in an area where there is foot traffic; however, Broadway may not be the best place and the Person House is still a potential space that would be accessible.

Chairwoman Zimet said the Person House came up at the Efficiency Committee meeting and we are hoping to move towards getting it settled. There is no way we can get someone in their quickly. There may be some way to get State or Federal money to move this project forward. Leg. Lomita said we have to make sure all Committees are advised and included in any discussions. A general discussion of the Person House followed.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Leg.Harris and seconded by Leg. Cahill and upon voice vote Chairwoman Zimet declared the meeting adjourned at 6:45pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Janet Salanitri  
Recorder