

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARTS, EDUCATION, TOURISM AND  
COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE OF THE ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE,  
HELD AT ULSTER COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE ON  
MAY 17, 2007**

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COMMIUTTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUSAN ZIMET, *Chairwoman*  
ALAN LOMITA  
FRANK FELICELLO  
MARY SHEELEY  
BRIAN CAHILL

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

CLAIRE BURLINGHAM, *Dean of Administration, Ulster County Community College*  
MARIANNE COLLINS, *Director of Institutional Advancement, UCCC*  
SHERRI BRITTAIN, *Executive Director, Ulster Arts Alliance*  
LEE REIDY, *Executive Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension*  
RICK REMSNYDER, *Director, Ulster County Tourism*  
LISA BERGER, *Marketing Director, Ulster County Tourism*  
MARK REYNOLDS, *Southern Ulster Times*  
JANET SALANITRI, *Recorder*

*A quorum being present, Chairwoman Zimet called the meeting to order at 5:08 pm. A motion to move into Executive Session was made by Leg. Sheeley and seconded by Leg. Lomita and the Committee moved to Executive Session at 5:10pm. A motion was then made by Leg. Sheeley and seconded by Leg. Cahill to invite Claire Burlingham and Marianne Collins, both representing Ulster County Community College, into Executive Session to discuss a personnel issue and all others present left the meeting room. At 5:35pm Leg. Cahill moved to return to regular session. The motion was seconded by Leg. Sheeley, unanimously approved and all those present returned.*

*At this time Chairwoman Zimet again recognized Dean Claire Burlingham of Ulster County Community College who gave her regular report. She advised that the Public Hearing on the 2007-08 Budget for Ulster County Community College would be held on June 6, 2007 at 7:30pm with a workshop proceeding at 7:00pm, in the Vanderlyn Hall Student Lounge. Ways & Means will also meet prior to the hearing and caucus rooms will be provided. A light buffet supper would also be provided.*

*Dean Burlingham gave an up-date on enrollment. She said Summer enrollment was ahead of projections but still under budget. The first session begins on Monday and the second session the end of May, beginning of June. She advised that the college has already met and exceeded*

*its budget projections for 2006-07 due, in part, to the hard work and innovative ideas of Ann Marrott, Vice President and Dean of Enrollment Management. She said we are currently 125 students ahead of last year at this point in registration for fall and we still have many registrations and financial aid workshops to come.*

*In reply to a question from Leg. Felicello, Dean Burlingham said the next Police Academy starts in mid-July and runs through the fall semester. This program is run in conjunction with the City of Kingston Police Department and the Ulster County Sheriff's Office and is mainly for those who have full time commitments working in law enforcement. Leg. Felicello said he thought the program was set up so that if someone was sponsored by a municipal police department they could attend the academy. Dean Burlingham said that is still true; however, not all academy students are already employed. There is a group called "unsworn" students who take the same classes as the police officers but with restrictions. The "unsworn" students cannot take certain classes such as firearms and driver training. In reply to another question from Leg. Felicello, Dean Burlingham said the program was fully accredited and she would send Leg. Felicello the information on the course.*

*The report of Ulster County Community College being concluded, Chairwoman Zimet recognized Rick Remsnyder, Director of Ulster County Tourism.*

*Ulster County Tourism:*

*Reporting on the Tourism Caboose, Mr. Remsnyder said thanks to the efforts of Victor Work, the leaks have been fixed, the staircase repaired and a crushed stone pathway created. He said he is also working with the various Chambers of Commerce to put up kiosks at various locations around the county. His office has also been awarded a grant which will enable caboose visitors to go directly to the county's Web site. Also, Lisa Berger has done all of the scheduling for the RSVP volunteers who man the caboose.*

*Leg. Cahill said the Town of Ulster did run water to that site; however, the county would have to hook up to it at a cost of about \$1500 to bring it into the caboose and he will bring that forward next month. He said it was under the \$3000 limit. He also said the sewer lines will be hooked up this summer and he will follow up with that. Ms. Brittain said Rondout Valley Growers will donate flowers and could provide water facilities. A general discussion on kiosks followed. Mr. Remsnyder said there is going to be an orientation tomorrow for the volunteers that will include a tour of Kingston's most popular tourist destinations so the volunteers will be able to answer questions. Leg. Sheeley said that many years ago when the caboose was in her district the county supplied a continuous slide presentation.*

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*The Travel Guide is almost ready said Mr. Remsnyder and displayed a mock-up of same. He advised that it should go to the printer shortly and be ready for distribution about June 1st. Mr. Remsnyder said this issue is better organized, has more pictures and is more colorful. The Web site will also be up-dated to include the Travel Guide.*

*On the Group Tour Operators from the United Kingdom, Mr. Remsnyder said they were in New York State for five days. Ms. Berger said they were particularly interested in the differences between the wineries from the Finger Lakes region and here. She said they were unaware that there were inter-regional differences. They were also very impressed with the arts and culture in this area.*

*Mr. Remsnyder distributed "Catskill Region Travel & Tourism Statistics issued Sept., 2006 which showed Ulster County representing over 40% of the region's tourism sales and also the largest share in the total direct visitor spending in the region, with \$388 million in direct visitor spending.*

*Mr. Remsnyder also advised the Committee that his office has cut back on advertising which has had a direct impact on inquiries by tourists and other out-of-towners. He said his office is way down in the 800 number requests. A general discussion on the affects of tourism followed.*

*Leg. Cahill asked what was meant by the terms "inquiries" and "requests. Mr. Remsnyder said in 2005 when there was a lot of advertising using many different forms of media and there were 2,131 requests for dates and general information. In 2006 with limited advertising, there were only 644 requests. Leg. Cahill said he was very concerned because there would have to be some adjustments budget wise.*

*Leg. Cahill asked about the Tourism Advisory Board and if it has been helpful. Mr. Remsnyder said the have been very helpful but could be more so. A general discussion of the advisory board followed, and Leg. Cahill said he needed more clarification as to the purpose of the board. Chairwoman Zimet said it was her impression that it was the bed tax the Legislature was trying to bring back that was the driving force. Leg. Lomita thought it was a wonderful opportunity for the Tourism Advisory Board to step in and help.*

*Ms. Brittain said, as a member of the Tourism Advisory Board, that it was her feeling that the Board was formed to help the Tourism Office at a time when it was not stabilized due to various factors. She said the Board is not going to be doing any volunteer work. Leg. Cahill thinks it is advisable to get sales tax figure updates fro the State and he does not believe they are good.*

*As part of tourism, Chairwoman Zimet distributed copies of Randall Travel Marketing's "Proposal for Comprehensive Travel & Tourism Research Study". She said she would like to*

*see this as a joint project between Ulster, Orange and Dutchess Counties and asked the members of the committee to review the proposal carefully and it would be further discussed.*

*Returning to Mr. Remsnyder's report, he submitted a request for conference attendance for Lisa Berger to attend the I Love New York Group Leader Sales Exchange in July at a cost of \$1,095. A motion to approve the request was made by Leg. Cahill and seconded by Leg. Lomita and upon Chairwoman Zimet calling for a voice vote the request was unanimously approved.*

*A second request to approve Tourism's participation in the Business Showcase at a cost of \$2,000. A motion to approve the request was made by Leg. Lomita and seconded by Leg. Cahill and upon Chairwoman Zimet calling for a voice vote the request was unanimously approved.*

*Leg. Cahill wanted it on the record that he thought the Tourism Department, while working on a shoestring, was doing a wonderful job.*

*The report of Ulster County Tourism being concluded, Chairwoman Zimet recognized Lee Reidy, Executive Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension.*

*Cornell Cooperative Extension:*

*Ms. Reidy thanked those members of the Legislature who came to the Legislative breakfast several weeks ago. She realizes that it is sometimes very difficult to get everyone together and her Board had recommended that we do this once or twice a year and it appears to be a success.*

*Ms. Reidy said that today Cornell had its annual golf tournament at Apple Greens and there were seventy-two golfers participating. The proceeds of this tournament are used to sponsor many of the 4-H programs and also the Volunteer Recognition ceremony which will be held shortly in the new Forsythe Nature Center. In addition, there will also be tours of this new facility.*

*She also discussed the Small Farms and Rural Living Expo which is coming up, as well as some Rural Living Safety Programs. Ms. Reidy reminded the committee that the Ulster County Fair will be held at the Fairgrounds from July 31<sup>st</sup> through August 5<sup>th</sup>. Main headliner is BJ Thomas.*

*Cornell Cooperative Extension has received an \$8,000 grant to do ATV (all-terrain vehicle) training for young people. This grant was one of only ten awarded across the nation. A discussion on ATVs and areas where they can be used and the safety requirements followed.*

*Ms. Reidy advised that on May 25, 2007 an Agricultural Farmland Protection Board meeting will be held from 12:00 to 2:00pm. They will be discussing properties that have asked to be*

*included in the Agricultural Districts. The Farmland Protection Board will make recommendations to the Legislature which, in turn, will make recommendations to the State. They will be discussing the four acre parcel in New Paltz where the owner wants to put in vines and run a farm winery and shop. She said these meetings are open; however, it is not a Public Hearing where people can speak. This proposal has generated a lot of interest from people in the area. Chairwoman Zimet said the property is down the road from her home but she has no interest in it.*

*The report of Cornell Cooperative Extension being concluded, Chairwoman Zimet recognized Sherri Brittain, Executive Director of Ulster Arts Alliance.*

*Ulster Arts Alliance:*

*Ms. Brittain distributed brochures on "Classics on the Mountain" Third Annual Music Festival to be held at Mohonk Mountain House June 12-17. She then followed up on Watchfire, the Veteran's Group and said she had helped them to organize as a non-profit group.*

*Ms. Brittain advised that a press conference would be held on June 5<sup>th</sup> to announce the results of the Americans for the Arts survey on the contribution of the arts to the economy. She said there is a press embargo on the results until the conference. She said she would like to do the press conference in the Legislative Chambers if at all possible. A discussion of this matter followed and Ms. Brittain said it was important information for the county and she hoped that the members of this committee could be present. Ms. Brittain will e-mail the committee as to the final time and place of the press conference.*

*The report of Ulster Arts Alliance being concluded, Chairwoman Zimet asked for a motion to adjourn. Such motion was made by Leg. Sheeley and seconded by Leg. Cahill. Upon voice vote the motion was unanimously approved and Chairwoman Zimet declared the meeting officially adjourned at 7:05pm.*

*Respectfully Submitted:*

*Janet Salanitri, Recorder*