

ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE MEETING

NAME OF COMMITTEE: Education, Culture and Economic Affairs
Committee

DATE: March 25, 1998

TIME: 5:00 P.M.

PLACE: Ulster County Community College,
Stone Ridge, New York

LEGISLATORS PRESENT: Chairman Dunn and Legislators Felicello,
Every, Gerentine, Sinagra, Magarelli,
Donaldson and Provenzano

LEGISLATORS EXCUSED: Legislator J. Naccarato

OTHERS ATTENDING: Gordon H. Howatt, Dean of Admin., UCCC;
Irene MacPherson, Marketing Dir., UCDC;
Lee Reidy, Director, Cornell Cooperative Ext.;
Peter Carafano, Director, Ulster County Tourism;
Tina Iapoce, Dep. Dir., Ulster County Tourism
Janet Crispino, Recorder

A quorum being present, Chairman Dunn called the meeting to order at 5:03pm and recognized Gordon Howatt, Dean of Administration of Ulster County Community College.

Dean Howatt presented a Resolution to appoint the firm of Brinnier & Larios to complete necessary plans and specifications for the new roof previously approved by the County Legislature for the Hardenberg Building. The cost is not to exceed \$18,500 which would be shared equally between the County and the State, and which is in the budget. Leg. Donaldson moved to approve the Resolution as presented and Leg. Magarelli seconded.

Upon discussion, Leg. Provenzano asked why an architect was needed for a roof. Dean Howatt said plans and specifications have to be done so that the project can go out for public bid. In reply to a question from Leg. Donaldson, Dean Howatt said he estimated the roof cost to be about \$150,000 but he was not sure.

Leg. Every noted that when dealing with architects it seems there always has to be more than one roof put on various buildings, and believes someone should be accountable. Dean Howatt agreed and when asked the age of the current roof said he believed it to be about thirteen years old and it does not have a lifetime guaranty.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Dunn called for a voice vote and the Resolution passed unanimously. A copy of the Resolution is attached to the original minutes.

Dean Howatt then presented a second Resolution to increase the contract with Joy, McCoola & Zilch, the architects for the Master Plan. He explained that the architects had worked through much of the previously awarded contract and had what would be described as a facilities condition study. There was no design plan and/or refurbishing design in that study that would cover the new programs. He said the College has applied to the SUNY system for six or seven new programs for this coming Fall, and plan on applying for another seven this Fall. He said the College wants to refurbish the interior of some buildings, is relocating some program areas and there is also the potential for additional academic space, and wants to re-work that segment of the Master Plan with the architects. That would also include working with various constituencies on campus. This would be done on a time and materials basis and the outside amount is \$13,906 half of which would come from the State and half is being asked of from the County.

Leg. Donaldson asked if the amount was in the budget, and Dean Howatt said it was outside the budget so that it would be an additional \$13,900 which would have to come from the County. The Dean said hopefully we will have a Master Plan for the May Committee meeting. He has done a full work session with the Board of Trustees and final documents should go to the Trustees in April.

Leg. Donaldson asked why this amount was not included in the original budget and Dean Howatt said we only discovered that the Master Plan under the contract had never been filed with the State. Leg. Donaldson asked who was responsible for filing and the Dean said it fell between the cracks with the change in leadership and lack of continuity. We should be filed in May to get in line for State funding for 1999. Leg. Donaldson asked why the College did not file it as it was and the Dean said it is only a facilities condition report now. It does not address rehabilitation of existing facilities for the new academic programs the College is trying to start.

Chairman Dunn asked Leg. Sinagra if he was familiar with this, and Leg. Sinagra said very much so; it should have been completed and filed a long time ago but for some reason was not.

A motion to approve the Resolution as presented was made by Leg. Provenzano and seconded by Leg. Sinagra. Upon discussion, Leg. Every asked where the money was going to come from. Leg. Provenzano said it was not up to this Committee to decide the funding. She said we will pass on the intent, but it still has to go before the Ways and Means Committee. Leg. Sinagra said if the Committee doesn't pass it this year, the college will get no funding from the State in 1999. He said this should have been a budget item but was not, so it has to be taken care of now.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Dunn asked for a voice vote on the Resolution, and the Resolution passed unanimously. A copy of the Resolution is attached to the original minutes.

Reporting on grants, Dean Howatt said the College had \$250,000 in anticipated new grants and the present balance is \$71,801. This is pursuant to previous Resolution #55 passed February 12, 1998.

Regarding a question on the Fleet Bank grant, Leg. Sinagra said this was a direct agreement between Fleet Bank and the College. When asked how the anticipated grants compare to current grants, Dean Howatt said he believed it is a little higher. Leg. Sinagra suggested that instead of putting these items under grants, they should be included in revenues, since grants usually come from outside agencies. Dean Howatt said these training grants are actually revenues and the College is in the process of cleaning this up.

Leg. Sinagra said it is not a good idea to mix them because when you go to the State and they look at what you have already received, they may cut the funding down. Dean Howatt agreed that grants should really be separate from contractual agreements. Leg. Donaldson said this is especially true when you are competing for money on a constant basis.

Dean Howatt reported that the final draft of the Memorandum of Agreement on the Mid-Town Community Center with the Kingston-Newburgh Economic Zone was ready, with a few minor changes. There followed a general discussion of the building in question. Chairman Dunn said this was another opportunity to have our Community College serve the people in the County by providing more space, more programs and more instructional facilities.

In reply to a question from Leg. Every, Dean Howatt said we hope to have it up and running this fall. Chairman Dunn asked when the agreement would be finalized, and Dean Howatt said he will be presenting it to the Board of Trustees at the April meeting, after some final changes are made.

Dean Howatt reported the College would be doing a presentation for this Committee in April on the proposed Technology Plan, which is designed to bring major technological changes and upgrades to the College. In addition, the Master Plan will be presented to the Committee at the May meeting. Dean Howatt said he is also working on getting budget material ready. The college does not anticipate any changes in tuition and fees and he is also talking to the County people about the extension of some educational benefits to County employees. Chairman Dunn asked that a copy of the printed materials on the Resolutions and other matters submitted by Dean Howatt be sent to the Clerk of the County Legislature.

There followed a general discussion of JTPA and the Department of Labor with the College. Dean Howatt also advised the College would be graduating its first Small Business Incubator tenants out of the Business Resource Center sometime in July. There are three businesses that will be moving out after three years and the College would try to do some awards.

The report of Ulster County Community College being concluded, Chairman Dunn recognized Irene MacPherson, Director of Marketing for Ulster County Development Corporation. She advised that Gerald Davidson, Executive Director, is in Arizona, and that he had asked her to report to this Committee on UCDC's 1998 Marketing Plan as well as other marketing activities.

Prior to doing so, Ms. MacPherson discussed with the Committee a proposed Resolution which had come before the IDA for Expansion Bonds requested by Viking Industries of the Town of New Paltz. She said Viking has experienced a 26% increase in business growth and want to expand, providing about ten new jobs. The Resolution requests approval of \$2,250,000 tax exempt bonds. There was a public hearing at the New Paltz Town Hall March 14th and there were no appearances.

Leg. Provenzano asked if UCDC keeps track of businesses that have said they were going to increase employment. Ms. MacPherson replied that the Annual Report showed the total number of jobs generated through UCDC, the IDA, and other projects.

Leg. Magarelli asked if the IDA bonds could also be a part of business retention, since these bonds would be tax exempt which would make it more attractive for existing businesses to stay in the County. Ms. MacPherson said businesses like to see a diverse, healthy economy and these bonds certainly do make businesses stay in Ulster County. Companies like Viking Industries also provide great advertising for the County.

Leg. Provenzano began a discussion of new jobs being created being in the \$5-6 per hour range, and she would also like to know if they really do hire more people. Ms. MacPherson said she will check into it, but said UCDC does know how many people are actually hired by a company.

Leg. Donaldson asked who guarantees the Bonds and Ms. MacPherson said they are usually sold on the open market with no obligation to the County. Leg. Sinagra said they go to a broker and the broker sells them on behalf of the individual. He said it should be noted that Viking Industries was going to leave the area. Ms. MacPherson agreed and said Viking had many discussions with UCDC and decided that with this incentive they would stay in Ulster. Leg. Sinagra added that the bulk of the money was necessary because Viking has to put up a water storage system. The New Paltz Fire Department requires it and Viking was offered the system free if they moved to Orange County.

Ms. MacPherson completed and presented the Resolution approving the issuance of \$2,250,000 in IDA bonds to Viking Industries. A motion to approve the Resolution as presented was made by Leg. Magarelli and seconded by Leg. Provenzano. Chairman Dunn requested a voice vote and the Resolution passed unanimously. A copy of the Resolution is attached to the original Minutes.

A general discussion was had regarding business attraction which Ms. MacPherson said is a very long process from start to closing. The trend is that site selection has become very important to businesses today. This comes out of the accounting field and takes a lot of time and effort. She advised that there were several companies close to an announcement.

UCDC has also developed a strategic marketing plan which is really an Action Strategy and is based on all initiatives created and accomplished in the past. She said we need to communicate more with the entire community as a team effort, and there are many positive signs for Ulster. Rockland, Westchester and Dutchess Counties are starting to build-out.

Ms. MacPherson said real estate drives the market and product availability is more certain now that the IBM site is settled and the two Edgewater Buildings are available. The mortgage holder have told UCDC they want to either sell or lease. This has opened about 2.6 million square feet of space that was not readily available the end of last year. UCDC is looking at doing special advertising and public relations to try to develop relationships on a commercial real estate level for people actually looking for sites today. They are also working with other agencies in the area such as Empire State Development and the Economic Development Zone, as well as with plant site locators and other.

Continuing her report, Ms. MacPherson said UCDC is offering an on-line job fair, because the work force is an issue in this area. We are looking at that as a service to businesses who are looking to expand. This would also be beneficial to people looking to come into the County.

UCDC recently started a "Welcome" program in conjunction with Rondout Savings Bank and Ulster Savings Bank, which helps make it easier for people to get mortgages, thus making it easier for employees to come to the area.

Leg. Provenzano asked if there were any problems with the Head Trauma Center and whether the State Health Department had passed it. There was a general discussion of the agencies involved in this project and about the Center's problems with financing. Leg. Sinagra said it is not the State Health Department holding things up; that the programs come because this is a new type of facility for New York and the developers have to do a lot of new things. It is his understanding that now the contractor wants more money for having to wait so long - the bottom line keeps changing. Chairman Dunn said he believed the approvals have been obtained but financial commitments have not been made as of this date. The Committee held a general discussion of the funding process.

Leg. Donaldson said the argument he has heard has been is this kind of center doesn't give the care necessary; that it would be a warehousing facility. Ms. MacPherson said UCDC has been trying to facilitate this project on all levels. Chairman Dunn said it is not in our local control at this time; there are other factors outside the County that we have to compete with. Leg. Donaldson said he didn't hear of any arguments against it until recently. The County has been pushing for it because it will attract good paying jobs as well as keep patients here rather than sending them out of state. Ms. MacPherson said this facility should make Ulster County the focal point for excellent health care.

The report of the Ulster County Development Corporation being concluded, Chairman Dunn recognized Lee Reidy, Executive Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension, who advised her office was working a program called "Practical Knowledge for Everyday Living". They will have a booth at the Lions Expo in the Hudson Valley Mall where young people will be doing their 4-H presentations which are designed to teach them organizational and public speaking skills.

Ms. Reidy also reported on the Bunny Basics course being held this weekend at the Gardiner Firehouse to teach children, and adults, how to care for small animals, such as rabbits.

Cornell Cooperative recently graduated nine more family budget counselors from training. Ms. Reidy said they are also looking for more people to train for the Master Gardener Program. This will be a 50-hour training program and will be held in the Fall. Also, she said, the 1998 Spring Garden Day sponsored by Cooperative Extension will be held on April 19th at the Community College.

The Volunteer Recognition "Dessert" is scheduled for April 23rd at 6:30pm. Ms. Reidy said this is a way to thank people who are supportive of Extension's programs. Ed Ford will be the speaker.

Ms. Reidy reported that the Golf Tournament would be held May 21st at Apple Greens and advised that Daryl Magill offered to emcee the dinner. Fred DuBois will be the Chairman. Cornell Cooperative is also interviewing the final two candidates for the fruit educator position available.

On the Agricultural Farmland Protection Board Ms. Reidy said a public hearing was held March 30th on District 4, Kingston north to Saugerties. There will also be a public hearing on April 20th at the Gardiner Fire House. These hearings give farmers the opportunity to put their land into the agricultural district or take land out if they want to use it for another purpose. If it is sold or used for any other use other than agriculture, they have to pay the back taxes on the property.

She is also working with farmers and the farm markets in the City of Kingston and at the Thruway exits.

Ms. Reidy advised that last night there was another government education satellite program. This was a Highway Superintendents' Training Program through the New York State Comptroller's Office. She said twenty-four local government officials attended.

The 1997 Annual Report of Cornell Cooperative was distributed to the Committee. A mailing was going out to the rest of the County Legislature and others.

Leg. Magarelli asked about a fifth agricultural district in the Hardenberg/Shandaken area and Ms. Reidy said she has had requests through the New York City Pilot Farm Program. One of the farmers was not in a recognized agricultural district. She said farmers in the area must file a petition, which they have done. There now will be a recommendation to the Legislature and then it goes to New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets for final approval.

The report of Cornell Cooperative Extension being concluded, Chairman Dunn recognized Peter Carafano, Director of Ulster County Tourism, who said he has been spending a lot of time on seasonal set-up; calling different businesses to get the brochure ready for distribution, planning caboose clean-up and scheduling, and finding the events his office will be attending throughout the season.

Mr. Carafano said the new Travel Guide copy and information has been submitted to the graphic artist, the bids for printing have gone out and will be opened on April 9th. Hopefully, the Travel Guide will be available mid-May.

He reported on his offices attendance at the Suffern Sportsmans Show and the Mohonk Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association meeting on March 19th. At the Mohonk meeting, Mohonk, Granit and Nevele were all in attendance, and there were a lot of newcomers.

In reply to a question from Leg. Felicello, Mr. Carafano said the Granit should be opening very soon. It had been put off until the Spring but it is guaranteed to be open by the holiday. There is also a lot of major renovation work being done by the Nevele.

Mr. Carafano said he and Ms. Iapoce were going to the Legislative Reception at Ski Windham. He said this formerly was an event which was held by the Chambers of Commerce of Sullivan and Ulster County. It has not become mainly a CATS regional event with all of the area Counties involved in regional tourism, as well as with their own area. Mr. Carafano said he would be speaking on "Destination Packaging". There will be seminars in May to see if there is interest in being involved in tour packaging.

On the Legislative appointment, the Clerk of the Legislature and he had done some interviews for the fourth position in this office and Mr. Carafano now reported that Ulster County Tourism has hired Patty Jacobs of New Paltz, who is a very qualified person, and who will be starting on April 6th.

On the Information Center at Exit 19 on the Thruway, there have been some preliminary discussions with Harvey Sleight, but nothing concrete to date.

Mr. Carafano advised that next months' meeting would be held at the new Mohonk Preserve on Route 44/55 going out of New Paltz, and his office will be mailing out directions and details. He would like to try to do something each month in a different area while the weather is good.

Ms. Iapoce reported she has been working on a Tourism Information Room and it should be complete in the next few weeks. The Town of Ulster Library is donating some glass display cases and in April there will be a joint display on National Library Week. She was also approached by some Holocaust survivors who are area artists and residents, and they would like to have some exposure in this room. There will be a special ceremony at the end of April for this exhibit.

She also said that National Tourism Week is the first week in May and there are several things being planned to promote that. In addition, the Third Annual "Company's Coming" program sponsored by her office, The Tourism Task Force and the City of Kingston, will be held on May 18th at the Holiday Inn. This event helps to make everyone aware that the tourism season is starting.

Leg. Donaldson asked about the matter regarding the descendants of George Clinton discussed at the March meeting, initiating a general discussion of Heritage Day in the City of Kingston and several other events. Leg. Donaldson thought that Heritage Day

could be combined with other events into a large event. It was Leg. Donaldson's thoughts that Ulster County Tourism could use its connections to reach other areas to have something like a "Hudson Valley Heritage Day". He said people are attempting to do this in different areas and perhaps Tourism could help bring these people together.

Leg. Provenzano asked if there was any chance of the New York State Legislature addressing gambling. Mr. Carafano said it seemed a dead issue at this point.

The report of Ulster County Tourism being concluded, Chairman Dunn recognized Leg. Magarelli, who said last month he had passed out literature in support of having the month of May proclaimed as "Civic Values Month". He would also like to recognize some of the community groups that demonstrate and support civic values, such as Veteran's, League of Women Voters, etc. Leg. Provenzano asked if that designation was made by the Chairman of the Legislature, and Leg. Magarelli said he believed the Chairman could issue a Proclamation. Chairman Dunn advised Leg. Magarelli to contact the Chairman, the Minority or Majority Leader to find out what to do.

The consensus of the Committee was that it is a good idea; however, Leg. Sinagra said he would not support it entirely, as he did not think any employee of the County should be put in a position where they have to recommend one group over another, especially if you forget somebody. The Committee agreed that they would not be involved in making recommendations favoring one group over another.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Leg. Gerentine and seconded by Leg. Felicello and Chairman Dunn declared the meeting adjourned at 6:45pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Vincent Dunn, Chairman
Education, Culture & Economic Affairs Committee