

ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE MEETING

NAME OF COMMITTEE: Education, Culture and Economic Affairs Committee

DATE: June 14, 1995

TIME: 5:00 P.M.

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

LEGISLATORS PRESENT: Acting Chairman Contini and Legislators Felicello and O'Reilly

LEGISLATORS EXCUSED: Legislators Dunn, Naccarato and Jennings

LEGISLATORS ABSENT: Legislators Wadnola, Bertone and Provenzano

OTHERS ATTENDING: Robert T. Brown, President, UCCC; Charles Schenck, Dean of Administration, UCCC; Bruce Whyte, Executive Director, Ulster Arts Alliance; George M. Prisco, representing H.I.T; Thomas Struzzieri, representing H.I.T.S.; Jim Shaughnessy, Multimedia Access and Study Center; Joann Ives, Multimedia Access and Study Center; Joseph Lemme, Director, Ulster County Information Services; Lee Reidy, Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension; Jolie Milstein, Executive Director, U.C. Development Corp.; Joseph Munster, Ulster County Public Information Officer

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Absent a quorum, it was decided that the meeting proceed for informational purposes, and Acting Chairman Contini called the meeting to order at 5:05pm, recognizing George Prisco and Thomas Struzziari who advised the Committee they were trying to locate a site in Ulster County where they could put on horse shows.

The company name is "Horse Shows In The Sun", (HITS), and does the organizing and promoting of horse shows, consisting of hunter/jumpers. The company will be participating in the World Cup finals to be held in the year 2000 in Las Vegas. He said HITS owns six dates in this area, which he likened to owning landing time at an airport. His shows are protected for a 250 mile radius and generate \$3 million - \$4 million in prize money per year. He would like to find a site within a 50-mile radius of Poughkeepsie coming West. They plan to do two or three two-week blocks for a total of six shows. There are not a lot of expenses to the community; however, there are different reactions from different communities. He is interested in Ulster County because the climate in the Summer is good and needs a site near lodging, restaurants, etc. He would like ideas or suggestions for a site in Ulster County.

Ms. Milstein asked if he had made a similar presentation to Dutchess County and Mr. Struzziari said not yet. Ulster County was his first choice because he believes people want to come to the mountains. His site specifications would be for 100 flat acres. All of the equipment is portable and would require no buildings.

Ms. Milstein asked how many beds would be required and he said about 200-400. Ms. Milstein said she would be happy to investigate further, but the amount of available beds may not be enough, since this is a large rural area with not a lot of flat land.

Ms. Reidy asked about the time period and Mr. Struzziari said it would be for Summer of 1996. He is looking to rent, borrow or buy and said each community is different. In response to a question from Leg. O'Reilly, he said he is looking for an audience of people from the south who are spending the Summer in Ulster County. Leg. O'Reilly asked if they were looking for economic support and he said cash is the least of his concerns; generally they give the gate to a local charity. He is not looking for money, but would like the support of the community.

Ms. Milstein asked for some references before starting any kind of search. Mr. Munster said the Fallsview Hotel and the Nevele Hotel have open fields and golf courses, and are looking for something other than casino gambling. Mr. Munster also asked why not the Dutchess County Fairgrounds. Mr. Struzziari said the fairgrounds is pretty booked up in the Summer and the only place available is the parking lot and they don't want that used. In response to a question from Ms. Reidy, he said the site would require water and access to electricity. Ms. Reidy requested specific dates and Mr. Struzziari said he would provide them.

The presentation of HITS being concluded, Acting Chairman Contini recognized Joann Ives and Jim Shaughnessy of Multimedia Access and Study Center (MASC). Ms. Ives said they were before this Committee to clarify their proposal and wanted to work with the County for the mutual benefit of all. Attached to these minutes at the request of the Vice-Chairman, and made a part hereof, is a copy of the Ulster County Home Page Proposal of MASC.

Ms. Ives said there have already been several inquiries from people in Albany who will be relocated by the State for the Computer Center and who want to find out about the area. She also asked that a line item be placed in the budget for next year, which would be much more broad based. That could be justified based on feedback from the pilot project. If there is not enough interest, they would not go forward. In response to a question by Acting Chairman Contini, she said they would be able to tell how effective it was through the feedback mechanisms. She said the Kingston Home Page is working fairly well, and has had visitors from over 200 Internet sites looking for employment opportunities. The Urban Cultural Park has also gotten requests for additional information.

Responding to a question by Mr. Lemme, Mr. Schaughnessy said updating is done twice a month by volunteers at MASC, which will be located initially at the Kingston Area Library. Mr. Lemme said leaving updating to volunteers could be a problem. Mr. Schaughnessy said servers are starting to be put in place in Ulster County and anticipated it being put on the BOCES server. Mr. Lemme asked how the other WEB directories would be populated and Mr. Schaughnessy said announcements are sent out and that would be done by MASC.

Mr. Lemme asked how long of a period of development and maintenance would the \$1,900 cover and Mr. Schaughnessy said it would be 1995 or would be from some period up to one year. Mr. Lemme said there were a number of municipalities across the country already doing this, and that for \$1,950 it is just a trial balloon. Mr. Munster mentioned that this will cost the County \$11,000 but that the City of Kingston is getting it for free. Mr. Schaughnessy said they can't continue to do that and are currently working on a proposal for the City of Kingston. Mr. Lemme said he thought the County should be the ones to suggest who should be on the Home Page since the results of this trial may cost them another \$10,000.

Mr. Schaughnessy said they presently have their set-up in the Mid-Hudson Regional Computer Center. They volunteered their server on a trial basis, as a demonstration project for the City of Kingston; however, he may have to make an arrangement with a commercial provider to put it on their server and there may be a minimal monthly charge for that service. Leg. Contini asked if the Kingston Area Library System and/or BOCES have that capability, and Mr. Schaughnessy said the BOCES does but he doesn't know if they will do it.

Mr. Munster said he currently has his calender of events on UCDC's Home Page. Ms. Milstein said that her server was OKC in New York City on a trial basis which expires in three months. This firm did all design, graphics, monitored all hits, put it into directories and have been advising her. Mr. Munster asked if Ms. Milstein had a price from them to continue and she said she preferred to go locally. She went with the people in New York because she knew them and because she was new to the area at that time. She said she is getting a lot of inquiries and that she uses it when she goes to trade shows. Part of her marketing strategy is to go all of the Hudson Valley on the World Wide Web. She said it is basically meant to be an economic development tool, as opposed to tourism, but it is now both.

Mr. Lemme reiterated that all major cities are doing this. He said for \$1,900 is a trial balloon and if it doesn't work, the County would just not continue.

Ms. Milstein asked if MASC is looking to solicit corporate sponsorship to defray some of the costs, and Mr. Shaughnessy replied he doesn't know how that is going to work out because there are people who are trying to establish commercial sites which would advertise over the Internet. Mr. Lemme said Ulster County should try to go to the various sponsors and try to solicit funding from them to advertise as part of Ulster County's Home Page. Ms. Milstein said it made more sense to tie economic development and tourism together rather than to try and market them separately.

Mr. Shaughnessy said the richer the environment is the more pages there are and the more traffic there will be. He said he would eventually like to see the kiosk at the Thruway circle go to a WEB site to get information. There should be some sort of touch screen. He reiterated they are proposing a start and that if it doesn't work, they will not go forward. He said he would not want to compete with those businesses we are trying to nurture.

Acting Chairman Contini agreed that it is a venture worth looking into, but with only three Legislators we cannot take any action. Leg. O'Reilly asked if this could come out of the tourism budget. Acting Chairman Contini said it could be discussed further when there is a quorum, but also asked if Mr. Munster could find any money in his budget, either now or for 1996. Ms. Ives said that the initial money is needed when the program is started up.

In response to a question from Leg. Felicello and from the other Legislators present regarding the use of funds from the tourism budget, Mr. Munster said he would need a Resolution before doing that. Leg. Contini asked how much front money would be needed, and Ms. Ives said \$1,975 start-up money is needed up-front.

Ms. Milstein asked if MASC provided hot links and said the program should be an umbrella for other agencies. Mr. Shaughnessy

said that Woodstock has accepted doing a Home Page and would be tied into Kingston, the Catskills and the Hudson Valley. Mr. Munster asked how much Woodstock is paying and Mr. Shaughnessy said the proposal was for \$5,000 for 1995 and next year.

Mr. Lemme said the \$1,900 for a year on a server with them doing all the developmental work; is a good deal. Leg. Contini asked if Mr. Lemme, Ms. Milstein, Mr. Shaughnessy and Mr. Munster could get together and discuss it further and he would ask Chairman Dunn to make plans for this to come before the Committee again next month. This concluded the presentation of MASC.

Acting Chairman Contini then recognized Robert T. Brown, President of Ulster County Community College, who advised the Committee that he had no Resolutions to present. He also thanked the Committee and the Legislature for their support of the budget which was passed, but still has to be submitted to the State University. Tuition, he said, will remain at \$2,220, as indicated, because there was no restoration of State aid.

President Brown said we will encounter a cash flow problem for the next payroll and will have to come to the County to advance the money for the July payrolls. It will take about six weeks for the \$1.9 million the State owes, but there is no other choice as the College cannot borrow money. All Community Colleges, he said, are in the same position.

Regarding the 1994-95 budget, President Brown said there was a \$350,000 savings which will be enough to make the pay-outs and cover some of the costs of making the organizational changes for 1995-96. He said he may also have to make some additions to the Business Resource Center. IBM, said President Brown, does not seem to be coming through with a gift of the computers that are needed, although Steve Cole has been very helpful.

With regard to facilities, President Brown said last Fall the Legislature approved a contract on the wall removal outside of Vanderlyn. The firm doing the work, Sunup Construction, is doing a very good job. Total project costs are reasonable, and they have not disturbed anyone. It is on target and almost complete. The President also said he has had to do a lot of explaining on campus as to why twenty positions had to be cut when we have a capital project going on. This is a hard concept for people to understand.

Leg. Felicello asked if there was any counselling set up for the people whose positions were eliminated. President Brown said one employee was going to get another position that opened up, and that he and his staff have spent a lot of time with the others. About eight did not get other positions and are having a difficult time. He said we would have to take a good look at how we are going to deal with this in the future. The President said that the Business Resource Center will also be beneficial, as it is strati-

gically located to do a lot the education and additional training people will need. He said it was a terrible thing to have to do, but there was no choice if the College wants to continue to offer quality educational programs.

With regard to the \$9.8 million expansion and rehabilitation project, President Brown said it appears the architect is not abandoning us. There have been several on-going problems, particularly with the boilers and these are being worked out.

He also advised that the College has a contract with Service-master to manage our cleaning services. Part of the new budget, he said, did create a savings of about \$30,000 by not renewing their contract. We will be going back into managing the cleaning services ourselves for the time being.

President Brown said that every three years we go out for Requests for Proposals for insurance, and hire an outside consultant to do their review. Marshall & Sterling gave the best proposal and the Board of Trustees will approve their proposal at the next meeting.

In addition, said the President, Canteen's contract for food service has expired and the College went out for bid. Canteen was not the successful bidder. Part of the proposal is to be able to pay the College money for doing this service and we look for the best profitability for price and food delivery. The successful bidder was All Seasons of Middlehope.

Returning to the Business Resource Center, President Brown said that because we have not been successful in landing the computer gift from IBM, the College is very hard pressed to get the computers in the BRC. He said we have to buy pentium class computers off State contract and they are very expensive. He did find that Ulster BOCES had purchased computers under a Nassau County bid. These are Dell computers which came in \$700 less than IBM. The Nassau County bid can be tied into by any other agency, and we will be buying them.

Dean Schenck said that the pentium class computers from Dell are \$2,100 each while IBM machines are \$2,800; a difference of \$700. President Brown said he is still trying to get with Steve Cole, as we are talking about fifty computers. Hopefully we may still end up with some gift from IBM or break on the purchase price. He told the Committee that we have on staff Fred Sarr, formerly with IBM who is our computer expert and who has done a lot of research.

Leg. O'Reilly said \$700 seems like a big difference. There followed a general discussion of computers and the capabilities, as well as the College's specifications and requirements. President Brown said we must fill our computer stations very quickly, and when you get into marketing it is a different story. He said he

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has been pursuing it for the last two months and has determined that if we are not going to get any grant or gift from IBM, we need to buy something off State or County contract.

With regard to the Business Resource Center, President Brown said there will be a Board of Directors meeting of the Ulster County Development Corporation held there on Friday morning. He advised that at present we have only signed three leases for incubator tenants; however, he advised that there is a committee that reviews all contracts and they are making recommendations.

Acting Chairman Contini said he had heard of a John Hasper, a former Assemblyman who now works for a State agency. He mentioned that they are going to take the RAIN system and change it around so that there is communication between State and local governments, in cooperation with Community Colleges, SUNY and Cooperative Extension. President Brown said the College is a part of a major proposal developed by the Office of General Services, but that was not RAIN.

Dean Schenck said there was a single proposal from the state to OGS essentially, to put all of its regulations, rules and applications and licensing forms together to be accessed by everybody. We will, he said, in our Business Resource Center, have the capability to train the trainers and write documentation for training programs. President Brown said Ulster County is the first Community College on that program.

Dean Schenck said John Stromquist, Director of the State Information Services, is meeting with data processing directors throughout the State, both in terms of government, education, State Education Department, and state government, because there are about eight Internet systems currently running within the unit itself. He said they can't have so many different data systems running in the State when there should be just one. President Brown said that, to the best of his knowledge, Mr. Stromquist is in charge of setting up the data center in Ulster County and bringing all data centers together from throughout the State. Acting Chairman Contini will get President Brown further information and President Brown will try to get more information from Mr. Stromquist.

The report of Ulster County Community College being concluded, Acting Chairman Contini recognized Jolie Milstein, Executive Director of the Ulster County Development Corporation, who advised that she had just returned from a Boston trade show. She went at the invitation of the Dutchess County Development Corporation to see how they market Dutchess County. They have, she said a first-class, very well funded promotional campaign going on. She was invited to go to other trade shows with them and has also spent some time with IBM to try and help us.

Ms. Milstein said she missed the last meeting because she was at a telecommunications show in California where she made a lot of good contacts. She said UCDC was about to sign a contract with a call center in Ulster County in Uptown Kingston. Sullivan County just got a call center and Dutchess County is getting one. It is a reasonable business opportunity; not a high wage job creation business activity, but more a lower wage with a slightly higher turnover, but still a good business.

She said she was joint to a P.C. Expo next week, which is another information technology opportunity for us. Although Ulster County will not have a booth there, IBM has promised to provide us with a list of exhibitors and attendees.

The annual meeting of UCDC is June 27th with a luncheon at Wiltwyck. Everyone should have received an invitation. The cost is \$25.00 per person. Guest speaker will be Charles Gargano, who is the senior person at the State Office of Economic Development. We may be able to find out what programs are coming out of Albany now that the budget is passed. She also advised that Bob King is coming on June 21st to talk about regulatory agencies.

Ms. Milstein said UCDC recently retained Joan Shuman Associates to represent the Development Corporation in the public relations area, in combination with the external marketing area. Requests for Proposals were sent out locally; there were seven responses. They interview two firms and selected Joan Shuman Associates on a retainer basis.

She also advised the Committee that UCDC had received the \$100,000 member item from Senator Charles Cooke, which money was agreed to in 1992 and authorized in 1993 for 1994 funding and received in 1995.

Leg. O'Reilly asked Ms. Milstein if she knew of any prospects the prospective owner of the IBM buildings has and she said she did not know of any. She said to date nobody has said they are investing any money, nor is there an anchor tenant. Also, she said, anyone that is going to come in will probably require some up-grading of the buildings. The property will have to look more like an industrial park. Right now it looks like just a business.

The report of the Ulster County Development Corporation being concluded, Acting Chairman Contini recognized Lee Reidy, Executive Director of the Cornell Cooperative Extension, who reminded the Committee that she had asked at the last meeting that the Committee have a regular meetings at the offices of Cornell Cooperative. She said that Chairman Dunn had agreed to do this in July or August. This will be an in-depth look at Cornell Cooperative Extension.

Ms. Reidy said she had been asked by the Environmental Management Council to take on EMC as part of Cornell Cooperative, as they

do in Dutchess County. Rick Fritschler put together a proposal whereby EMC would retain its Board of Directors and volunteers, but one staff person would become a Cornell Cooperative Extension agent, be responsible to the EMC and would also have other responsibilities in Cornell Cooperative for some of the environmental programs they have done in the past. This would have to go through the Boards of Cornell Cooperative and EMC as well as the County Legislature, since it will take Legislative action.

EMC is currently a County Department and their employee is a County employee. Dutchess County EMC has been a part of Cornell Cooperative Extension for twenty years, as has Chemung County. Ms Reidy said she is willing to put the time and effort into this and bring the resources of Cornell University to the EMC. There would also be some cost savings to the County. She said she will look to use the new set-up to better monitor and organize the environmental work being done by various widely-scattered Ulster County agencies

Ms. Reidy said Dave Alle of Cornell, who is in charge of the local government portion of Cooperative Extension, as well as of Economic Development, is coming to meet with Jolie Milstein and Phil Sinagra. Phil Sinagra is particularly interested in the New York City Watershed and has been involved in writing several large grants. This meeting will take place on June 22nd.

The new Horticultural Business Management agent is Ben Carlos who starts on July 5th and is willing to move into Ulster County. He will focus on horticultural business management in Ulster and Orange Counties, which is a cooperative agreement. He will also be meeting with the UCDC and SBDC to coordinate resources.

Ms. Reidy reported she has been working with Dutchess, Orange and Sullivan Counties to put together a proposal to do financial management budget counselling for people having problems managing their money. There is a great deal of need for this service in Ulster County particularly among low-income people or people on assistance. She said Cooperative Extension trains volunteers to work in counselling situations for families in trouble financially. R.S.V.P. is interested in providing volunteers as counselors.

In response to a question, Ms. Reidy said the satellite dish is still not up. It has been turned over to Phil Sinagra who will be looking into it. Jolie Milstein said the Building Inspector said that if the County Legislature believes it is important, he will make sure it gets done. Ms. Reidy said Cornell is ready to install it as soon as approvals are obtained.

The report of Cornell Cooperative Extension being concluded, Acting Chairman Contini recognized Joseph Munster, Ulster County Public Information Officer. Mr. Munster asked Ms. Reidy about the low power radio station, and she said they have the lines and are only waiting for the antenna to come in.

Regarding the caboose move in Ellenville, his office will give \$1,500 to the Village of Ellenville to be part of the \$37,000 ISTEAA grant money; however, the money cannot be spent until a contract is signed because it would not be reimbursable. This will help pay for the renovations, a mural, and the move.

The caboose move to Milton is on hold. There is a problem with the power lines, and it appears that in order to get the caboose out of its present location, they will have to shut off the power to Highland for three hours because of high tension wires.

On the Apple Festival, Mr. Munster handed out an invitation to participate in the Ulster County Apple Festival from September 30th to October 1, 1995. At the request of Acting Chairman Contini, a copy of this invitation is attached to these minutes and made a part hereof. He said this is not going to be taking away from anything else and believes there is no conflict in the date. The only conflict is the Mum Festival to be held in Saugerties on October 1st. If anything, he said, it might help. Many people will be interested in both and will move around the County.

He said they will be using the Johnny Appleseed theme and will be distributing apple tree seeds. He doesn't know the cost of printing the seed envelopes as yet; however, the seeds themselves are free. He said there will be a minimal investment of County money. The main purpose is to get people to go to the various local orchards and farm stands. The general consensus amount all was favorable.

The report of the Ulster County Public Information Office being concluded, and there being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Leg. Felicello and seconded by Leg. O'Reilly, and Acting Chairman Contini declared the meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Attilio Contini, Acting Chairman
Education, Culture and Economic Affairs Committee