

**American Rescue Plan Act
Special Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes**

DATE & TIME: June 29, 2022 – 5:00
LOCATION: Powered by Zoom Meeting by Dialing: 1-646-558-8656,
Meeting ID: 828 8954 0625
PRESIDING OFFICER: Peter Criswell, Chairman
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Amber Feaster
PRESENT: Legislators Thomas Corcoran, Jr, Aaron J. Levine, Craig V. Lopez, and Megan Sperry; and Legislative Chair Tracey A. Bartels (arrived at 5:09 PM)
ABSENT: None
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes
OTHER ATTENDEES: Legislators Manna Jo Greene, Chris Hewitt and Kathy Nolan; Deputy County Executive Chris Kelly; Comptroller March Gallagher; Deputy Comptroller Alicia DeMarco; ARP Administration Nathan Litwin, Ashlee Long, and Molly Scott; Director of Planning Dennis Doyle; Ulster County Soil & Water Conservation District Jake Wedemeyer

- **Chairman Criswell called the meeting to order at 5:03 PM**

Motion No. 1: To approve the minutes and transcripts of the June 1, 2022 and June 15, 2022 Regular Meetings

Motion Made By: Legislator Corcoran
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Lopez
Discussion: None
Voting In Favor: Legislators Criswell, Corcoran, Levine, Lopez, and Sperry
Voting Against: None
No. of Votes in Favor: 5
No. of Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Approved

Motion No. 2: To amend Resolution No. 289 -- Amending The 2022 - 2027 Capital Improvement Program –Establishing And Funding Capital Project No. 635 - ARPA Parks Program – Amending The 2022 Capital Fund Budget – Department Of Finance

Resolution Summary: This Resolution establishes Capital Project No. 635 in the amount of \$2,000,000.00 to create the ARPA Parks Program to partner with municipalities to match up to 50% of the total cost of each park project, with a maximum match of \$200,000.00 per project.

Motion Made By: Legislator Corcoran

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Sperry

Discussion: See attached transcript.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Criswell, Corcoran, Levine, Lopez, and Sperry; and Legislative Chair Bartels

Voting Against: None

No. of Votes in Favor: 6

No. of Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Approved

Motion No. 3: To discuss Resolution No. 289 -- Amending The 2022 - 2027 Capital Improvement Program –Establishing And Funding Capital Project No. 635 - ARPA Parks Program – Amending The 2022 Capital Fund Budget – Department Of Finance, as amended.

Resolution Summary: This Resolution establishes Capital Project No. 635 in the amount of \$2,000,000.00 to create the ARPA Parks Program to partner with municipalities to match up to 50% of the total cost of each park project, with a maximum match of ~~\$200,000.00~~ 100,000.00 per project.

Motion Made By: Legislator Corcoran

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Sperry

Voting In Favor: Legislators Criswell, Corcoran, Levine, Lopez, and Sperry; and Legislative Chair Bartels

Voting Against: None

No. of Votes in Favor: 6

No. of Votes Against: 0

Discussion: See attached transcript.

Disposition: No Action Taken.

Motion No. 4: To approve Resolution No. 339 – Approving The Execution Of A Contract For \$1,364,900.00 Entered Into By The County – Gorick Construction Co., Inc. – Department Of Public Works

Resolution Summary: This Resolution approves the execution of a contract with Gorick Construction Co., Inc. from August 1, 2022 through December 31, 2023 for demolition services for the former Ulster County Jail in the amount of \$1,364,900.00.

Motion Made By: Legislator Corcoran
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Levine

Discussion: See attached transcript.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Criswell, Corcoran, Levine, Lopez, and Sperry; and Legislative Chair Bartels

Voting Against: None

No. of Votes in Favor: 6

No. of Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Approved

Motion No. 5: To discuss Resolution No. 340 – Funding Capital Project No. 600 - ARPA Food Security And Access - Department Of Finance, Division Of Recovery And Resilience

Resolution Summary: This Resolution funds Capital Project No. 600 – ARPA Food Security and Access in the amount of \$350,000 for the purpose of convening an Emergency Food Working Group to complete a Food System Resilience Report with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County as the partner to convene this effort by engaging the Emergency Food Network, local agricultural producers, suppliers and others in the planning and coordination process.

Motion Made By: Legislator Corcoran
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Levine

Voting In Favor: Legislators Criswell, Corcoran, Levine, Lopez, and Sperry; and Legislative Chair Bartels

Voting Against: None

No. of Votes in Favor: 6

No. of Votes Against: 0

Discussion: See attached transcript.

Disposition: No Action Taken

Motion No. 6: To discuss Resolution No. 341 – Amending The 2022 - 2027 Capital Improvement Program -Establishing Capital Project No. 642 - ARPA Homeowner Energy Improvements And Job Training Project - Amending 2022 Capital Fund Budget - Department Of Finance, Division Of Recovery And Resilience

Resolution Summary: This Resolution establishes Capital Project No. 341 – ARPA Homeowner Energy Improvements And Job Training Project in the amount of \$500,000 to provide assistance to income eligible homeowners while also offering job training activities to improve the energy efficiency of homes, following the same conditions and rules that is part of its CDBG Program.

Motion Made By: Legislator Corcoran

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Sperry

Voting In Favor: Legislators Criswell, Corcoran, Levine, Lopez, and Sperry; and
Legislative Chair Bartels

Voting Against: None

No. of Votes in Favor: 6

No. of Votes Against: 0

Discussion: See attached transcript.

Disposition: No Action Taken

New Business:

Forthcoming ARPA Funding Requests:

ARPA Program to Aid Farmers – Legislator Nolan. See attached transcript.

Old Business: None

Chairman Criswell asked the members if there was any other business, and hearing none;

Adjournment

Motion Made By: Legislator Sperry

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Levine

No. of Votes in Favor: 5

No. of Votes Against: 0

Time: 6:59 PM

Respectfully submitted: Amber Feaster

Minutes Approved: July 27, 2022

**American Rescue Plan Act
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- **Chairman Criswell called the meeting to order at 5:03 PM**
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Chairman Criswell: Alright, so welcome, everybody. This is the June 29th meeting of the American Rescue Plan Act Special Committee. It is 5:03 and we are calling the meeting to order right now. If you could call the roll, please.

Deputy Clerk Feaster: Criswell.

Chairman Criswell: Here.

Deputy Clerk Feaster: Corcoran.

Legislator Corcoran: Here.

Deputy Clerk Feaster: Levine.

Legislator Levine: Here.

Deputy Clerk Feaster: Lopez.

Legislator Lopez: Here.

Deputy Clerk Feaster: Sperry.

Legislator Sperry: Here.

Deputy Clerk Feaster: Five present, zero absent.

Chairman Criswell: Thank you so much. Next on the agenda is the approval of the minutes and transcripts of the June 1 meeting, and the Regular, and the June 15 meeting. So, did everybody get those, and can I get a motion to approve those?

Legislator Corcoran: Motion.

Legislator Lopez: Second.

Chairman Criswell: Great. All in favor.

Group: Aye.

Chairman Criswell: Any opposed? Great. All right, let's talk about money. How much do we have? Amber's updated this beautiful document, which I'm sure you all got. So, it is, we are now at 8 million, 8,735,000 roughly. And, you know, we do know that that may change a little bit here and there. But that's roughly where we're at at this point. That, that's what we have left. And so, you know, something to think about as we're, as we're continuing our spending. But again, I feel very good about, I love this pie chart, because it really shows how thoughtful we're being about spreading the monies around and really looking at our priorities, the priorities that we talked about, and really sticking to that, which I think is terrific. Does anybody have any questions about this document or about where we're at money wise right now? Okay, seeing no questions, Oh, Amber, did you want to?

Deputy Clerk Feaster: I just want to let the committee know that before, previously I was also including into this exercise what was in the adopted Capital Improvement Program. That's not in here now. I am continuing to monitor the Program and any Resolutions that come in and if there's any clean up that's needed, we'll just do it at budget time. So, it's just being monitored.

Chairman Criswell: That's great. Thank you for that update. Comptroller Gallagher, do you want to talk to us anything about any of the spending or any thoughts on where things are at? Okay, I just wanted to make sure.

Comptroller Gallagher: Journal entries through June 15th and, you know, no major spending has come out of this yet. It's about 1.9 million in actual so far. And a lot of that is, you know, some of that is stuff you already knew about plus some of the staffing related to ARPA management, etc. So, we're continuing to watch it. Thanks.

Chairman Criswell: That's great. And I wanted to ask you, Deputy Executive Kelly, if you had anything you wanted to add about the money? If not, we'll move on.

Deputy County Executive Kelly: I'm good for now. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman Criswell: Great. Alright. So, moving on to resolution. So, Resolution 289. This is the ARPA Parks Program. And, Chris Hewitt, is going to, Legislator Hewitt is going to talk to us about this tonight. Legislator Hewitt is... yes, on the line. Great. So, Chris, if you could just give us you know, again, the sort of highlights and you could also talk about how this project has sort of mutated along with conversations and sort of where it's at now, because it started in one place, and it's now at a different place. So, if you could clue us into just the overall project so we can remind everybody and sort of where it, where it was and where it now stands. I'd appreciate that.

Legislator Hewitt: Great, thank you. I think many of you are familiar with the project or the Resolution, 289. Because of the changes that were made over time, it started as a \$5 million request and Legislator Stewart was thinking about Grady Park and how parks like Grady Park and High Falls could be improved, but we can use funding to improve parks across the county. So, we have two shovel ready projects in the Town of Rochester. One we're calling the Watershed Nature Trail, and the other one is a canoe and kayak launch by the Accord Townhall. And so, we started working together and improving the resolution with all of your help to reduce the funding to \$2 million dollars and instead of a maximum of 200,000 per project which actually it still says 200,000 in what we shared with you today, but we're actually requesting 100,000 per project to spread the wealth more throughout the county. So, 20 projects, that would be 100,000. And we were also discussing the requirements for a match, I don't think it's required to have a match. But I like the idea of the in kind services because each town has people who want to help. Designers who want to help, for example, with the Watershed Nature Trail that we're creating on 34 acres, it's by the old Rainbow Diner, if anyone's familiar, right off of 209, behind the solar field is 34 acres that the town owns. And we've already worked with the Environmental Commission and the local contractor who volunteered their time to cut in a trail that goes near the Millbrook and has a plan for a future of signage that talks about flora and fauna in the forest. There's oaks that are over 200 years old. So, there's a lot of educational opportunities. And Legislators Stewart and I are talking about how we could share the design of a sign about foxes, for example, or blueberries that grow in the area. So, if there's 10 to 20 parts, we could share some of the expenses and the plans around landscapers or permaculture experts, or where to buy nut trees or fruit trees. So, there's a lot of thinking that goes into how to work together. But Legislator Stewart and I are willing, as gardeners, I was trained as a master gardener with Cornell Cooperative, and Legislative Stewart had a gardening company, we're willing to help and guide anyone with their shovel ready projects over the next two years with these 20 projects.

Chairman Criswell: May I also add that part of that conversation about in kind services was with the municipalities, that they wouldn't necessarily have to offer cash, but they could offer their services with you know, actual construction and anything along those lines. And that would sort of be equal to a cash match for this, for this particular project.

Legislator Hewitt: Even highway departments.

Chairman Criswell: Exactly. Which I actually think, I actually think is a great thing. So, Chairwoman Bartels.

Legislative Chair Bartels: Thanks. And thank you, Legislator Hewitt for presenting today. I look forward to following up with both Legislator Stewart and yourself. But I, can I ask about the, the match? You know, I'd like to offer a different perspective. I mean, I want to better understand why the match would be allowed to be in kind services rather than a real match, given that, again, just to put the perspective, in terms of sharing with municipalities, you know, this month we're going to be moving a certain amount of sales tax, assuming it gets the support, back to the municipalities. And, and I'm inclined to think it will, will get the support. And, and we have the stormwater projects, which is us sharing our funds with the municipalities and, and then we're going to be sharing, to some degree, through the mental health programming, which in working with the school districts, which is the municipalities, and since each municipality's, as well as school's, got our plans as well, I'm just, I'm curious why we wouldn't require a real match. And I want to say like, I just want to, just be clear that I really support and I've long talked about the idea of the county spending more on parks but so much of what I was focused on, or, or meant in those discussions in years past was on more County, county parks. I know that there's been criticism. I live very close to the Ulster County Fairgrounds and the, and the pool and I know I've heard Legislators be critical of the pool in New Paltz, but what, what those Legislators may not know is that New Paltz actually has its own municipal pool. And the county pool gets used by a wide variety of people from, from all over, including out of county. And, and I'm saying this backdrop to say that, while it may sound like a radical thing to say right now in this committee, I mean, I'd be supportive of citing a county pool elsewhere in the county on the other side of the mountain or in the northern part of the county. I know it's expensive, but I get to see firsthand how well it gets utilized and how important it is to, to communities that don't have pools in their backyards individually. So, all that's to say, like I'm more inclined to be supportive of county, you know, spending county money on county parks, but I'm open to having this conversation but really want to understand why we wouldn't require a real match in terms of real financial match.

Chairman Criswell: So, anybody want to speak to that? Yes, Legislator Hewitt.

Legislator Hewitt: Yes, thank you. I think this resolution was modeled after the resolution on stormwater and freshwater infrastructure, sharing the expense throughout municipalities. And so, one reason that I was talking about in kind services and brought this up recently is not every town has \$100,000 to put toward parks right now. But they do have highway departments and ECCs and people willing to volunteer to help. And it's also not in their budget this year. So, they couldn't use this money with a match because there is no, they didn't create the budget with this in mind last year. So, it would have to be for 2023 to be spent and they'd have to plan ahead to use that 100,000. So, I think it's more feasible to move forward and the parks will make progress. And the 20 towns would actually take us up on it. It's in kind also. And I'm also wondering if RUPCO had to match when they got the 2.5 million for their infrastructure? Or is every project we're spending money on required to have a match?

Chairman Criswell: There is no requirement for matches for the ARPA programs, Nate or Chris, you can correct me on that. But my understanding is that there is, that is something that

we created as an incentive as a skin in the game kind of mentality. So that is it. Are you in? Do you agree with me, Chris and Nate? Is Nate here?

Deputy Executive Kelly: Yeah, we're here. We applied the match for the sewer water program to show kind of skin in the game, like you said, but also viability of the project. When you're talking about some of the, I guess it would be Silver Gardens, that projects they are, have a whole capital stack involved and we were probably the smallest funder in that project. So, it's been a different standard for each. I don't think it's uncommon, in my experience, for programs to allow labor as a match for a grant. So, when I worked for the state, we used our labor force to install signage on Washington Avenue in the City of Poughkeepsie for Walkway Over The Hudson, and they used our labor at a set and accepted hourly rate as a match for their grants. That would be the one thing that I would, I guess, flag to everybody is, if we were to accept that in kind or that, you know, labor or some type of volunteer contribution, we'd have to set an equal standard amongst all projects. So, we don't have one town saying, Well, I've got a great gardener, and he's 50 an hour, and then another town charges 20 an hour. I think we would have to find some way of leveling the playing field.

Chairman Criswell: Chairwoman Bartels.

Legislative Chair Bartels: Sure. Thanks. But, but just to be clear, the storm water does require a match. I mean, it's not required by ARPA, but we required a match. And that's a financial. That's not an in kind match. And so other than other than the two ARPA programs that are, that are grants, that are at outright grants, much of what we've supported are projects, are either totally County projects or projects, as Deputy Executive Kelly said, that have already significant investment, not just Silver Gardens, but the, the RUPCO project has significant additional investment beyond our investment. So, you know, so I don't you know, I think it's less about that. And I think Legislator Hewitt, the point about towns' budgets is a really good one. But I also would say that, you know, if you know, if we wanted to, we could consider extending this program into the next budget cycle, so that they could budget for, you know, they could budget for it in the next, in the next cycle. So, because ARPA can go that long, as well. So.

Chairman Criswell: I want to ask Deputy Executive Kelly a question about the, I understand what you're saying about somehow trying to make the fees equal. So, what would we use? Like what, what would we, how would we standardize such a random amount of possible in-kind donations? You know, what would we look at it against?

Deputy Executive Kelly: I mean, with any of our projects, there's set prevailing wage, there's different tools that I'm sure I can pull from either DOL or working with Dennis and Planning and DPW, just looking at some, some common wages there and just kind of set what we would, what we would pay on a contract, or a town would pay in a contract, we should apply to the labor being used. That's one way of looking at it. Dennis can also chime in, I'm sure.

Chairman Criswell: Yeah, actually Legislator Hewitt and Dennis Doyle. Thank you.

Legislator Hewitt: Thank you. We applied last year in the Town of Rochester to a Greenway grant, and they had a standard labor of \$28 and change.

Chairman Criswell: Okay, thank you. Director Doyle.

Director of Planning Doyle: There are, there are standard labor rates that, that are out there that you can use that, that the state publishes as well. And you could even use your own rates at the county level. You could benchmark it back to what you pack at the county level for rates. I do want to add, however, that municipalities do, under their zoning statutes, for subdivisions, housing developments, collect the recreation fee, and that recreation fee has to be put towards essentially improving, not improving, but actually expanding the recreational opportunities. So, it's not necessarily a budget item that's out there. They, they, most municipalities have funds readily available as part of their recreation fee escrow accounts that they can use to essentially add, add, to provide a match. I'd also just want to add on to the Chair's comment, with respect to County parks, the Planning Department, through its various reports and studies and even its comments with respect to the Capital Program has long advocated for two things: One would be a park facility in the Ellenville area. If you look at that, from an environmental justice standpoint, and from a disadvantaged community standpoint, that's one of the communities that doesn't have or have access to a County park or to water-based recreation. And the second thing is, is we've also advocated, quite frankly, for a parks department at a County level. Because our DPW Department is essentially charged with opening parks, and we do, they do a really great job of opening parks. But from a programmatic standpoint, in terms of what's available in our parks and the programs that are available to parks. Those are things that would benefit from essentially someone that has their attention on, on recreational activities rather than capital improvements to the parks.

Chairman Criswell: Thank you. Um, the other concern that I heard, which I actually share as well is, are we setting up some sort of a double standard if we allow, if we're asking for matching funds from other organizations and then with this project, we're saying matching or in-kind? I'm not opposed to it. I'm just wondering is, is it something that someone might call out as a double standard where we're asking for cash, cash only with one project and cash or in-kind with another? Anybody having opinions on that, or thoughts on it?

Legislator Hewitt: I think if it, if it needs adjustment, we can talk about a balance of in-kind and, to make it more affordable, a percentage of dollars.

Chairman Criswell: So, so are you suggesting that we lower the match? That it's no longer a 50% match? Or, and that it becomes a cash match? Or what, what do you, what are you suggesting?

Legislator Hewitt: I have to read the language again. I'm looking for it now. But is it 100, if they're getting 100,000, do they need 100,000?

Chairman Criswell: Right now, right now, it's saying that either through direct financial investment and or through in-kind services, up to 50% of the total cost of each park project with the maximum match of, it says 200,000? Yeah, but we're gonna say 100. So, so if we're saying it's 100,000 max, then they're, 50% of the total cost if they get the max would be 50,000. Correct?

Legislator Hewitt: Yeah, I think it's smart to include them 25% in-kind and 25% in dollars. Because a lot of towns have resources they can tap into this.

Chairman Criswell: Thoughts on that? Yes, Legislator Levine.

Legislator Levine: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's just a quick clerical question. I just so, I'm making sure I understand the proposed change correctly. If we're going to be dropping the, if it's going to be proposed to drop the maximum match to \$100,000. Was that, that's, that what that was?

Chairman Criswell: Yes. That would be it.

Legislator Levine: So if that is that \$100,000, will be 50% of the total cost of the project, so that that would be the max, would it be the maximum cost of the project would be 200,000 then or am I not understanding that one correctly? If the match is only 50% and if it's 100,000, so the total cost of the project will be 200, could be up to 200,000.

Chairman Criswell: Deputy Executive Kelly.

Deputy Executive Kelly: So.

Chairman Criswell: Is that you don't want to answer because I think the answer is yes, yes?

Deputy Executive Kelly: Yeah. I believe the answer is yes.

Chairman Criswell: The answer to your question, basically, is that the total cost of the project would be \$200,000.

Deputy Executive Kelly: Yes.

Chairman Criswell: Because we would come at it with up to, they would come at it with the other.

Deputy Executive Kelly: Yeah. And, and the way that we've designed other programs, and the way we designed water was that, so we were a partial funder, and not the, kind of the majority funder on any project. So, if you look at our existing capital program, we have the Community Development Program, where the 25%, and the municipality or project sponsor would be 75%. So, I want to, you know, I feel more comfortable in that dynamic. Whether it's 75 / 25, or in the case of the water / sewer, it's 66 / 33. I just think that we're here to catalyze and support rather than be the dominant figure in the funding stack. The other point is, I do regularly talk with the Town's Supervisors Association. I do think that pulling them, and they're a very active group, to see what's out there may also help inform this, this this kind of program. They all know their budgets very well and they're all very well informed. So, I think reaching out to Supervisor Quigley, who has it, would be helpful.

Chairman Criswell: So, I want to continue this discussion. But I just wanted to say what, what I'd like to do with this resolution tonight is, we haven't scored it yet. So, what I'd like to do is collect these questions that we're talking about. And if we're going to reach out to Supervisors to find out, you know, what the capacity that they think they might have for matching or how that might work, I think that would be a great thing to do within the next week. It's a little funny because we're coming up a holiday. But, but if we could get some of that information together, share it with the committee, then that will help us with scoring these, these resolution, this resolution. So, I see Legislator, Chairwoman Bartels. I see Legislator Corcoran, and then I'll go to you, Jake.

Legislative Chair Bartels: Can I let Legislator Corcoran go first since he hasn't spoken.

Chairman Criswell: Absolutely. Legislator Corcoran.

Legislator Corcoran 22:27

I just want to understand the wording because I don't know, when it says either through direct financial investment and or in-kind services up to 50% total costs of the project with a maximum match of now 100,000. Does that mean if the project is 75,000, we're only going to give them 50% of the 75,000. We're not, we're not adjusting the 50,000 to be 25 / 25. That should still say 50, that's 50%. So, we're not adjusting the 50% number. And I thought I heard us trying to adjust that. That's a maximum of 100,000. But the 50% is based on the cost of the project up to 100. So, it's a \$50,000 project. we're only matching 25,000. So, let's not change that number.

Chairman Criswell: Yeah, what I had heard, proposed and correct me if I'm wrong was that we changed that 50% to 25% cash and 25% in-kind. Isn't that what you were proposing, Legislator Hewitt?

Legislator Hewitt: Yes, but it sounds like Legislator Corcoran is saying that we're providing 50% of the total cost of the project. But this is saying that's the town's contribution, the in-kind and the direct financial investment. So, I was suggesting to break it up for the town's to have in-kind and have direct financial investment.

Chairman Criswell: Yeah. Chris.

Deputy Executive Kelly: Yeah. Yeah, I hear what everyone's saying. So, it's the same thing that we did with water / sewer is, you gotta look at it, our contribution is the not-to-exceed amount of \$100,000, even if the project's a half a million, but our contribution will never go higher than 100,000. But if it's a \$50,000 project, and 25% is in-kind, 25% as cash will come in for 25 cash. Does that make sense? Ours is going to slide based on the project, but we're never going to exceed \$100,000 on any project, regardless of if it's a million dollars or 500,000.

Chairman Criswell: So, is there a way that we can actually clean up this language so that it matches what you just said? Because I, I agree the language I think is not clear.

Deputy Executive Kelly: Yeah.

Chairman Criswell: Okay.

Deputy Executive Kelly: Yeah. I have the draft and will start circulating something like that.

Chairman Criswell: Great. I would suggest that and then let's share it. Chairwoman Bartels, I think you were up next.

Legislative Chair Bartels: Thanks. Um, yeah, I mean, I liked the suggestion. Again, I'm still struggling with the, well I mean, a couple of things. I'm still struggling. And you'll hear this from me again, as we go on, I just, I'm aware that we're getting toward the end of the funding. So, I'm just really trying to be thoughtful about, you know, how we spend these last dollars, but also, what's left outlaying what's not here yet. Because, you know, we all know that there are going to be things that don't get funded and that's not specific to this project that, again, you're going to hear, you're going to hear me speak to that on other projects as well. As far as this project, you know, I like, I like what Deputy Executive Kelly said, and the model that was created with a, the, the sewer and water infrastructure with us being a minority portion of the project. And I realized that might have, face challenges, I definitely think we should speak to, Supervisors face challenges in this year's budget. But if it's a forward-looking project and Supervisors have time to budget for next year. It may be that 25% could be county share, could be the catalyst to a community doing a project that they weren't otherwise going to do. Obviously, 50% is a bigger catalyst. But again, we don't have a lot of money left. And I, you know, and I think that we've, we've already done a lot in terms of sharing our funds directly with the communities. And again, it's not to say that I'm not supporting parks. But, you know, I appreciate Planner Doyle's comments about, and I took note of it, having a Parks Department and a county level. I think that's an, probably long, long overdue, and, you know, echoing, you know, when I said set up a pool on the other side of the mountain, I was, meant Ellenville, and an echoing the need for, you know, diversifying our county parks, which, which is going to be expensive. So, and I'm not saying it's an either / or moment, it's just, that's where, that's where I tend to think of my focus in terms of, in terms of parks, and I think there can be, you know, there's, what I realized in, in having a child and going to my local park, which is literally, like 800 feet from my house, and I really didn't spend any time in it and then I had a child and realized, oh, my gosh, like, you could, there's nothing you can't do in this park that won't get utilized. Like there's, there is not too much that can happen. And so, and I think that's the same in every community, not just for parents, but for people who want to get outside safely, who want to recreate the trails that Legislator Hewitt's talking about, are critical to the, our, you know, our well-being all across, all across ages. So yeah, so anyway, back to I really prefer the model of a minority portion of the share.

Chairman Criswell: Thank you. I just wanted to bring up a question about the Resolution itself. Since we're talking about changing it from \$200,000, \$200,000, do we need to amend that in this committee? Or how does that, how does that actually work? So, can we, can we actually call for a motion to amend it right now and take a vote on it and move, move that piece of it through? And then when we get corrected language, next time we, we amend it again. Is that the correct way to do this? Okay, so if I could, I see you, Jake, and I see you, Legislator Sperry. But let's

take care of this bit of business. So, we can at least move this forward. So, can I get a motion to amend Resolution 289 to make the maximum match rather than \$200,000, it's \$100,000?

Legislator Corcoran: Motion.

Chairman Criswell: Motion to have a second. Legislator Sperry. Thank you. All in favor, say aye.

Group: Aye.

Chairman Criswell: Any opposed? Okay, the motion carries. Thank you very much. Appreciate that. And then we will clean up the rest of this when we get cleaned up language. All right, Jake. You've been hanging out for a while so I'm going to call on you. And then I'll get to Legislator Sperry. Thank you.

Jake Wedemeyer: I have a suggestion with the municipality in-kind. Each town has different salaries for their town employees, say with their highway departments, buildings and grounds. And if anybody needs any ideas how to do it, but when we do in-kind when we write our grants, we include the, our salaries plus our benefits, right? And we also, and we divide by 2,080 hours. But there's an equation if somebody's getting like, you know, two weeks vacation a year, we include the vacation, sick time, and holidays. So that actually brings up the hourly rate. So, say, for somebody like me that's been with the district forever, my hourly rate is higher, since I get more vacation time and I have a higher salary. We have a new hire, that gets less vacation time and less money, their hourly rate is less. So, if anybody wants any suggestions how we calculate that for grant work, I'll be happy to help them.

Chairman Criswell: Thank you for that. Appreciate it. Great. Legislator Sperry.

Legislator Sperry: Thank you, Chair Criswell. I, I love this idea because I do think that parks are a wonderful place for our communities to come together. And often, when you are in a park, or you drive by a park, I see a lot of our immigrant community using them the most, you know, for gatherings or get togethers or barbecues, or whatever. And one of the things that we talked about with the trail expansion towards Ellenville was like the need for that type of access in the southern part of the county. I had a conversation with Legislator Hewitt recently, in relation to this, about the opportunity, and it kind of goes along with what Dennis was saying, in a way of like creating a Rec, Parks and Rec Department, is this is an opportunity for workforce development, right? Like, if you talk to any of the nonprofits, or the organizations that run the trails in our area, a lot of them are concerned about the future of the trails and the maintenance of the trails. So one of the things that I was talking about with Legislator Hewitt was, you know, if there's a way to include some type of workforce development in this plan, so that we, as a county could be training folks on maintenance of trails, you know, perhaps maintenance of parks, but giving an opportunity for like a good green job. Right? That, like, teaches people about what we have, in, you know, if we're going to start building, you know, edible trails and having things on the sides of trails, like doing tours, right? And like, creating some type of revenue stream in that way. And I know that needs a little bit more fleshing out. But I do think that if there's a way to use this as a jumping off point for maybe a pilot for a Parks and Rec Department, you know, on

Ulster, in, in Ulster County, that if, if we could shape shift it into that, that would be super helpful to our communities. So that's all I'm gonna say.

Chairman Criswell: That's great., Thank you. Legislator Hewitt. You're on mute.

Legislator Hewitt: Thank you so much. I think if we had a map of all of this little, little parks that are created over time with this type of funding, because it would be great to not just be ARPA, but part of a long-term parks plan. Then we can have a map of all of the micro parks around our whole county, and that becomes county park and its connections. And each town can have different types of educational tours based on the edibles that are in their parks, for example. And that's what we've incorporated into the Watershed Nature Trail, blueberries, six types of nut trees, and then you go into the forest and learn about local animals, and I think there's just a lot of opportunity to create a full plan and a better County Parks Department like Planner Doyle mentioned. And I just wanted to take this opportunity to mention Colony Farm out in the district that is right, Chaired by Legislator Nolan, Legislator Gavaris, me. It could become a park that connects the Catskills to the Shawangunks. And this is a once in a lifetime opportunity, because it's owned by the Department of Corrections. Deputy Executive Chris Kelly and I have been talking about how do we, how does the county own this perfect parcel that may get solar panels built on it soon. And if that happens, we can't connect our two precious parks. So, I wanted to mention that.

Chairman Criswell: That's great. Thank you very much. All right. So back to this Resolution. So, I think the cleanup work we need to do a little bit is in the language of the percentage. I think there's probably still a little bit further discussion about whether it's going to be what percentage of income, is there going to be a percentage of in-kind or not? And if so, then what percent of that that math would be in-kind. Those are the two pieces that I see still dangling. So, I'd like to get those clarified. Deputy Executive Kelly said he's going to work on the language for the numbers there. So, what I'd like to suggest for tonight is that we're not going to take any action on this, we're going to collect a little bit more information. I don't even actually feel like we're quite ready to score it yet, because we don't have those pieces in place. So, I'm going to say, let's get that information in and then maybe at some point next week, we can send a scoring sheet about that. Does that feel right to everybody?

Legislator Hewitt: Okay, I'll be in touch with Deputy Executive Kelly tomorrow, and I'll update Legislator Stewart.

Chairman Criswell: Perfect. Thank you so much. And thank you for the good conversation about this. All right. Moving on, could I get a motion that we discussed Resolution 339, which is the execution of a contract for 1.3 million to Gorick Construction?

Legislator Corcoran: Motion.

Chairman Criswell: Second please.

Legislator Levine: Second.

Chairman Criswell: Great. All in favor.

Group: Aye.

Chairman Criswell: Any opposed? Great. Alright, so this is the contract for the jail demolition. Correct, Deputy Executive Kelly? Great. So, unless anybody has questions about this contract itself, I'd actually like for us to vote on this this evening. We've already discussed the jail demolition. We've already approved the jail demolition. I think we've had like a lot of hearty conversation around it, and this is simply the contract to get that moving. But I'm open to conversation, if anybody has any conversation that they want to have about this particular contract. Happy to have that. If not, I'd like to just suggest we move to the vote. Chairwoman Bartels.

Legislative Chair Bartels: I'm just curious. I know it's in there. But Can someone just give me the high level in terms of the timeline for completion?

Chairman Criswell: Deputy Executive Kelly.

Director of Planning Dolye: I can. I can.

Chairman Criswell: Oh, wait. You're, you're pointing but...

Legislative Chair Bartels: Yeah, you're pointing in a weird way.

Chairman Criswell: You're pointing to Amber, for me. Dr. Doyle, I think he was pointing to you.

Director of Planning Doyle: I think I can take that. So, the contract is the base bid, which we had for we had three alternates into bid. One was actually just to take the buildings down on site. And the second, or first alternate, was not only to take the buildings down, but also do some of the other site improvements that are up here, particularly the parking lots and some of the other improvements to remove them as well. And then there was an alternate that also provided for us to do installation of some of the necessary utilities, to bring into the areas where the proposed buildings were. So, we were able to award the base bid plus the first alternate with the funding that we had available. And we would anticipate there, we would anticipate what, by the time they get mobilized, I believe that we're probably looking at somewhere between, I'd like to say about four to six months. So, we're trying to time this so that as we look at the January meet, the January work comes up relative to Penrose, as Penrose' works starting, that they would begin to finish some time where when, when Penrose starts to mobilize, the start, starts mobilizing to start. And that's assuming that the applications and everything else goes, goes well. But that's where we're at. That's where we're at. So, I would think early spring is where we're probably talking about being completed. The county does have, there are some expenses in here that the county will be using, a 1.5 million for, we have a requirement for third party testing for air because there's asbestos in the building. So there needs to be a third-party testing for air quality purposes. And we're also going to have some onsite inspection for stormwater work, there is a slip that, what they call a stormwater pollution prevention plan that goes with this because we'll

be disturbing more than an acre of property on an acre of land. So, we're gonna have to have an inspector up there on a daily basis to make sure that the stormwater and pollution, potential controls for stormwater are in place.

Chairman Criswell: Thank you. Any further questions? Seeing none, I'd like to call for a vote for this. All in favor.

Group: Aye.

Chairman Criswell: Any opposed? All right, the motion passes. Thank you. Alright. I'd like to get a motion to discuss Resolution 340, which is the ARPA Food Security and Access Program we were talking about.

Legislator Corcoran: Motion.

Chairman Corcoran: Motion. And a second.

Legislator Levine: Second.

Chairman Criswell: Great. All in favor.

Group: Aye.

Chairman Criswell: Any opposed? Alright. So, for discussion, um, is there somebody from the Executive's office who wants to talk on this project or?

Deputy Executive Kelly: Dennis Doyle will be speaking on this one.

Chairman Criswell: Okay. Thank you.

Director of Planning Doyle: Thank you. So unfortunately, I, Amanda was going to speak to this tonight and she has a sick child. So, she could, she couldn't make it this evening. So, my, my sense is, is that I'll answer questions if there are any, but I prefer not to muddy the water if there, if there is, if there are any questions with respect to my misinterpretation of what the, what the program is about.

Chairman Criswell: My recollection is that we had a very full and complete presentation from from Amanda LaValle, and unless there were any changes to that. I, I. Okay. Chairwoman Bartels.

Legislative Chair Bartels: Thanks. So, I wasn't here for the presentation. But I, but I've seen and, and read the slides. I don't know if there was more than that. I'm sure there was a robust back and forth. I have a couple, couple questions. Couple of technical questions. I mean, and a couple of programmatic questions. The technical question is what, and I'll start with that, because maybe it's the easiest. Why this is projected to come out of a capital project? I thought we had gotten to the point where we determined if things weren't capital projects, we weren't going to

take them from the Capital. And this proposes to continue to do that. So far as I can tell, I don't know if there's.

Chairman Criswell: Yeah, Deputy Executive Kelly.

Deputy Executive Kelly: Yeah, we're open to amend it. No issue.

Legislative Chair Bartels: Okay. So that's, that's the first and then this. The second is, I'm just trying to understand, you know, when I look at this, the slide, it says it's, so it's a \$350,000 project, but 225 is go, basically, just correct me if I'm wrong, where, where, it's a project that proposes to contract with an outside vendor to do these three, the emergency feeding plan, the draft food system resilience report, and to create, I'm assuming as a result of that, to create an action plan, and that's proposed to be \$225,000. And then it reserves 125,000, to do a call for grants, I'm assuming, following, following the, following, is it, is it a follow on? Is it one step, one step, two step, one we created?

Deputy Executive Kelly: It is.

Legislative Chair Bartels: It is, and then step two, we create a grants program. So, so one, my, my, my question is, I don't know if it's, we already know that, that that's what it's going to cost to get a vendor to help us with a plan. But it seems like a, you know, it seems like a high price tag. I guess that's what vendors cost these days. But it also seems like a disconnect to be spending twice as much, almost twice as much on the plan as we're going to spend on implementation. And then my second comment is that the implementation being another grants program, seems to put the cart before the horse when we don't yet know, if that's what the plan is going to show. We should do, we know versus actually being able to do something internally, or with our own resources.

Director of Planning Doyle: Well, we do know that there are certain entities and certain other capital needs within the food system that needs, that need to be addressed. So, we do know, for example, that there is a nonprofit that coordinates a substantial amount of the, of the activities relative to food security, that is completely underfunded. And we want to make sure that they're, they're addressed. What, what that relationship looks like, I think is the reason for the plan. And then we also know that there are a number of food kitchens that need improvements. And there are discussions with respect to those food, those food kitchens, and what needs to be improved within those food kitchens. And some of that will come out of the plan as well. And then the third thing is, is that the idea would be to, to actually put together a Food Council and the Food Council would, would, would continue. What we found out I think, what Amanda found out and others with respect to the Project Resilience, when we started up in pandemic, there wasn't a lot of coordination ongoing between all of the parties that were involved in making, making sure that food security could be achieved. And the idea of a Food Council or Food Security Council would be to actually create an operating, an operating entity that continues to look at this, not just when there's a problem but also ongoing with respect to the food system work. Consider, think of this as something that the county supports with respect to a continuum of care, that continues to look at the homeless situation in the county on a regular basis, and seek the necessary grants, etc. So, it becomes a, it becomes a guiding council as well as an opportunity to,

for others to essentially, to think about how we work together to get more money for food security than just our own.

Legislative Chair Bartels: May I just follow up?

Chairman Criswell: Yes, sure.

Legislative Chair Bartels: So, thank you. So, um, first of all, in terms of the kitchens, kitchens are something that I, you know, that I absolutely and strongly supportive and have been advocating for both a kitchen, a community kitchen in the north and a community kitchen somewhere in the south. And I've talked about it in this committee. I did not anticipate that that was a part of this 350,000, nor, nor do I imagine that it would be able to be fully funded out of it. Based on, I guess, that's what I'm saying. I mean, the slide that breaks down, the slide that breaks down the funds, puts 225,000, toward planning and support over three years. And it has a TBD vendor. But I don't know if the 225 has to be split through these three things. I don't know, when you say, Dennis, that there's, you know, the Council, like I don't know, if we're paying the Council, but it's very clear on the implementation fund. But there will be a call for projects, and that this money is to be used as grants. So, I guess that I guess I'm just not clear on, on how the money's to be delineated fully. And, and also, I personally would feel more comfortable, you know, seeing, seeing it broken out in a little more detail, even hearing today that that it's going to include the community kitchens, that makes me a little excited, but a little confused, because it's 350,000 for a lot of things.

Chairman Criswell 46:58

If I can correct that, actually, at the last meeting that you were not at, I asked for those to be separated, and they were separated out. So, this is what I separated about. This is not going to be funding for the Community Kitchen. So that's not part of this. Sorry, to oppose what you were saying, Director Doyle, but we had specifically asked to separate that so that that's going to be a total separate resolution. Correct?

Director of Planning Doyle: I know it was under discussion. I wasn't sure where they actually did. I know it was under discussion that they would fund the community kitchen separately.

Chairman Criswell: Yeah.

Deputy Executive Kelly: Chair, if I, if I may. Real Quick.

Chairman Criswell: Yes, go ahead.

Deputy Executive Kelly: We, myself and the ARPA team had a discussion earlier this week. And we're going to, we're setting up a meeting with you, Chairwoman to discuss the specifics because they've been doing kind of the field work, looking at locations in the southern end, and also talking to Community Action about their existing location up here. So, we're in the process of setting that meeting up so we can continue the work on the community kitchens. And we also met with that legislator Gavaris, down in Ellenville. So, that discussion on this ongoing.

Chairman Criswell: Clerk Feaster, I saw your hand. Did you want to say something?

Deputy Clerk Feaster: Thank you. Um, I just want to make everybody aware that there's a report coming out of our office called "Addressing Food Insecurity in Ulster County" that was born from our internship program. So, the timing of everything is really coincidental in that, like, it's the end of the school year, and we're getting this resolution. It's just really crazy timing. So, this report is available on the Legislature's website, I can send a link to everybody in the chat, just something to be aware of.

Chairman Criswell: Great, thank you. I wanted to recognize Nate and then Legislator Hewitt.

Director of Resilience Litwin: Yeah, just on the Food Security and Access, hopefully to address any misunderstanding the last piece. \$150,000. That is, yes, a small grant program that would likely be handled by, or we're thinking it would be handled by, and this is from conversations with Amanda. Let's see. Hudson Valley Community Foundation, small grants program for multiple food. Basically, all the different providers of food to those in need in Ulster County.

Chairman Criswell: Legislator Hewitt.

Legislator Hewitt: Thanks, I got distracted by that lovely link. Thanks, Amber. I wanted to say I think that I'm happy that there's a study being done, because the term "community kitchen" is in transition right now. It's an evolving term that everyone doesn't really know what that is. So, we're not talking about soup kitchens anymore. We're talking about a future where we have food sovereignty and we have access to food for all and like this is a community kitchen I'm sitting in right now. It has breakfast and lunch every day. But everyone has the choice to leave a tip. And we don't take tips here. So, all of those tips are going toward filling the community refrigerators. So, we have a triple tiered pricing model called sponsoring, restaurant style, or sponsored. And so, if you forgot your wallet, and you're someone who can afford lunch, but you forgot your wallet, you can get a sponsored meal from someone who left a tip. And that's someone who was sponsoring someone. Some, they could leave \$13. That's a pay it forward meal, or they could leave \$1. We put it all toward our pay it forward meal program. So, my point is, I think there's been a lot of research already in Kingston, Ellenville, in the region, with Community Action and their kitchen, that the idea of how to feed people is shifting right now. And the idea of how generous people are is shifting since COVID. And mutual aid networks and how people are like I have a bunch of rice, I'm going to pay some forward. So, I think the study will be helpful to see what NoVo has done in their research about community kitchens. And I know the Clinton Avenue Church did a lot of research about kitchens. So, I'm optimistic about the study. And I'm hopeful to be involved.

Chairman Criswell: Thank you. That's great, thank you very much. If there's no further questions about this specific resolution, what I'd like to do is suggest that we take no action on it. I would like to score this at our next ARPA meeting. So, I would say any questions, Director Doyle, can we send questions to you? Okay, we'll send them through,

Director of Planning Doyle: Yes. And we'll make sure that Amanda is available for the next, for the next meeting and she had, sends her apologies for not being able to attend this evening. Thank you.

Chairman Criswell: And as always, please send your questions through Clerk Feaster, so Clerk Feaster can then channel them to where they're supposed to go. Alright, so I'm going to move us along to our next Resolution. If I could get a motion for discussion for Resolution 341, which is the ARPA Home Owner Energy Improvement and Job Training Project.

Legislator Corcoran: Motion.

Chairman Criswell: Thank you. And a second. Thank you. And all in favor.

Group: Aye.

Chairman Criswell: Any opposed? All right, Director Doyle, it's your night tonight.

Director of Planning Doyle:

Well, thank you. Thank you, Chair. I think unfortunately, I have a, I have a PowerPoint presentation. So, if you'll bear with me while I go through that. And please, please stop me at any point in time during this presentation that you have questions or concerns, or the slides are confusing. So, if, if I can share my screen? Oh, good. I can. Can everyone see that now? That's a yes. So, we're starting to think about the work that we do in housing, to call it something to come out with, with a name that similar to what we've done with our Project Resiliency work. And so, we're, we're looking at something called Ulster County Housing Smart. And then the program would come out of behind that. So, this is an energy retrofit program. And we think that, we're thinking of this as sort of, as a pilot, job training and low- and moderate-income homeowner energy use reduction program is, is what we're thinking about. That is that how this works. So let me just go to so the, the next, the next I wanted to give you a sense of what the state picture is with respect to housing policy and energy reduction. So, this takes a look at the major players at the state level, which are NYSERDA, the New York State Public Service Commission, and I'll get into that a little bit later, the programs that they use and something called Homes and Community Renewal. And the County has participated in Homes and Community Renewal in the past with funding for something called a Community Development Block Grant Program. The state, the 2023 budget, 22-23 budget message established the goal at the state level to electrify and make climate friendly, at least 22 million homes by 2030. And it established a requirement or is going to establish a requirement that all new buildings be all electric by 2027. And there are a number of other state initiatives out here that are already going through. Something else that's out there that you should be aware of is something called the climate, the Climate Leadership Protection Act, which is coming down with a whole sets of policy, from housing, to transportation, to other types of things that are available, that the state is going to begin to start to take a look at and place recommendations on, both funding and additional regulations on. The state budget for 2020 to 2023, has a total spending of about 25 billion for housing over five years. And that plan puts forth a substantial amount of money in different buckets, the biggest bucket being 11 billion to help shelters and supportive housing, and provision for rental subsidies. The key to it when you look through all of the money that's

available is that there is really not a lot of money made available for energy efficiency. And the other thing that is available within that, within that 23 budget is there's about \$250 million available to weatherize and electrify the existing New York State's existing housing stock. And most of this is coming through all electric high-performance equipment for heating and air conditioning. Any questions? Okay.

Oh, the next thing I wanted to give you an idea of what else is out there from the state picture from NYSEERDA and the PSC. The key here and you'll see this come back in terms of where we're going with the program is the State's EmPower program. The State's EmPower Program provides funding, basically free funding for a number of, a number of energy efficiency programs for homeowners that meet an income eligibility ease. And those income eligibilities, these are generally 60% or below AMI, in terms of, in terms of that being available. The EmPower program is, is not designed to do deep energy retrofits. They will do free energy audits. And from those energy audits, they'll make some specific recommendations. But generally, they are involved in terms of appliance recommendations and work on those things. So, they'll buy new refrigerators, change out gas ranges and stuff like that. But they won't do some of the work that we're talking about with respect to this program.

And one of the other things is that you wanted to know is, is that in 2020, the State Public Service Commission working through NYSEERDA, established a program called, it was called Energy Meter New York, New Energy for New York. And it was improving access to low- and moderate-income consumers in the state, basically advanced energy, affordability initiatives, that included about \$253 million over a five-year period and that's being run through NYSEERDA right now. So, one of the things that you should know is, is that Ulster County applied for and received as part of a housing, a housing rehabilitation grant using funding from Homes and Community Renewal for \$800,000. And that, that program, by definition has to target low- and moderate-income homeowners and those income, those people that were targeting, or have to be below 80% of AMI. It's scattered site. It's a scattered site program, which means we operate in all the towns in Ulster County but we do not operate in the City of Kingston. And the reason for that is the city has its own CDBG program, so we're precluded by the funding source from operating in the City of Kingston. The rehabilitation that we do under this program is major building systems, roofs and furnaces as an example. We do code compliance issues, electrical systems, structural issues, so that the house can maintain its livability. And finally, we do some quality-of-life work, remediation of water, water infiltration into buildings, handicap access, mold remediation, those types of things are also included in that. The average cost that we cap these at is about \$30,000 per home and the anticipated number of homes that will do with respect to this effort is about 25 to, between 25 and 30. And we have in the past been able to meet our, our goals with, in terms of the number of homes that are done. We are anticipating that we may run into issues here because of the cost of materials and inflation and the cost of labor. But we're working closely with our, with our sub recipient, which is RUPCO in this instance, to make sure that we can do that delivery. Our award for this project was in, early this year. And we have 18 months to complete, assuming that we don't ask for any extensions. The, we can implement some green building practices or some energy retrofits using this funding, but we can't do deep energy retro, energy retrofits using the funding. Any questions?

The proposed homeowner energy efficiency retrofit program aim has a number of goals. The one goal is to basically reduce energy expenditures for low- and moderate-income homeowners by, by providing these deep energy retrofits. The second is to enable additional job training and opportunities in degree job fields. The, also, we also believe that we have an opportunity to incentivize contractors to work with agencies involved in low- and moderate- income housing, you don't see a lot of energy retrofit work or a lot of contractors' folk focusing on low- and moderate- income housing. And this offers an opportunity to essentially work with how those, how those contractors work with those entities that are engaged in low- and moderate- income housing, housing rehab work, and also engaged with, with respect to the low- and moderate-income clientele. This has long-term implications not only with respect to our grants, but also with respect to the direction the state seems to be taking with respect to some of its funding for housing, for housing rehabilitation, and climate, and climate action work. And the last thing is to build capacity in the nonprofit sector for job training. In this instance, we're, we anticipate being working with the Citizens for Local Power. The Citizens for Local Power currently has an internship program and works with contractors to enable those contractors to use interns to provide on-the-job training. So, our program partners here would be Citizens for Local Power. And we would provide funding for a partial funding for their administrative position so that they can coordinate the work that we're doing on these houses back with their contractors and back with their interns. We will not, the program is not providing pay for the interns. Citizens for Local Power has a, another nonprofit source for funding for those interns.

The other source here is RUPCO. RUPCO currently is implementing the County's Community Development Block Grant Program. We would follow that protocol with program participants with deep energy retrofits. RUPCO would be responsible for essentially making sure, doing the job scoping for those retrofits looking for additional funds, such as NYSERDA funds, is a great example. And other types of funds, including HOME funds, and there's a few other sources of funds, some weatherization funds, although the weatherization people are very busy. And they would coordinate the energy improvements with the necessary improvements that we're making and other areas of the house, such as code compliance, which I mentioned before. And then the last, our last partner is the Office of Employment and Training. And they would coordinate the additional job opportunities with the available workforce. We also have initiated discussions with BOCES, which has a program as well. We have not formalized that discussion with BOCES, in terms of how they would participate. But some of that participation may not be on the job actually out in the field training, but actually working with Repko in in office to give an idea of how they scope projects and how they look at how projects are funded and how they asked to do project estimates in terms of costs. Any questions?

Chairman Criswell: I have a quick question. And then I see two other hands here. So, I'm looking at these three potential partners, and we're looking at \$500,000. What's the breakdown of, do you have a rough idea of the breakdown to each partner?

Director of Planning Doyle: I do. And the next slide will give you an example of a budget.

Chairman Criswell: Okay, great.

Director of Planning Doyle: If you want to wait, I can go to the next slide if somebody else has a question I'll take that.

Chairman Criswell: Yeah. Is that okay Chairwoman Bartels? Great, and Legislator Greene? Can we slide and then we'll jump into questions? Okay.

Legislator Greene: That's fine.

Chairman Criswell: Great. Thank you. Please continue.

Director of Planning Doyle: Okay. So, the proposed funding sources for this are using a county ARP funds, it's \$500,000. We believe that we can, we can access NYSERDA funds for energy efficiency improvements of about \$40,000. NYSERDA comes in on eligible homeowners for about \$4,000 a piece for those homeowners. The problem with, I shouldn't say the problem. The difficulty with a NYSERDA funds is you have to use certified contractors for that effort. And sometimes those certified contractors are significantly more expensive than other contractors that are doing the same work in the field. We also are thinking that we can use some of our own Community Development Block Grant funds, our CDBG funds, and redirect some of that funds to, to assist in energy improvement. So out of the \$800,000 we think that we can convince the state to allow us to allocate at least \$60,000 of that, or six, \$60,000 of that, which is, which is, which is 10% of the program delivery funds, who essentially assist in deeper energy retrofits. And then the other thing that we're going to, we certainly will use is this, is the state's EmPower program through, through NYSERDA, where we have income eligible individuals that can participate in that. And they will provide free energy audits for, for our, for our efforts, relative to Community Development, relative to the green jobs and green infrastructure improvements. And then when we look at this, in terms of where, where does the money go, we believe that we can do about between 15 and 20 homes with deep energy retrofits. Out of those, we are thinking that we're looking at an average cost per home somewhere between 25 and 30,000 dollars. We may be able to get away with a little less on some of these homes. But these are, these are not just installation of, of what they call mini splits. These may be Change Overs, from furnaces to a different to, an all-electric heating source. It certainly will involve perhaps windows and / or door changes and additional installation, installation work that could be done. So, all of those come into play in terms of that. And we, one of the things that, one of the reasons we want to do this is we want to take the experience of these energy retrofits in these homes and be able to apply it in terms of what it costs versus what it saves. So, what we're trying to do is come up with a sense that you can energy retrofit your home and those energy savings can pay for, may be able to pay for your money that you have to take out, a loan to essentially do those energy savings. And if we can start to prove that out as a concept, what ends up happening is then we can start to have conversations with larger lending sources, private sector lending sources, banks and others to come in and be able to essentially, expand this, expand this program exponentially. With the idea that we're not, we're not actually granting money, we're actually figuring out a way that we can convince homeowners to participate in a program on the basis that once we're finished, you're going to pay less for energy than you are going to pay for their loan, then you are going to pay for the loan that it takes to do those energy improvements.

This program is ongoing right now in Ithaca. They have convinced a, a private sector individual to come in and grant lower interest loans. And they're anticipating if they can, they can, and somebody can correct me on the numbers, but Citizens for Local Power has been monitoring this situation. They're in contact with Ithaca and the point being is, is that they think that they can, they can expand this out to 1,000 homes by, by using the leverage of private sector money.

So direct assistance to homeowners is about \$500,000. And then the project administration would probably be, would be around \$100,000. I know that that's not, that's not low. We typically look at Project Administration's cost anywhere between 17 to 18%. This is around 20%. But we're, what we're doing here is, we're going to fund, we anticipate funding Citizens for Local Power's administration position in the \$30,000 range, which is about half of what they're, what they're currently paying for their administrator to allow them to not only hire that administrator, but also to devote the time necessary to this program. And then from the implementation side, on the RUPCO implementation side, we're in discussions in terms of what they need, in terms of their program delivery fees. But somewhere between, I would say somewhere between 65 and \$75,000 is where we're going to end up in terms of program delivery. And for that they make sure they're, all the contractors, that the scope of work gets done. They coordinate all of the efforts that are involved. And this is similar to the fee that they're currently taking for the remainder of the Community Development Block Grant funds that are out there.

Chairman Criswell: Right. Thank you so much. I'm gonna ask, unless anybody still needs it, if you could stop sharing your screen, so we can see.

Director of Planning Doyle: Thank you.

Chairman Criswell: Thank you.

Director of Planning Doyle: Soon as I figure out where.

Chairman Criswell: Alright, great. And I see Chairwoman Bartels and then I see Legislator Greene.

Legislative Chair Bartels: Legislator Green was first. You can go first.

Chairman Criswell: Thank you.

Legislator Greene: Okay. Thank you. I think that was a really excellent report. I would love to get a copy of the slides. And one of the things I like best is how the various agencies are working together. I have two major questions. I'm gonna go with the financial one first. I was fortunate enough a few years ago, that a contractor that I know got a grant and needed a leaky old building to retrofit. And this four-bedroom cape, small four-bedroom Cape Cod, I raised my hand and they used it as an example. They sort of paid for most of it. And I, the total estimated costs was \$95,000. I had to pay for the new roof. And so that was 25. And the rest was a NYSERDA grant. And that does not include, this is just a deep energy retrofit for three floors, but it does not include changing out the heating and cooling system. I don't have a cooling system but changing the heating system to air source heat pumps. So, I, my first question is, since I think that doing

the energy retrofit is certainly as important, if not more important, then switching over to some form of beneficial electrification. I, I'm just wondering about the gap. And all of that 95,000 went to late contractor, labor, materials. And, you know, none of it was administration. So, I'm just a little confused about that.

Director of Planning Doyle: So, so the short answer is, is that that there will be limits in terms of what we can do in terms of a what you had done on that, on that small Cape versus what we're proposing to do here. So, the, that's the short answer. The, the other answer is, is that we're looking at what we've seen in other communities that have done this, and it's anywhere between 30 and \$50,000. So, we're on the low end of what we think will need to be done.

Legislator Greene: Okay. The other question I have is that the EmPower Kingston program that, what was Citizens for Local Power. I think they recently are changing their DBA to Communities for Local Power. But anyway, CLP has been working with Kingston EmPower, Kingston's program, and I think they've done at least two trainings and I think they're starting the third. And they've been working in Kingston, and you mentioned that Kingston has its own CBD G, I don't know if I have the letters, correct. Um, and that the county works, essentially everywhere else. And I know that CLP is thinking about continuing in Kingston, and then possibly doing some work in Ellenville. And I just wondered how the, the issue of Kingston being separate from the rest of the county would play out?

Director of Planning Doyle: We, we've engaged well, we'll call it Citizens for Local Power for now or CLP for now, with respect to the Kingston issue and what we're looking at, because of transportation, there's some transportation issues that come into, into play here. So, we would probably be looking at a radius in and around Kingston of around 25 miles, relative to the houses that we'll work on. And we think that when we look at the houses that we're going to work on, that we can work within that area, if we run into issues in terms of where they work, in terms of where our Community Development Block Grant funds are, then we would, we would revert back and use the money in areas that, for houses are not, not participating in our program in the, in the Community Development Block Grant program. But we definitely need, we need CLP as, as a partner here, otherwise, this job training work just doesn't, it becomes much, much more difficult without their expertise. And the other thing is, is that they also have the immediate contract. They have immediate agreements with contractors to take their interns and to work with their interns. And that's a key piece here. And so, the discussions that we've had is, is we'd actually bid the work out to eligible contractors that are working with CLP right now. So, to make sure that the contractors that got the work done, that got the work for the, the energy retrofits would essentially be those contractors that CLP is working with, that does two things. One is it encourages those contractors to work with local, with the local entities that are doing this work to nonprofits that are working in the low-income field. It also encourages other contractors that are already working in a low impact, in the low-income field to essentially participate with CLP for other kinds of, for other kinds of internship programs. So, there's really, there's some real benefits here on both, on both sides.

Legislator Greene: Great, those are my major questions. And I'm, I'm really glad to see this move forward. And, you know, just with real emphasis on energy efficiency, because as long as the energy efficiency is maintained, then you can do with less mini splits, or if geothermal is

being considered, it could be downsized, or appropriately sized to a well-insulated house. And also, just to stress maintaining, or ensuring healthy air, indoor air quality.

Chairman Criswell: Great. And again, thank you Legislator Greene for pushing this forward. Appreciate that. Leg-, Chairwoman Bartels.

Legislative Chair Bartels: Thank you. So, I just wanted to, two things as well, to understand because this is presented as a job training program. But now it's, it sounds more like an expansion of the initial 800,000. But the job training is happening through the partnership with CLP. Is that what you're saying?

Director of Planning Doyle: That's correct, Legislator Bartels. That's correct.

Legislative Chair Bartels: Okay, and how, if this is a continuation of the first 800,000, is there anything stopping us from utilizing CLP and the job training in those projects as well? How far along are we through that first 800,000 with RUPCO?

Director of Planning Doyle: Well, the short answer is, is, the difficulty is, is that we're not doing energy, energy work on those, on those houses with respect to the existing rehab.

Legislative Chair Bartels: Okay. At all?

Director of Planning Doyle: At all, and, and, and there is, there is, understand something, that there is, there is some concern relative to having interns in houses by homeowners. So, you, we need, you need to understand that the novel, not every homeowner does not want to a non-qualified individual in their house doing work on their house. So, the discussions have been that we were going to have to find homeowners that are willing to participate as part of this, the idea that they get additional funds and additional work done associated with that gives them the, there's another incentive for them to participate.

Legislative Chair Bartels: And that's going to be an obligate, I mean, it's going to be obligatory, right? No project is going to move forward without an intern on it.

Director of Planning Doyle: We're going to have, we're going to make sure that our energy efficiency work that, where we spend this \$500,000 is associated with an intern, with an intern job training opportunity. Yes. The short answer to your question is yes.

Legislative Chair Bartels: Okay. For some reason, I thought that that initial discussion about the partnership with RUPCO going back to the last of the contract, 800,000 and accepting the state grants, that we were talking about energy and energy project, but I'll have to, I take you at your word, and I'll look back at it. I didn't realize that we weren't talking about energy projects.

Director of Planning Doyle: No, the, the original grant was the original application to the state was mentioned, the 500, to get the possibility of a \$500,000 opportunity from the, from the County and that may be where the confusion lies. There is clearly, there are energy improvements that get done as part of a lot of code compliance and also as part of major systems.

The example I would give you is, we are, we do replace boilers and furnaces that are that are of age. And those are energy efficient, but they're not electric. So, if you have a boiler replacement, you'll get some energy efficiency out of those boiler replacements. But they won't be, they won't be generated at an electric level. So that the thought being is, is here, you could actually move to a whole new system, rather than, rather than just replace the boiler.

Legislative Chair Bartels: Okay, and can you just explain I mean, is there a way to explain briefly how what we're proposing to do is distinct from EmPower? You say EmPower does not do energy retrofits or deep energy?

Director of Planning Doyle: They do very minor. They do very minor that the, my understanding and talking with the people that are involved in the EmPower program, they do very minor work associated with that. They'll do drafting work, some, some work to remove draft, weather stripping, those kinds of things that replace appliances, but they won't do the kind of work that we're talking about here. I can certainly make sure that that is the case and get back to you with respect to that but that's my, RUPCO, RUPCO uses the EmPower program, and they use the NYSERDA program and they've indicated there's a clear difference in terms of what EmPower will do. And then I started a program which offers for income eligible homeowners up to \$4,000 which, which is literally nothing in terms of, in terms of energy, energy efficiency improvements. You, but you have to use a BPI certified contractor in order to do that.

Legislative Chair Bartels: The NYSERDA one is the \$4,000?

Director of Planning Doyle: Yeah, it really, EmPower's a NYSERDA program as well.

Legislative Chair Bartels: Right, but you were making the distinction. So okay.

Director of Planning Doyle: Yep. Yeah.

Legislative Chair Bartels: All right. Thank you. And will we get this PowerPoint circulated through Amber?

Director of Planning Doyle: I think I sent it to Amber. My apologies to the group. I sent it late. And in my apologies to Amber, if she didn't have time to circulate, circulate it.

Chairman Criswell: We'll get, we'll get this to everybody. And I want to remind everybody, correct me if I'm wrong, Amber, but I believe that we saw this \$500,000 request many months ago with Deputy Executive Rider, correct? And we went back and said, Could you clarify this and develop, and this has been sort of in this development place to where it is today? Correct. Okay, great. I just wanted to remind everybody that we saw this 500,000, many, many months ago at this point, like February or something. Okay. Great, good discussion on this. I think what I'd like to do also is take no action on this. And I think we can put this out for scoring. I think if there are questions if they could go to Amber, who will, again, funnel them to Director Doyle, and we'll get the answers back for that. But I'd like to see this, the, this get on the scoring track, so we can move this forward if everybody feels comfortable with that. Okay, great. All right, I want to move us along. We don't have much more to go here. But I do want to give space for

Legislator Nolan. But before that, I just want to do a quick report out and actually, Deputy Executive Kelly, I'm going to actually have you humming with this conversation that we've been having with Legislator Erner about the bus fares, I just wanted to kind of bring up that we're in conversation about UCAT bus fares. And if you could, just kinda give us a little fill. And we don't have the details. We don't have materials that we've sent to the committee, but we're hoping to have those materials within a week or so. So, Chris, if you could just give us a little update on that?

Deputy Executive Kelly: Sure. So, we've been working with both the budget team as well as UCAT and understanding essentially, the rule sets regarding our funds and how the program would work. It's, it's certainly doable. And what we're trying to narrow down is kind of a technical thing where our state operating aid is, sets a minimum fare, and a minimum discounted fare that we have to maintain and report out on. So right now, it's kind of a, in the weeds budget exercise. And because the goal here is really, let me zoom back out, the goal is to make sure that whatever we're requesting, whether it is ARP funds, or whether it would be fund balance because I'm not, I'm not yet set on saying that this is an ARP program yet. So, because if it is something that we want to sustain, then there's certainly a legacy cost of free fare. So, I'm looking at the perspective of, I have to back into what we project our fare collection to be. And then that's what I have to kind of set as the free fare, and then charge back to the government, which is us. So, it's really that type of a technical discussion right now. We're not worried so much about FTA at this point, we're, we want to make sure that whatever we do, is kind of blessed by the MPO, or Metropolitan Planning Organization, which means that DOT would have knowledge of what we're doing. And then it's really just about how much and how. It's not that I don't want to bring it before this great committee, because this is my favorite by far. But we have a fund balance, and it is quite large. And if we want it to go beyond what we envisioned to be a 16 month or kind of pilot here, I would hate to do it with a temporary funding source if our intention is to make this have some length to it. So, not there yet but it is getting certainly closer. Because once I'm comfortable with the technical aspects and, and Dennis and the transportation planners say, Yeah, DOT is going to be fine with this as well and there's not going to be transit blocks, then it's how do we fund? I think that's where this discussion goes.

Chairman Criswell: That's great. Thank you for that update. And as soon as you your thinking evolves on it, whether it's ARPA or whether it's fund balance, if you could just let us know, I'll pass that information on to the committee at that time. Thank you for that update. I want to give the floor to Legislator Nolan now to talk about the program to aid farmers.

Legislator Nolan: Thank you very much, Chair Criswell. I did send some slides to Amber and I didn't send them to myself. So, I do have some slides to give some information.

Chairman Criswell: I think Amber, Amber will take care of the slides, if you could just let her know when to move forward.

Legislator Nolan: Great, great. So just before we get, well, we can go ahead and pull up the first one. We're, who's the we? The issue of the crisis and farming in Ulster County was brought to the Ulster County Soil and Water Conservation District board a little over a month ago. And we discussed as a board the potential for ARPA funding to help out with this. We are working with

the legislators that are on that committee, which is her Herb Litts and myself and the Executive Director from Soil and Water, Jake Wedemeyer, who's here this evening, and the prior Legislator, Legislative liaison to that committee, Jim Delaune, as well as the farmers and others on the Soil and Water Conservation Board to put together kind of a basis for an application. And I think we've come quite a distance on that. So, I will need to present where we've been, because there's some people that need to be in that conversation that aren't yet. The Ulster County Planning Department, for example, has a lot of information. I did reach out to Amanda LaValle, we haven't connected yet. And there are other members of the Legislature that have a lot of expertise on farming as well. So, my thinking was, by putting something together, you would know where we are, and we can work together to problem solve where we need to go.

So, if we can go to the next slide. The issue is addressing the farming crisis in Ulster County with ARPA funding. And basically we're going to talk about the increasing cost and an already stressed system, diversity of needs, which therefore means we need to have a diversity of approaches to address those needs, which might include things like direct subsidies to farmers support for actions that farmers are taking to ensure climate resiliency, and we want to look particularly to serve, to provide support to underserved populations. And further goal would be, as was just mentioned, in terms of the transit and the free ridership issue, is how to make whatever investments we're putting towards this something that's sustainable and not just a once and done type of operation.

Next one. So, what is the farming crisis? Some of this is direct COVID-19 losses. Farms were hit by this, some of their losses during 2020 and 2021 were partially offset by Project Resilience with a market for their goods being maintained, but there have been losses in terms of individuals who are farmers who have suffered illness. And Employment. More important than the output side, though, has been the input side. So, wage, expense side. Wages are increasing and costs are increasing. The ones that farmers came to the Soil and Water Conservation Board with first were fuel, primarily diesel fuel, fertilizer, and livestock feed. So, their input costs, we have farmers telling us that they are putting acreage fallow, sometimes as much as 100 acres. And we have the potential for acreage being sold, which is really problematic, because we don't have very much of this, if any, in concert, agricultural conservation easements, that would keep that farmland from being lost to farming. And we also have potential farms being sold. And that's another place where we then go to a type of development that isn't needed as much in Ulster County right now as preservation of our farming communities.

So, the next slide. Jake, Wedemeyer, has done some outreach to farmers to try to get some sense of the magnitude of the problem. And this lists the responses from 15 or 16. I think that some of them may be overlap, same farmer giving information. But generally, what we're seeing is people reporting fuel up front, and,

Jake Wedemeyer: There's no overlap, no overlap. There's 16 individual farmers.

Legislator Nolan: Great, thank you. So, increases of 125% to 300% in fuel. Fuel cost tripling in some cases, and fertilizer costs increasing quite a bit as much for many people. And cost of corn to feed livestock up 160% in number 16 there. Soybean meal 137%. Many of these increases are in the past six months and so, may not be represented in some of the quantitative data I have

looked at from 2019 to 2021. There, those data looked to me like they're going to show a 50% increase over that time period. But when we are able to get figures for this first half of 2022, I think we're going to see that we can confirm these, these are not out of the range of what people are saying when they're paying for gas at the pump, for example. There was one thing here and I forgot to note which, which number it was, but there was one oh, here it is. Number 14, an organic vegetable producer noted that fertilizer was up 10%. So, I think there's some further follow up we can do with this information to find out why fertilizer for the organic farmer is up 10% when fertilizer from 15 other farmers is up 125 to 300%.

Jake Wedemeyer: That's because they use compost.

Legislator Nolan: Exactly. So that's a potential area for directing solutions to some of these problems. Next slide.

Jake Wedemeyer: They have different soils. Dry and black dirt. Their needs are different. That's the reasoning behind it.

Legislator Nolan: Okay, thank you.

Jake Wedemeyer: The rest of the farmers have mineral soils, not black dirt.

Legislator Nolan: All right, cool. One of the things I told the Soil and Water District board and I can say here is that I'm new to really the details of farming. I did serve on the Soil and Water board when I was in the Legislature, Legislature previously have learned a lot. But my role here is primarily to bring the information together. And so, we're leaning heavily on Jake in the Soil and Water Conservation District to make sure we get the agriculture part of this right. And part of the reason to bring the presentation again is so that other people can jump in and my goal here is what are we missing? What are we not thinking about? So, this diversity of farms in Ulster County, Ulster County is information from the USDA and I can send a two page summary of that around if the committee wants it. I think we need to talk think about at least a million to 2 million in support from ARPA. We estimate that we have about 200 to 300 farms. The latest USDA data was 2017. It was for 21. There should be data from, for, from 2019 soon. And there are all types of farms, crop farms, livestock, orchard, there's even a few urban farms that are listed back in 2017. There may be more now. And agroforestry probably should be on here as well, maybe others. There are also a great diversity in the size of the farms from single person ownership to many small family farms and then very large farms and a wide range in the income for production from those farms from barely a few 1,000 in some cases a year to over 100,000. So, I think we,

Chairman Criswell: Legislator Nolan, can I ask a quick question? Sure. Just in terms of the one to 2 million. So, you know, I've asked this question of every project that we're doing. Is, it's a cash infusion that once it stops, that, like what's going to happen after the ARPA funds?

Legislator Nolan: Well, we have built into the request at this stage, the notion of a Agricultural Program Coordinator, that would be, to help provide that sustainability, partly by adding to what's already done by soil and water in terms of grant solicitations, and some project some

some expense saving aspects that somebody could coordinate at a county wide or perhaps even a regional level. So if we can come back to it, I think it's a you no good question. And we anticipate building in at least some funding to make this a pilot for something that would continue on. Thank you. And legislator Greene has her hand up. Should we take that now? Absolutely.

Legislator Greene: Unmute. I can wait till the end but maybe it is appropriate since of the most recent conversation. And that is to encourage, if it's not already in the portfolio, agrivoltaics especially a combination of regenerative farming, with agrivoltaics on marginal lands so that the prime farmland, and there are even ways of course, of using prime farmland with more than just pollinator friendly plantings. But actually, in addition to agriculture, in forests, but putting solar, integrating solar into a plan, I think, is much better than a farmer going out of business and then that whole land getting covered with solar, but we've lost the use of the prime farmland. So, I just want to put in a plug, because that's a good way to supplement income and address the climate crisis.

Legislator Nolan: Thank you. Yes, I agree with you completely. And I, I hope that I remembered to put agrivoltaics on a later slide. You mentioned this at the previous ARPA meeting where we just opened the discussion. I thought it was a really important contribution. Jake, do you want to come in with something here?

Jake Wedemeyer: Yes. So, it sounds like a onetime deal and we're already writing a lot of grants that are specific to districts, statewide, and nationwide. We're getting heavily involved in climate resilient farming. We applied for a grant for no till drill, and planting about 375 acres and additional cover crops. So, you know, we do a lot of education outreach. We partner with Cornell. So, I think with the Legislature and the board, you know, we just have to communicate a little more. But even with using solar panels and farmland, I think that is a good idea, but it has its place. So, we found over time, as to many site visits, there's a lot of erosion and sediment control issues when you're creating impervious surfaces on cropland. So, I think we should continue this discussion.

Legislator Nolan: We're certainly going to stay in conversation with the Soil and Water Conservation District as we go forward with this. Maybe we go to the next slide. So, one of the things that these types of funds could do that extend beyond all the great work that the Soil and Water District already does is augment that promotion of climate resiliency. And this is, at this point, this is list of potential things that could be supported by this type of funding. And one of the things we've been asked by the farmers is that we come up with a mechanism that would allow the program to serve both small and large farms. And what, what they mean by that is, the small forms often get left out by USDA or NCRS program funding, when it's something like 60 cents per acre, and they've got a 10-acre farm, it just doesn't make any sense for them even to apply for that. Whereas a bigger farm, the administrative costs are justified by getting in a fair return. And the large farms are also worried that they'll get left out because they have some of the bigger names. And they've been hit harder on some of these variables, particularly staffing, I think. So, we've looked at mechanisms such as using a percent of, a percentage of acreage rather than a price per acre as a mechanism that might allow small farms that are already doing some of these actions or would take them on to qualify for some support. And Jake has mentioned some

of them. These are fairly well established, although they have recently been brought forward in a bigger measure by the passage of the soil health law and New York State. It takes effect in July of this year, to asking for farm programs throughout the state to incentivize and to promote these types of actions, no till or conservation tillage cover cropping, integrated, integrated pest management to promote beneficial soil organism, various insect, insecticide reduction approaches, particularly getting rid of insecticide, saturated seeds, pollinating plants and nectar producing plants, rotational grazing, nutrient management, best practices agroforestry. I didn't get on there, Legislator Greene, agrivoltaics, it will be on the next iteration, sustainable energy sources for these farms. And so that would include that I guess. Potentially on-site worker housing and other, other things that farmers can use that will shift them away from higher diesel fuel usage, higher fertilize usage, and so not harm the environment, but will be a benefit to them in terms of reducing expenses. And again, we'll have to work out mechanisms depending upon what we choose to include, for how we assess the implementation can include site visits, and perhaps other mechanisms.

So, let's go to the next slide. As I mentioned, we think that it would be potentially very important to build in an agricultural program coordinator that could be continued either within the county or perhaps through some nonprofit. That, the role for that person would include being at the county level, planning towards the sustainable solutions, and basically running the pilot program with funding because the Soil and Water board is asking for an additional staff position in the coming up budget. We'll be talking about that coming up, but really is functioning at max or more than max, we get monthly reports of activities and it's astounding the amount of work that's being, coming out of the Soil and Water Conservation District office. This role would also include grant writing and management during the time of the funding, but potentially generating funding so that the, the position could be funded going forward. Developing it further because we're just at the start of something here.

Jake Wedemeyer: That might be our second technician because a lot of grants are districts specific. And we'd have to train the coordinator how to write the grants to district specifics and there's a lot of money with climate resilient farming, as well as agricultural nonpoint source pollution. And there's noncompetitive Agricultural Environmental Management funds out there. And we're also doing more rotational grazing. We're doing two. We did, we're doing, did one system last year, about 60 acres, and we're doing another 50 acres of a system this year. So, you know, with our limited staff, are chugging along, and we just, we have a new hire on board. He's a certified crop advisor and so, is Travis said, we're able to provide additional agronomic and nutrient management services free of charge to the farmers.

Legislator Nolan: So, those programs would be continued and potentially augmented. Um, other things that we aren't currently doing, we don't have as much Farmland Protection happening as I think we need. And we aren't able to get to do as much as we would like to do on certain cooperative approaches. The no till drill that the Soil and Water District is going to do is, it was working to bring in, will be a, an initial step on that. But there are potentials for other shared equipment, or bulk purchases that could reduce expenses for farmers, and long-term planning. It's been identified to us through this process that farmers invest in their farms for their retirement. And so, they need to sell the farm at a, at a profit in order to realize that investment. There are land trusts that are working on things called equity trust, to be able to let that a farmer

have that kind of return on investment, but also keep the farm in farming. And we would do well to be having a lot of our farm acreage in Ulster County in such programs, the coordinator would also develop the program, do networking, outreach, perhaps to even other counties would help us develop metrics that are acceptable to the farmers. The other recurring theme from the farmers as we've been doing our outreach is that many of the programs are too burdensome in terms of Administration and Reporting to be worthwhile to them. So, they want, really, ease of access. And I think that's maybe the last slide is. Want to go and see if there's another one?

These are just, just a list of people, the ones in regular font are people we've already talked with, at least in some degree, Ulster County Planning, maybe a little bit of a slip in there. And the ones in italics are people that we have on our list, or we've reached out to and maybe haven't heard back from yet. So, I think that is the last content slide.

This is, you know, it's, it's an, aspirational sort of. It's an aspirational program in that we think that we can do something right at this current moment to help farmers here. And we also have people that, the first people we've been talking to are saying, you got to do this, that others need to do this. Somebody has to do it first. And so, we have been getting encouragement for this as a pilot or an initial program. We haven't completed even our conversations with the Executive's office. Um, but um, I appreciate your giving us this much time tonight, because we'd like to make our next investment of time productive for getting this to towards a, an application.

Chairman Criswell: That sounds great. Thank you so much for that in depth presentation and I think we all feel the need for this. I guess what I would encourage is, as Chairwoman Bartels said earlier, funds are dwindling. And so, and there's a lot of requests, actually, that are already on the table. So, what I would recommend is to start to really prioritize that. So that was kind of a long laundry list of, of things that you desired, which is great, but I would start to put numbers to it as quickly as possible and prioritize it and see what it really looks like in total. Is it a million? Is it 2 million? Is it 7 million? You know, where does it actually land? And then, then I think that will at least give us some concrete idea of where it can fit in with the remaining funds. Other Legislators have comments and suggestions about this? Legislator Sperry, and then Legislator Bartels, and then Legislator Greene.

Legislator Sperry: Sorry, the little general's trying to eat a book back here. Guess she's hungry. So, I'm on the Cornell Cooperative Extension board, and there is a map that they have on their website that is actually pretty amazing. It's a little janky, because it's a GIS thing and I don't really know how to navigate that, but I don't know, you could probably reach out to them or talk to them anyways. But they have a pretty amazing map that they developed during COVID to help folks understand where farms are in the county. And like, you know, CSAs, farm stands, and all of this stuff. So, I think that might even be more up to date than the 2017 USDA map that you're citing. And I'm happy to talk to you more offline, off this call about ways that we can inter, intersect. So.

Legislator Nolan: Great. Thank you.

Chairman Criswell: Chairwoman Bartels, and then Legislator Greene.

Legislative Chair Bartels: So, I just wanted to thank Legislator Nolan for such a, a thorough presentation. You know, I think this is something of critical importance just to our county overall, the idea that the pressures that, you know, we came into this term knowing the pressures that our farmers were facing, and that's just been so exacerbated by the conditions, including fuel prices. And the, the worst-case scenario, which has been happening slowly is an, an expedited end of these farms through the sale of the properties, which I know they must, you know, every individual farm must just be under incredible pressure. Because, like so many things, farming is a lot of work, and so on, you're facing the real estate prices and offers that they're facing. So, I do agree that we need to contemplate what our role needs to be. And, and I think, also Legislator Nolan, it would be good for, for you and, and Soil and Water to, you know, to go and present at Economic Development and Farming as well, because agriculture is now a part of that committee. And even though you're, you're bringing this as ARPA funds, I think to just have this conversation happening in that committee is of critical importance as well. So, you know, I'm really going to let it all sink in. Sorry for the noise in the background. And I look forward to whatever you bring forward. And it's, you know, it's even contemplating ideas like this in general, that goes back, like Chair Criswell said, to my first comment about us all really being mindful about how little money we have left and really thinking through. It's not a race to the finish to spend it. I think we want to really be thoughtful about where we're going to have the most impact. And we all expected that toward the end that was going to get more and more difficult. But your presentation today kind of highlights the importance of, of our need to do that. Thank you.

Chairman Criswell: Thank you. Legislator Greene. You are on mute. Yeah, you're on mute.

Legislator Greene: I was being facetious, but my, but I was muted, so you couldn't hear it. I'm gonna pass on that and just say that I am really concerned, particularly with, with sea level rise, there are going to be a lot of communities and ultimately, the greater New York metropolitan area where strategic relocation is going to be necessary. There's gonna be huge pressure on our farms and protecting our farms and encouraging them to use really best practices in terms of climate solutions. Is, is critical. So, I think it's not a moment too soon. For many reasons, you know, climate reasons, but also food security. Once, once that land is gone, it's really, we're not going to get it back. So, thank you for working on this.

Chairman Criswell: Thank you so much. And I'm aware of the fact that Legislator Levine has to leave us at seven o'clock. So, I think this was a hearty discussion. And unless anybody else has a burning thing that they want to say, I think I would like to ask for a motion for us to adjourn. Do we have any old business, anything that we have to take care of?

Jake Wedemeyer: One thing I'd like to say real quick is that with climate change, the West is burning up, the East is turning into the next breadbasket of this nation. So, it's something we need to pay attention to.

Chairman Criswell: Thank you. Again, thank you for your participation in this discussion, Jake. We appreciate you being here. So. All right. With that, I would ask for a motion to adjourn.

Legislator Levine: Motion.

Legislator Sperry: Motion. Motion to adjourn.

Chairman Criswell: And a second. Yes. And All in favor, say aye.

Group: Aye.

Chairman Criswell: Thank you again for a great conversation. Appreciate it. Enjoy your holiday. We won't see each other until then. All right. Take care.

Time: 6:59 PM

Respectfully submitted: Amber Feaster

Minutes Approved: July 27, 2022