

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

**DATE & TIME:** August 10, 2022 – 5:00  
**LOCATION:** Powered by Zoom Meeting by Dialing: 1-646-558-8656,  
Meeting ID: 885 6564 1321  
**PRESIDING OFFICER:** Peter Criswell, Chairman  
**LEGISLATIVE STAFF:** Fawn Tantillo  
**PRESENT:** Legislators Aaron J. Levine, and Megan Sperry; and  
Legislative Chair Tracey A. Bartels  
**ABSENT:** Legislators Thomas Corcoran, Jr, and Craig V. Lopez  
**QUORUM PRESENT:** Yes  
**OTHER ATTENDEES:** Legislators Manna Jo Greene, Herbert Litts, III, and Kathy  
Nolan; ARP Administration Nathan Litwin, Ashlee Long,  
and Molly Scott; Director of Planning Dennis Doyle;  
Deputy Director of Planning Amanda LaValle; Deputy  
Comptroller Alicia DeMarco; Ulster County Soil & Water  
Conservation District Jake Wedemeyer

- **Chairman Criswell called the meeting to order at 5:04 PM**
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**Motion No. 1: 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**

**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 \$100,000.00 per project.

**Motion Made By:** Legislator Sperry  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Levine

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Criswell, Levine, and Sperry; and Legislative Chair Bartels  
**Voting Against:** None  
**No. of Votes in Favor:** 4  
**No. of Votes Against:** 0

**Discussion:** See attached transcript.

**Motion No. 2: To approve 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 \$100,000.00 per project.

**Motion Made By:** Legislator Sperry

**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Levine

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

**Voting Against:** None

**No. of Votes in Favor:** 4

**No. of Votes Against:** 0

**Disposition:** Approved

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**Motion No. 3: 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 the ARPA Food Security and Access project 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 Sperry

**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Levine

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

**Voting Against:** None

**No. of Votes in Favor:** 4

**No. of Votes Against:** 0

**Discussion:** See attached transcript.

**Disposition:** No Action Taken

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**Motion No. 4: To discuss Resolution No. 400 – Amending The 2022 Budget To Establish And Fund The Ulster County Agricultural Crisis Relief Program - Department Of Finance, Division Of Recovery And Resilience**

**Resolution Summary:** This Resolution establishes and funds the Ulster County Agricultural Crisis Relief Program in the amount of \$2,000,000.00, to be funded by American Rescue Plan Act funding.

**Motion Made By:** Legislator Bartels  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Levine

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Criswell, Levine, and Sperry; and Legislative Chair Bartels  
**Voting Against:** None  
**No. of Votes in Favor:** 4  
**No. of Votes Against:** 0

**Discussion:** See attached transcript.

**Disposition:** No Action Taken

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**New Business:** See attached transcript.

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**Old Business:** See attached transcript.

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

### **Adjournment**

**Motion Made By:** Legislator Levine  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Sperry  
**No. of Votes in Favor:** 5  
**No. of Votes Against:** 0

**Time:** 7:00 PM

**Respectfully submitted:** Amber Feaster  
**Minutes Approved:** August 31, 2022

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

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Legislative Chair Tracey A. Bartels  
**ABSENT:** Legislators Thomas Corcoran, Jr, and Craig V. Lopez  
**QUORUM PRESENT:** Yes  
**OTHER ATTENDEES:** Legislators Manna Jo Greene, Herbert Litts, III, and Kathy  
Nolan; ARP Administration Nathan Litwin, Ashlee Long,  
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- 

**Fawn Tantillo:** You're all set.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you. Okay, I'm going to call this meeting to order. It's the American rescue plan act, special committee meeting, August 10<sup>th</sup>. It is 5:02pm. And if I could get the Clerk to call the roll, please.

**Fawn Tantillo:** Peter Criswell.

**Chairman Criswell:** Here.

**Fawn Tantillo:** Thomas Corcoran, not with us yet. Aaron Levine.

**Legislator Levine:** Here.

**Fawn Tantillo:** Craig Lopez is not with us and Megan Sperry.

**Legislator Sperry:** Present.

**Fawn Tantillo:** Alright, you have a quorum.

**Chairman Criswell:** And our illustrious Chair is with us this evening as well.

**Fawn Tantillo:** That's right. That's right. Tracey Bartels. I'm sorry. I should.

**Legislative Chair Bartels:** Thank you. And I don't think, I don't think Tom will be joining today.

**Chairman Criswell:** Yeah, he's in transit and he said if he could log on to, you know, Wi Fi somewhere, he would do it. But I, who knows if that's going to happen. So, we're just going to kind of move on. I actually think this will go fairly quickly tonight. We do have a few things I want to cover. So, let's just jump right into Resolutions. If I could have a motion to discuss Resolution 289, which is the ARPA Parks program.

**Legislator Sperry:** Motion to discuss.

**Legislator Levine:** I'll second it then.

**Chairman Criswell:** You'll second it. Thank you. All in favor.

**Group:** Aye.

**Chairman Criswell:** All opposed. Great. Alright. So, as we mentioned in caucus, you know, we've sort of been around-about with this many times now. And Legislator Stewart, I think, has done a very good job at listening to the concerns of this committee, as well as the concerns of other committees and made adjustments. I think, you know, we could continue to tweak it and make adjustments, but I feel like we're in a really good place with it and what I'd like to do is open the floor for any final comments, and then I'd like to actually vote on it this evening.  
Chairwoman Bartels.

**Legislative Chair Bartels:** Thank you. You know, I spoke with Legislator Hewitt, who came on as a co-sponsor earlier today on another subject and brought this up with him and I intend to reach out to Legislators Stewart. This is gonna seem like a, maybe like an uncharacteristic, I mean, I feel like it's an uncharacteristic recommendation for me, and it's not something that we have to change right now. I think we can move it forward. But I would like to make what I hope is a friendly suggestion, in terms of contracting these projects. You know, it occurs to me and as Legislators, I think probably everyone's experienced this, probably most notably the newest Legislators, because they're there, they're new to the body, and they're coming from not being Legislators so they're, you know, there's a real awareness of how little the public understands what we do. You know, I've been doing this a long time. And even when I knock on doors, you know, there are people who have no clue, unless they're utilizing our services, what the Legislature does, what the county does. People have a certain level of awareness of our Executive, not always even who their, who their local Legislator is. And all this is a preamble to say, this is a project that is, you know, is bound, when it's successfully executed, to have real impact on the ground, in communities where people live and play, right? So, it's going to be seen and felt by lots of people. And so, what I started to think about is, maybe we might suggest, you know, contractually, or otherwise, some way of recognizing the Legislature, the Legislature, the County's contribution to these projects. And that maybe, I don't know what it is, maybe it's

signage, maybe it's, you know, at a ribbon cutting, I have no idea. And it's not so much for patting ourselves on the back, as, you know, as sort of positioning the County within each of these communities in a way that people will understand and appreciate because I think with the County, I know that the County does amazing things and important things, very important things. But I also know that countywide our constituents don't know what we do. So, I just wanted to, you know, I wanted to float it to this committee, since it's the committee of jurisdiction, you know, get people's thoughts if they have now or let people sit on it, because again, if it's something that we change, contractually, we, it's not something that holds up the Resolution. It could be something that can be added to a contract at the point of contracting, but I just wanted to get people's thoughts.

**Chairman Criswell:** I very much like that idea. It's something that I've talked about a little bit, you know, since I started as a Legislator. Again, relatively new to government. And, you know, folks had no idea. A lot of folks had no idea what we do. And I talked about like, do we have a PR, you know, what's our PR situation here? And I know we send out press releases. And, and that's, that's great. But I think that folks don't always go to our site to look at press releases. So, you know, I think the more active we can be in terms of letting the community know what we're doing, and that we are partners with our local towns and cities. I totally agree with you Chairwoman Bartels. I think it's a great idea. And, yeah, let's try and figure out a way to actually bake that into, into what we're doing with this project and the other projects. Now we've done some nice press now with the nonprofit funding and I hope that we'll get the same kind of press when we make other announcements about funding that we're doing for these countywide programs. So, I can, I will continue to support that idea. So, thank you for bringing it up. Legislator Levine I saw, and then Legislator Sperry.

**Legislator Levine:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I concur with both the Chair, Chair Bartels and yourself. I think it's a good idea to make sure that the public is aware about, you know, what the Legislature is doing on their behalf and on what projects that we think are going to have a real tangible impact on the lives of our constituents. And, you know, having that credibility and awareness, I think is important. However, you know, I, I don't, I, you know, I don't want to speak for all of my colleagues. But, you know, unfortunately, I don't think that that will, that, I think that this idea won't have a unanimous support in the Legislature. I think that there are some members of the Legislature who will oppose that idea. So, I just kind of want to bring it to the attention of this committee and the Chair that I don't think it would be unanimously supported, but I would be in full support of it as well. I think it is a good idea. But that's, I just wanted to bring that to your attention.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you. Legislator Sperry.

**Legislator Sperry:** Did you say Sper or Sperry?

**Chairman Criswell:** Sperry.

**Legislator Sperry:** Okay. I just want to make sure you finished my last name.

**Chairman Criswell:** Noted.

**Legislator Sperry:** Thank you. So, I agree. I love this idea. And I was just thinking, Chairwoman Bartels, when you were talking at the bridge in New Paltz, facing Mohonk, you know where I'm talking about? That outlook, there's a plaque there and it actually says that it's donated on the, or it lists all of the Legislature that was in office when that plaque in that park were built. And it's not often that you see that around the county. So, I agree, this is a wonderful opportunity. And I would even go maybe a step further and saying that maybe we could say that this project was made possible because of ARPA funds. I don't know if that's like, how legal or kosher it is and I'm almost wondering if that's like a double-edged sword. Because, you know, some people might be like, That's not appropriate, you know, and, but it's like, we know what's appropriate. We're on the committee. But you know what I'm saying. Like, I like the idea of mentioning this cohort of the Legislature. And if we could, and if it's possible, I would love to communicate to our community that these projects were made possible because of the partnership between us, the ARPA committee, the ARPA funds, and the municipalities.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you. That's, that's a great question. Nate, I'm going to ask you. Do you know any rules or regulations against citing that these were, you know,

**Director of Resilience Litwin:** Over citing the use of ARPA funds? There's, I think it's, it's encouraged.

**Chairman Criswell:** I would think so.

**Director of Resilience Litwin:** Yeah.

**Legislator Levine:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was just gonna say in regards to what Legislator Sperry just, just mentioned, going back after, after the financial crisis, I'm just trying to remember that, I believe that after the stimulus bill was passed after the financial crisis that I remember seeing, especially here in New York City, I think like on the MTA, on MTA subways and everything, that there were a lot of, there was signage like on the actual subways and in the stations about projects that were paid for using, you know, stimulus money. So, I think it's, it's, it's been done before, so I would hope that there wouldn't be an issue with it, so.

**Chairman Criswell:** And historically, the WPA, you know, you see things, you saw things all the time that were say this was sponsored by Work Projects Administration, and that's, I think, So, historically, it has precedent. Chairwoman Bartels.

**Legislative Chair Bartels:** Yeah. And I think, I think for me, it has the dual benefit, and of course, you know, I would want it to say in partnership with the local municipality, but for me, it has the dual benefit of sort of grounding some of what we do in terms of exposure to, to our constituency. And by that I don't mean individual constituency, I mean the whole county, but also, you know, and again, we should look into about maybe publicizing that it's ARPA funds, but also, letting you know, giving people a sense of, you know, where their money is going. Getting to see in real time, I mean, because I think that there's, you know, not only do people not know what we're doing, but they know that they're paying property taxes, they know that, you

know, they know that 1,000, you know, 1,800 people are employed by the county, so it's, but they don't, but they, many people don't know what it is that we're doing. So, and these projects, I know are going to be very positively felt, you know, when, when people, when people spend time in any of our parks, any portion of our park system, whether they're municipal parks, or county parks or private parks, they're generally, I mean, I think there is generally a positive reaction, right? Like people are, they're exercising, relaxing with their families, by themselves. For whatever reason they're going, they're recreating. So, it's, it's, it's a positive response. So again, just for further conversation, and I will reach out to Legislator Stewart about it. But I don't think we need to make any changes to the resolution on that end.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you. With that said, I'd like to call a vote on this resolution. All in favor.

**Group:** Aye.

**Chairman Criswell:** Opposed. All right, the Resolution passes unanimously. Thank you very much. Legislator Stewart would be thrilled at this point. Thank you. All right. Can I get a motion for discussion for Resolution 340, which is the Food Access, Food Security and Access?

**Legislator Sperry:** Motion to discuss.

**Chairman Criswell:** And a second, please.

**Legislator Levine:** Second.

**Chairman Criswell:** All in favor.

**Group:** Aye.

**Chairman Criswell:** All opposed. Great. And I believe we have Amanda LaValle here with us tonight to talk about where things are at with the sort of re-imagining of this.

**Deputy Director of Planning LaValle:** Thank you. I can speak briefly to that. We, you know, after receiving some, some feedback about kind of the proportion of the money towards planning initiatives versus direct support to organizations, we looked at some other models based on that feedback. And one similar to the Continuum of Care model that's used to support unhoused, housing unhoused people. And we think that that would work well here. So, I have done a little work on kind of restructuring the budget, to, to reflect that focus, and changing the proportion of the money that goes towards, towards direct support to emergency feeding organizations. I think it is still important to devote some of the funds towards an organization that would be able to convene those groups and bring them together to kind of learn from each other, as well as to kind of assess the needs overall, in order to direct the funds to where they really are needed across the kind of county-wide system. But this would be a lighter and leaner version of that than what was originally proposed. There is also I think it would be important to leave some kind of focus through the three-year kind of time period that we have of updating the county's emergency feeding plan. And that's really how the county in, in different types of emergencies interacts with

all those feeding organizations in order to like call them up and meet needs in a particular emergency. So, I think that that is still a way in which we would be doing both things which would mean meeting the ongoing need and also being prepared to feed people during some disturbance or disaster event. And I think that, you know, those are both things that are important to kind of keep our eyes on because, because this is what we're realizing, you know, there's both tremendous ongoing need, but there's also, events happen that we may not be totally prepared for, and seeing what we can do to support the emergency feeding system to kind of gain the strength so that there's, they're better able to meet that need.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you. I had a couple quick questions. One of them is a question that we ask for every proposal that comes in front of us. And it has to do with the long-term sustainability of the project. Because it's really key that this money is really seed money for something that then is not going to become a burden to the County, or if it is, then it's really clear, as we're going into it, that we're accepting that burden as we move forward. So, can you speak to that just a little bit?

**Deputy Director of Planning LaValle:** Sure. And I think that that also kind of speaks to that dynamic of where is that kind of spot between planning and just funding, right? Of various initiatives. So, we want to make sure that we're supporting a structure that can move forward to support those organizations and also funding those projects. So, I think in the revised proposal, by having an Emergency Feeding Working Group that can meet year over year from the county, I think that that that is funded for three years with the ARPA money, I think at that point in time, the county could consider continuing to fund just that. It's pretty modest. Right now, it's about \$25,000 a year to support and organize support to all those, all the emergency feeding kind of operations in the county. So, when you consider who they're, how many people they're serving, what they're providing, you know, that's a pretty modest amount of money if it were to be funded, ongoing by the county. I think by setting up that structure with having like a, an action plan of priority projects, would then allow you to seek other funding in order to meet those needs on going. So, it would be important with the ARPA money to have, as I have the revised budget \$275,000 of the \$350,000 total going to direct funding to those organizations. But that would, I think we should be looking at a relationship with the Community Foundation of the Hudson Valley to do that funding for several reasons. They currently administer funding like that for the Farm Fresh Food Program so they're very experienced in working with smaller nonprofits in order to, to get the money out for them to do their work and pay them. Also, they would have the ability to seek other funding to continue funding initiatives that we see important and can do private fundraising. They could look for other type of grant funding. And I think it gives us a relationship and a structure that then could live beyond our, I don't know, Legislator Criswell, if that answers your question.

**Chairman Criswell:** It does. I have a quick follow up. And then I see you Chair Bartels. Have you approached Community Foundation's already to,

**Deputy Director of Planning LaValle:** We have had initial discussions with them over administering this type of fund, which they were receptive to for a modest and I think reasonable administrative fee.

**Chairman Criswell 18:32**

Okay. The reason I ask is because we had this conversation in the Legislative Programs Committee last session with them, and they ended up not accepting our proposal to,

**Deputy Director of Planning LaValle:** Okay.

**Chairman Criswell:** So, I just wanted you to know that that was, that was a discussion that we had, and we, you know, so just making sure that you at least started that discussion and interest there.

**Deputy Director of Planning LaValle:** Yes.

**Chairman Criswell:** The other thing on my mind is, when this first started, wasn't Cornell Cooperative an integral part of this and are they any longer a piece of this puzzle?

**Deputy Director of Planning LaValle:** So, based on the feedback that we received from Committee, the Cornell Cooperative piece was very focused on food system planning, and convening of a food system Council. And based on the feedback that we received, it didn't seem as though the goals of the Legislature could be met by still funding Cornell Cooperative about \$160,000 of the total \$350,000 to do the Food System Council work.

**Chairman Criswell:** Okay, thank you. And then last question, I promise. So, will this Resolution have to be totally redrafted or can it be amended with the alterations that you're making?

**Chairman Criswell:** I'm going to defer to Nate because I think he might be able to speak to that better.

**Director of Resilience Litwin:** Thank you. So, I did look at the Resolution today, and it is a funding resolution so it's mainly the dollar value I don't believe is changing. There's no specifics. I mean, I can look at the whereases a little closer, but I mainly focused on the resolved. And that was just for a result funding on a figure. So, my thought is that it could be, maybe the whereases can be amended or some added just to show the intent and we can do that.

**Chairman Criswell:** Okay, great. I just wanted to understand where we're at, where we're at technically. I see, let me go to Legislator Bartels, because, Chairwoman Bartels, because she's been waiting for a long.

**Legislative Chair Bartels:** Thank you. So, okay, I'm gonna go backwards. I had some questions, some of which Amanda was able to address but I do have questions for Amanda. But I'm going to start with the financing. I would actually offer and suggest the alternative, that the Resolution does need to be amended. You know, we have long, I realize we're getting to the end of this, taken exception to the idea of making capital projects out of things that aren't capital projects out of ease of, you know, and this is exactly why, Nate, because essentially, we're just authorizing spending 350,000 on anything. Like whereases, our whereas, you know, you, we go ahead and say, Okay, there's 350,000 for a project and not that I'm suggesting you would do this, you could

just go ahead and do whatever with it, because we've just authorized 350,000 on something that's not a capital project, in fact. So, I think that the Resolution should be amended. I don't know, Amanda, if any supporting, I'm so happy to hear what you just explained. And again, I'm sorry, we weren't able to connect, because the supporting documentation that's in the packet doesn't reflect any of that change. And I don't know if that's a mistake on our end, or if nothing was sent over. Because the old numbers are there, the old backups there. Before you started talking, I was thinking I gotta pull up last month because, or two months ago because this looks the same. I don't, I don't know. It's different. And once you started to give numbers, I realized that you're talking about a very substantive change. But just we are not seeing it.

**Director of Resilience Litwin:** I don't believe that's been provided yet. But we have some documentation over to Nate to give to you.

**Legislative Chair Bartels:** That's great. And so given that, my, my one comment is, you know, I would, you know, I very much appreciate the responsiveness to the concerns that the committee raised. And the, what you explained as the shift in the balance of the, the finances. The one thing that gives me a little bit of pause, but less so in your explanation, is this idea that the balance of that funding is predetermined to be distributed as grants, because, in fact, what, what you may find is that there's a different way to, to fund the system or a different need in the system, then individually funding X amount of grants. I think, I just, I guess what I'm saying is, I feel that almost in assuming that it's going to go out as grants, you're assuming the end before getting there. And I know we're spending less money on the planning aspect. But it may be that even in that smaller portion of the planning, you realize there's something else that we need to fund with it rather than direct grants to X number of providers. So, and I don't know the answer, I think it may take a little more thinking through, but I just want to raise that as a concern. But I'm, very much appreciate the shift in the in the finances going to direct aid.

**Director of Resilience Litwin:** Received, I think we could actually kind of look at the scope of the grant program as being one of the first kind of charges in developing this more. I think that would be to, I would like to hear more from you kind of what the, if it's not direct assistance, kind of what the universe of things that you could think might be funded or would be important to be funded to make sure that we're, you know, providing structure so that we're, we're using this money in a, in a effective and thoughtful way, but not so much structure, structure and network recruiting. You know, meet with something that's a little different. That is also very important that really raises up as a priority.

**Legislative Chair Bartels:** Thank you. And if I may, I will follow up with you, you know, tomorrow or the next day, and maybe we can talk it out a little further, I would, I just want to say one other comment on this, on this project, but this priority really, and that is, you know, like all of us, I think, I suspect this is going to become more and more of an escalated issue. And, you know, just speaking for myself, and I was having this conversation yesterday, I almost, more than any other thing, I notice a giant difference at the supermarket. I noticed, I mean, significant, it varies, I think last time I talked about the difference in the cost of romaine lettuce. But from my overall I'd say that whatever numbers, whatever percentages, they're saying that groceries have increased, I think it's higher. Like I personally am seeing it as higher. And as we're talking, you know, as we're facing potentially more inflation, I just think more individuals, more families

are going to be squeezed on this front. And I think it's going to continue to squeeze people who, who never, who never felt like we're, never on our radar in terms of falling within the specter of need. So, I have a feeling that this is probably the tip of the iceberg of what we're going to need. And that is also to say that down the road, we may have to spend more money, just may not be ARPA money, on the things that you were talking about before, like those planning initiatives. I don't, I don't want to suggest that they are any less important. I think, as one voice in this committee, I just wanted to see that this money was going for more immediate, immediate response in terms of on the ground response. But I think that we should continue the conversation about the planning that needs to be done. Because I think that's really important work.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you, Chair Bartels. Director Doyle, I see your hand. And then Amanda, I saw, I just saw your hand too, so let me go to Dennis first.

**Director of Planning Doyle:** Thank you, Chair. I really appreciate the opportunity, I just wanted to round back and, and sort of put some meat on some bones relative to this. And I want to, just wanted to let the Legislature know that the Planning Department has some very good experiences with respect to the kind of planning work that is being proposed here. We actually have a small contract for administrative purposes to run something called a Continuum of Care, that gathers all of the homeless providers in Ulster County together and has them go through a process and an application process to decide how funding will be distributed to those providers based on what they submit. And, and then we provide essentially, the funding to put together the application that goes to HUD. And so, for a very modest, a modest investment of around \$30,000, the county usually returns about \$1.3 million in homeless housing assistance through the various nonprofit entities that are there. And these folks are mission driven. They're not here to make a profit. They're mission driven to essentially to, to deal with the homeless. And we envision that, and we see that when we look at what's happening with respect to the food, the food system. So, what we're hoping to do is essentially be able to come together,

**Chairman Criswell:** Manna Jo, Can I just get you to mute yourself please? Thank you.

**Director of Planning Doyle:** So, what we hope to do here is essentially bring that, bring a similar group together, and do the necessary work to essentially have them decide what's the best way that we can provide, provide assistance. And I'm not suggesting, I think I go back to the Chair, the Chairperson's comment, that it may not end up being grants, but provide assistance. The other reason that you do this is that by coming together as one and starting to work at those priorities, you have an opportunity to approach other entities that do this type of funding, and, and sort of leverage whatever monies you get or leverage the fact that you're working together in terms of what they're willing to give. I just wanted to say that we think that, that out of this comes essentially a, a sense of what we're going to fund using the ARPA money, but I wouldn't, I would hope that what we could do is leverage that funding on the basis of not only priorities, but also the participation by others in that funding scheme. And the other thing is, is I know we had a brief conversation with respect to Cornell. Cornell is going to be part of this, it's just that we're not paying them for a work product, but Cornell does have a role here with respect to some of the programs they already offer. And we would anticipate that Cornell comes in as a

stakeholder, with other with other people with the other providers with respect to the food systems. Thank you.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you so much for that update. Amanda, did you want to add something?

**Deputy Director of Planning LaValle:** Just to also emphasize that, you know, by setting up the system, you know, we would be able to leverage, if it were an ongoing investment of the County to fund that kind of annual, the convening and the support to the food providers that, you know, that might be the right place for ongoing support for the county. And it, and to, to be quite frank, it's, it's something that currently we don't fund in really any capacity, as any kind of organized support to the emergency feeding network. And again, it's it is really a backbone of social services, if folks aren't able to qualify for WIC or SNAP, you know, they get handed the sheet of information about emergency feeding organizations. But at the same time, the County is not providing any kind of coordinated support for those groups. So, if after three years of ARPA funding, and if it's a decision from the Legislature, if this is worth continuing to fund that level of, of organization, organizational support. Thank you.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you very much. Um, so we haven't done this before. But I'm actually going to suggest that once we get, I think this needs a little bit more time to, to, to get thought out. And then I'm going to suggest that as a committee, we're going to re-score this, because we scored it as a very different project, and it got good scores at that point. So, I'm gonna suggest that we just basically take those scores and, and move them to the side. Look at the project with fresh eyes, re-score it, send it out to the community again, re-score it. Is there any timeframe urgency on this? Nope. Hearing none. Okay, so we're gonna, we're gonna give it just a little bit more time to, Nate, did you want to?

**Director of Resilience Litwin:** Sorry. Thank you, Chair. I kind of, on your thoughts, I'm just procedurally, and I'm sure Amanda and Dennis could help, but I know that the Executive deadline is, I believe, the end of next week. And if a new resolution was filed, would the old Resolution have to be withdrawn? I just, kind of thinking out the procedural step.

**Chairman Criswell:** Yeah, Chairwoman Bartels.

**Legislative Chair Bartels:** So, if a new resolution, a new resolution is filed, we could withdraw the old resolution, that would probably be the best case. I mean, if you wanted to make significant amendments to this resolution, it could stay in with its number. I think that'll be up to you, depending on how, how much change, change there is. I would not recommend withdrawing this Resolution until you have another one that you're putting in, just in case, you know, we get pushed back that week. I mean it, push back in terms of times, and we can make changes to this one while, while it sits. But, but I think, yeah, I don't know that you'll have. I don't know that you'll have a fully new one ready for Resolution deadline, I guess is what I'm saying. Which is why I just said keep this one in as the placeholder and the place where we're having a conversation. We can maybe work on making some changes to it. But I don't think it stops us from moving forward with the work.

**Chairman Criswell:** Yeah, Nate, are you able to just take a, take a hard look at this and see if it needs, you know, significant change, or if it just needs some tweaks for a couple of the whereases? If you do that, and then just let us know whether it's going to meet a whole new Resolution. That would be terrific. I see Chairwoman Bartels.

**Legislative Chair Bartels:** Thanks, and I mean, obviously that would be in collaboration with Amanda and, and the Planning Department just in terms of updating the backup reflecting against the Resolution, and moving it from being a Capital Project to including some of the detail, not just in the whereases, but in the resolves to show how we're going to be spending the money.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you for adding that. Legislator Levine.

**Legislator Levine:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, just a question for you in regards to, so if, if, if we ended up going this route of a re-scoring this, would it be your expectation that we would just be, it would be to be discussed at our, at our meeting at the end of the month, to be, to be discussed, and then I guess voted on at the September? If it goes to the floor at the September meeting?

**Chairman Criswell:** That'd be ideal. I think it's going to really depend on how long it takes to sort of more fully realize the ideas in here and get them worked into either, you know, an amended resolution or a new resolution. So, you know, could be that quickly. But I'm also realistic, that it's end of August, people are taking vacations, you know, life is happening. So, I think this is going to be something that we just need to check in with each other and see how things are going. If everybody feels comfortable with that, then we can see how quickly we can move it along. Does that seem realistic? Everybody good with that? Okay, so for now, I'm going to suggest that we take no action on this. We'll keep in touch and see how it's developing, and then we will put it on our next agenda if it's ready to be scored before in a timely fashion before we actually are going to meet. We'll send it out to committee members to score. If not, we'll just pick up the conversation next, next meeting and then send it out for scoring after that. That sound okay with everybody? Okay, great. Sounds good. Thank you. And again, thank you for your flexibility on this, Amanda and Dennis. We really appreciate you hearing the concerns and going back and sort of scrapping and starting again, so thank you. And I've actually sat in on a bunch of Continuum of Care meetings, and I think it's a great group. As the LGBTQ Center, we're part of that and so, I think it's a really interesting model. So, thank you for that. All right, moving us along to Resolution 400. If I could get a motion for discussion, please. Chair. And a second, please.

**Legislator Levine:** Second.

**Chairman Criswell:** Legislator Levine. All in favor.

**Group:** Aye.

**Chairman Criswell:** All opposed. All right. So, Resolution 400 is Establishing and Fund the Ulster County Agricultural Crisis Relief Program. Legislator Nolan, do you want to give us any updated information at this point? Actually, before you do that, let me just give you, give

everybody a little history of what I, what I have is that it was postponed in Economic Development. Further information provided from Legislator Nolan, it's in the meeting packet, which you all got. We haven't done any scoring at this time. We were waiting on that. The scoring template is in OneDrive, and that will be sent to everybody as well. So, Legislator Nolan, did you have, Oh, I see you're in transit. Do you want to, do you want to wait for a minute until you get settled or? Okay. Yes, Chairwoman Bartels, why don't you, can you riff for a while, while Legislator Nolan gets herself sorted?

**Legislative Chair Bartels:** Um, you know if, if Legislator Litts wants to go first, that's okay and then.

**Chairman Criswell:** Yeah, please, Legislator Litts.

**Legislator Litts:** Unmuted, okay. I know. Chair Bartels on the last Resolution was commenting on how she is personally seeing an increase in pricing in the, in the store, in the grocery store. And I just want to inform you that you haven't seen the tip of the iceberg. From the last time I purchased my components to make feed for my cows and my pigs, from the last time not even like a year ago, the price of those components have gone up an average of 137%. That's to feed the animals. By the time that gets passed along, and the middleman and a second middleman and then the distributor and it gets to the grocery store, it's going to be quadrupled. So, the price of food is going to skyrocket. So, and I, you know, it's no secret, I've been trying to get a meat facility in the Hudson Valley for 20 years. I'm finally getting a little traction. But there's so many farmers that have gone out of business already. And with the pressures of the new rules and regulations and laws, there's quite a few farmers that are not able to pay the overtime. They're paying it at the 60 hours. But once it drops to what's going to 50, then to 40, once they get to 40, some of the very large farmers, like sweet corn growers that have 1200 acres, so they're going to stop and go out of business. So, I think there is a crisis. And I think it goes well beyond COVID. It's something that's been, been working in the Hudson Valley for a long time. The 1960 census in my town, 87% of the land use, by land use, was agriculture. Now it's less than 11%. And that's base, basically my farm and some apple farms in the lower end of the Town of Lloyd. A lot of the family farms are all gone. So, there is a crisis. It is a true crisis. And well beyond the ARPA funding. The County needs to think about agriculture as one of the major economic drivers of this County and it's, and its, and its economy, agritourism and tourism and agriculture itself. Because it's waning, it really is, at a dramatic pace. Thank you.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you very much. Chairwoman Bartels.

**Legislative Chair Bartels:** Thank you. So, um, I really appreciate Legislator Litts' perspective, you know, his firsthand experience on the issue, and I, and I share, I share his concerns. You know, I think it's, you know, we're in the midst of what is really a perfect storm in terms of the pressure, the real estate pressure, property values going up, and prior to that, I was hearing from small farmers about the challenge, and talking to small farmers who chose to stop farming because they were on rental land and the rents were going up. Very hard to find, you know, purchase land. People who want to farm but, but couldn't. I'm gonna just add to that to say that the climate crisis that we are undoubtedly in the midst of that we're seeing, you know, report, we're feeling firsthand, but we're seeing reports of what's happening across the country, I think,

undeniably is going to result in the northeast, once again, being the breadbasket of the country. And the reality is, we need to be thinking about that before all the properties are sold off to build, you know, giant mansions, and, you know, et cetera, so, and housing, because we need in order to live in houses, you have to have food to eat, and we all, you know, the priority of having local food, and the importance of that local food to this nation. I'm just going to forecast is going to become exponentially more important year over year over year based on where we're headed.

I really appreciate this Resolution and I look forward to hearing from Legislator Nolan about the changes, and I do have some thoughts about it. I did have very big concern about this position, both the, the, some concerns about the salary, that it's not, but the bigger concerns about it reporting to ARPA. I want to hear about the thought behind it reporting to Economic Development rather than Planning, and I do want to say that I think, you know, again, following on Legislator Litts' point that we should be thinking about a, you know, an agriculture advisor or someone at the County level, potentially as a permanent position, which I know is not necessarily what ARPA set out to do. But I think, I think the crisis is that critical. On that note, I'm just gonna say, you know, before we get into the deep, into the detail, I, I absolutely support this level of funding, and potentially even more from ARPA, because, again, you know, it's been brought up a couple of times, the idea that I floated in terms of food security, about connecting the CSAs to food security. I think that could be on top of this project. I would support, I would support at this moment in time, I'd support funding to agriculture almost over any, any other, any other spend with the rest of the ARPA funds. But I just want to say that I do think that this still needs some work and some discussion, you know that two, 250 farms, direct aid to 250 farms at the level that's proposed is, you know, roughly \$3,000 a farm. I'm not sure that that's, that's going to have the biggest proverbial bang for the buck. Like I would want to hear, I would want to hear from farmers, similar to my comments in the last, you know, in the last resolutions, like, I want to get both the people who might be implementing this and the people who are the recipients of it to the table, because again, I'm not sure that there's the, the, the question of how do we get how do we get \$3,000 to 250 separate farms? And is that the, is that the smartest way to spend the money? So, it's not a question of the spend, I'm happy with the spend and I, and I'm also happy that we're having the conversation which we wouldn't be if Legislator Nolan didn't put this resolution in.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you. So, I saw Jake threw his hands up. So, I'm gonna have Jake speak and then Legislator Nolan, and then Legislator Greene, I see your hand as well.

**Jake Wedemeyer:** Yeah, what Chairwoman Bartels said about farmers that are renting land, they have to give up land, us at the district we call an ag feasibility. We're being more, we feel for these people. And it's really hard for them to get really good farmland at a good price. We've been assisting a lot of landowners, a lot of walk ins. They sit down next to me with mapping soils, looking at prices, trying to help them any way we can. And it is really saddening that people that want to farm in Ulster County can't afford to live here. On another note, what Chairwoman Bartels said was, this is turning into the breadbasket. And also, what Legislator Litts said is that, you know, input prices have gone up dramatically this year. But to add insult to injury, we're in a serious drought in Ulster County. At the last Water Quality Coordinating Committee meeting, Amanda from Planning showed us a drought map and it's really effect, affecting southern Ulster. I mean the corn, pumpkin, squash crops, they look horrendous. Second

cutting for hay, it's going to be non-existent. So that's another stressor to farmers. On a positive note, the Ulster County District Board of Directors approved us using our own funding, \$50,000, to assist farmers with cover crops. So, it's up to \$5,000 per farm. We can help out 50 farms. And that might not be enough because some of the growers are cover cropping over 400 acres. So, \$5,000 per farm, up to 5,000, is better than nothing. So, maybe the ARPA funding can be used to supplement our program. Thank you.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you, Legislator Nolan.

**Legislator Nolan:** Thank you. Do we want to get Legislator Greene's comment in as well? And then I respond to all of it, or shall I go ahead with what was that?

**Chairman Criswell:** Doesn't matter. If you would like to, Legislator Greene, please.

**Legislator Nolan:** Legislator Greene.

**Legislator Greene 48:31**

Yeah, I just came back from a week at the Ulster County Fair and it always deepens my appreciation for farming and the food security that it provides. One of our questions and people spun a wheel and they pick, you know, they got a number and then we asked them a question and they got a little prize, was what is agrovoltatics, or argrivoltatics? Sometimes I see it with an "i" or an "o". But, um, I just wanted to mention it now. Because I do think that it can, there can be a really good mixture of the marginal farmland that is open space being used for, for solar and providing direct income to the farm and I know that in Gardner, the New York State solar farm, their solar developer, and they're looking to implement agricultural-type projects. So, I just want to toss that in because I think, you know, to be able to add a source of income without covering prime farmland, but looking for those opportunities on more marginal land with, you know, rocky outcrops and so forth. And then I would like to, at some point, add to the agenda for a new business or old business rather, the discussion that I thought we were going to have again tonight, but I don't see it on the agenda.

**Chairman Criswell:** I was gonna have that, Legislator Greene. It didn't make it.

**Legislator Greene:** Thank you. I'll lower my hand and look forward to what Legislator Nolan has to say.

**Chairman Criswell:** All yours, Legislator Nolan.

**Legislator Nolan:** Thank you so much, Chair Criswell and everybody here. I mean, I think that this, kind of this conversation that we're having makes me feel really good about this resolution and this project as, as we have it now. Because what, what you're showing me here is, what we're experiencing is that there's about five or six different intersecting agendas, or areas of concern for farmers, including the photovoltaics, which was controversial enough with farmers and with the Soil and Water Conservation Board that we didn't build it in explicitly. But what we've tried to do is put together a program that addresses each of the major concerns at least in some way and puts in place a program manager who can ideally be intrapreneurial enough to look into

areas where there may be funding in the agricultural future, such as agrivoltaic, that the current structures don't accommodate, don't prioritize. So, in response to the, what, so let me go back to the original proposal. There is the direct subsidies that Chair Bartels is talking about. And we know that \$3,000, if we do have 250 Farms come in, is low, is not enough for any one farm. But many small farmers told us they wanted to be in and they needed something administratively simple. So, we tried to create something that they could come in and get something that would be, would at least connect them to the Soil and Water District in ways they may not have connected yet, and get them in with us and allow us to provide other technical assistance. In addition to that direct subsidy, we built in some additional monies to go to people who are in the system already but getting capped at \$5,000 on their cover cropping. When they may need 10,000 or \$15,000 or more, this program would allow them to come in and say, I'm already in the program, I'm already being monitored, Can I qualify for an additional subsidy? Again, very low administrative hurdles for people to get assistance. And then farmland conservation because in the face of the stressors that Legislator Litts is describing, we're having people putting fields fallow, and when they put them fallow, the next thing is to sell them off, because a fallow field doesn't have much value. And they're not selling them to a agrivoltaic company that would sell them to a developer, and if they go out of agricultural use, it's very difficult, basically impossible, to get it back in any scenario that we can currently envision. So, we built in nearly a third of the program to focus on getting more agricultural lands into easements and allowing people to do pre-emptive purchase rights so that they can retire if they want to, but retire leaving their farm as a farm for that future use. The program administrator, administrator that I envision and you know, we've talked with now prior Legislator Jim Delaune and I, as well as Jake Wedemeyer, the Executive Director of Soil and Water, have spoken with, I would say, 20 now nonprofit organizations, American Farmland Trust. We spoken with the Pace Law Clinic for Agriculture. Everybody wants to help us take this program and make it something good and use it as a model for how counties can provide better support to farms and farmers.

The idea of reporting to you, ARPA, I think was to try to get it moving. We wanted to start this as soon as possible. The request that we look at a different way of doing that we took very seriously. And right now, I don't, I'm looking towards generating something that will serve as a model for a permanent position in Ulster County. And if I felt like we could put that into this year's budget and get this thing going with a good intrapreneurial person, I would do it for this year. But I think that might be too, you know, it might be hard lift to do that. And I don't know where to put it yet because different people recommended to us different places. Ulster County Soil and Water Conservation District, Planning Department of Ulster County, or Cornell Cooperative. And in talking with people about the advantages and disadvantages of those three, I'm not prepared to say we know what this, where this program should go. Because each of those existing programs does a certain thing or things well, and yet, we've reached the point where we are in a crisis. So, we haven't plugged the gaps yet. And I wanted somebody to come in that could be a problem solver, and help us determine where the biggest gaps are, and where a future position would go. When the Office of Development was proposed, it seemed to me perfect, because many of our farms in Ulster County are small, they're small businesses, they need small business assistance many of them, and so we want to provide that as part of this program as well. Tim Weidemeyer is open to doing this with the idea that it would be transient for it to be there. Unless it turns out that's the great place for it to be. And with a steering committee from the Ulster County Legislature and those three other involved concern groups that I mentioned. So the

idea at this point is to get it up and running in the next couple of months before the end of the year, get these programs going, see how many people do come in for small subsidies or for improving their soil health, their cover cropping, their composting, instead of buying fertilizer, which is a high priced item right now. I want to move towards electric, didn't build it in explicitly into this but one of the things that would make that, we're working on in the job description is to try to get somebody who would be able to move more strongly into the green economy, aspects of agriculture in Ulster County. We do it on everything else, we should be doing it on this. And in talking with people in and about those three existing organizations, it wasn't clear, you know, that that would be a focus, at least right away. I didn't have a chance to talk with Amanda about this. So, I want to say that if I had had that conversation she might have, she might have sold me, and we could still consider that. But I just think it's better to start out not committed to one of those existing avenues and instead to see where the current flow, both of need and the funding on every opportunity. And it would allow us to go ahead and move forward instead of, you know, spending more months trying to make it perfect. And meanwhile not getting any aid to the farms and farmers. So, my request is that we move it out of out of this group tonight to scoring unless somebody can, you know, comes up with something that sounds great and changes your mind before the end of the meeting. But that's the idea I came into the meeting with is let's try this. Because it's, it's a good enough package, I think, to get us some of these answers and to get some real aid to some people that need it.

**Chairman Criswell:** Great. Thank you so much for your work on this and evolving the thinking. Chairwoman Bartels.

**Legislative Chair Bartels:** Thank you. Yes. And, and, and again, you know, I want to, I want to thank you for your work on it and for, you know, for the detail and for starting the conversation. I mean, I, I would feel, I think the conversation should be had, I know that not right now on this committee, with Amanda and Dennis and the Planning Department, and probably the whole Executive team to see, you know, where ultimately a position like this makes most sense to land because I'd rather have a sense of that rather than begin with Economic Development on the thought that it, you know, it may be a temporary space. I think we should, I think it's worth, I think it's worth some more time and some more conversation. And I don't know how much time that would take. But I certainly, I think I would argue it's worth it. I'm inclined to think that it's not Soil and Water, because I don't know long term about the county funding a position in the Soil and Water District, you know, directly. You know, the county gives a contribution to Soil and Water District and could, could commit to increasing its contribution, you know, consistently over time in order to fund a position. But I just, I think that we want it, my instinct is that it should be a county position and should live in the county and should be working in the county with all the departments that you're talking about that that potentially, you know, not only could be impacted, but could certainly assist the farming community in collaboration with Soil and Water, and Cornell, etc. I still do have concerns about the, you know, about \$3,000 per farm and whether not that's the best plan. And again, I'd want to hear from farms. I'd want to hear further from, from Soil and Water and from Cornell. Like, I'm not, I'm not sure that it isn't better to give more, and I would be very interested, I know, you've identified that there are 250 farms, I'd be very interested in two things and seeing the list of the farms because I'm sure it exists. And, and by that I'm curious, I assume when you say that the, the revenue is under 50,000, that that's the net not the gross of their income. But for example, you know, I know people who, who

have had their property identified as farmland, because someone hays it. You know, they have a very large home, they have a very large home with 15 acres, and someone hays their acreage so that they get an ag exemption. Do they qualify as a farm? Do they? Are they going to get \$3,000? I don't really, that's not who I'm trying to help. I see Jake nodding. And I'm not trying to be argumentative. I'm saying that, I really think we need to make sure not only that we're getting this direct assistance to the right people, but they're we're getting them assistance that's meaningful. That's not just buying, like when herb talks about the increase, it's not just buying a week or something, you know, I think we need to be making impactful change. And certainly if it would, if one of those 250 farms is my neighbor, who's, you know, who has their 15 acres hayed, they don't need \$3,000. So, you know, I just want to make, I just, I think we have to have all the conversations and again, I, I, I would be supportive of spending even more money. I'm not saying I don't support the idea of the project. I absolutely wouldn't be. I just want, I just want to make sure that we're really, we're, we're vetting it.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you. I had a thought while you were speaking Chairwoman Bartels, that we know that the ARPA monies, at some point, there's going to be sort of a shakeout of what we've spent, what hasn't been spent, and there's going to be some surplus that happens, we think at some point. I wonder if we could actually, I don't know if we need to officially do it, but we could as a committee sort of earmark an amount that could be sort of a second draw for this project. So give out the first \$3,000, you know, to the tune of 50 farms wherever and then see where the need is, and then see if we could use more ARPA money to supplement a second funding. You know, something like that could, could then, because then I think you'd have a better sense of, okay, this was really a drop in the bucket for this farm, but it really actually took care of this other farm and that seemed to work. So, I'm gonna say Legislator Nolan and then Jake.

**Legislator Nolan:** Thank you. So, we have had some many of the conversations that you're suggesting. I have talked with Planning Director Doyle, and he is willing, if that's what we all decide, that this position should report initially to Planning he's willing to do that, is what he had told me. Again, I didn't think on hearing the whole conversation with him and with others, that that was the best way to go. We have been reporting back to the Soil and Water Conservation District. We've been in good contact with them and will continue to be what is becoming apparent to me is that we do have lists of farms, but we're not in contact with those farms, all of them. And even the Soil and Water Conservation District is not directly in contact with them. So, some of this money, especially small amount, but Jake is shaking his head, he may have some contact, but they're not in our programs, they're not with them.

**Jake Wedemeyer:** Yeah, we are. We are.

**Legislator Nolan:** Well, that is not what you have reported to me previously. So, bring me that data, bring me that data and show me the 250 farms and the contact we're having with each one of them. Because I'm just not getting a consistent information on that. And this is one of the problems. So, if we don't have an email list, even that we can feel confident that we'll be able to get those 250 farms to know about this program. It, there's going to be some inequities in it, initially. But what we will get is if we find out that there's this 15-acres being paid, we can then have a, create a database, as we go along, that will have that information in it. And in the next

round, or where we're trying to do something else. Like we want to see how much haying is being done, we can have some information that we can really base the decision making on and I, that hasn't come to me on, in the detail and on the specifics that that you're asking about, Chair Bartels. I would love to have that. Part of the reason to do it this way is so that we get that. And then I think we can actually make recommendations for 2023 and 2024 that will be much more science based, much more grounded in data and have that conversations. What tends to happen is we don't get conversations with a lot of the farmers directly coming to the board at the Soil and Water Conservation District, because they're busy, they're farming. So, we get reports from isolated members. And we need to have a broader picture. The way you do that is you get those smaller farmers primarily involved more deeply, we do have a couple of representatives of small farms on the board, including Jake Wedemeyer, including Herb Litts, and a new younger woman who is on the board who has a small farm. So, we're getting that. But I'm watching this happen in slow motion, at the time that people are reporting to me crisis numbers and telling me they're putting hundreds of acres fallow. So, this initiative, proposes to jump in and start pulling things together for a bigger crisis management. And I liked the idea from Chair Criswell that we would be investing more either of ARPA funds, or I'm thinking Ulster County funding in the future. But right now, I wouldn't be able to tell you how to do it in a way that would be fair, and that would really achieve the benefits we're looking to achieve. The large farmers come to me, I've spoken with large farmers who say, please make sure this doesn't leave out large farmers. And then I've had small farmers come to me and say to me, please make sure this doesn't leave out small farmers. And I would just say, if somebody's got a better idea than this, then okay, you know, step up, and I'll just help you do it. But I don't think that's it. I think we've, we need to start doing something not doing more research and talking to more people about how to make it perfect.

**Chairman Criswell:** Legislator Nolan, can I ask you to fill us in a little bit more about the conversation you've had with Director Wiedemann, about placing this in Economic Development? Because you mentioned it briefly, but you didn't actually talk about how that conversation went down.

**Legislator Nolan:** Yeah. So, I approached him with this idea. And he initially was like, Well, why would it come here. And then I started talking about both the green initiative, and the fact that we, that small farmers are small businesses. And that the, you know, the \$3,000 has a little bit of an echo with the 25,000, which wasn't enough, but went to small businesses in Ulster County in now, I hope, two rounds. And he got very excited about it. And I'm not saying that it wouldn't end up in the Office of Development in the long term. It's just this very new idea for it to go there. But as we had that conversation, he got very excited. And then I went and talked to some of the other people including the Executive's office and the ARPA committee about that, and they started getting excited about that. So, I'll take a deep breath. I am excited by what I think came together to be something really good. I'm eager to get it going, obviously. But maybe, maybe there, if there's a way to do something better in a short period of time, let's spec that out of how that would be. And when you know, when we would see, you know, having a decision, and who we would bring into the conversation that hasn't yet been in the conversation. I mean, we've done a lot of outreach, I showed a slide in the initial presentation of a dozen groups that we wanted to talk to, we've talked with all of them, plus an additional half dozen or more. And the Pace Law Clinic was the most recent one, they want to do outreach seminars and webinars on a pro bono basis for the county. They can also do some pro bono legal work, although they can't

do all of the legal work that goes into putting easements into place. So, these are resources that are very close and very much available that need somebody who's comfortable in the realm of, you know, organizing those kinds of outreach efforts to step in into a level of where the person can actually help define the position to a certain extent.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you. Jake, I know you've had your hand up for a while. I'm calling you and then Chairwoman Bartels.

**Jake Wedemeyer:** Okay. So, I think, give me a call, any of you, what we do, you know, and we'll have a conversation anytime, we could have some coffee, whatever. But I think with the Board of Directors, it's hard for people to understand our programs. There's so many different acronyms. So, we, I think we have 298 or 299 farms that have participated in the Agricultural Environmental Management Program. And the thing is that I don't share that data because it's confidential by New York State law. We cannot get FOILED. It's a voluntary program. So, over the years, last twenty years working with the state funded program, we've worked with 298 farms. Some are in business, some are not some have retired, you know, some have died. But you know, over the years, that program is a tool to form relationships with farmers, if they have a problem, they come to us. And you know, so it's not like we're working with 298 farms all at once. Typically, there's like a rotation of about 15 to 18 farms at once. So that's what we're working with, with projects. We are sitting on income that we earned, that we're getting from the state, right, and the county Legislature is aware of that. We're putting that money to help out farms. So, it's called the Part C Mini Grant Program for Cover Crops. And so basically, that's where we're using our funding that we earned to help out Ulster County agriculture. And it's a simple program. It's a one-page application. We did that on purpose. And we're already getting applicants for that. That's one program. We do have some funds that we could use additional funds to help out farmers with board approval. Okay? So basically, we have a lot to offer. And another thing I want to say, I should really write notes. With Resolution 400, we're in full support of working with a new position, helping them. We do that with other agencies, Cornell especially, we have a partnership. There's a new Livestock Educator, and we help get, you know, refer them to farmers to help them out. So, we do a lot of different things. I don't want to pat us on the backs, but it's a partnership. It's the relationships between the farmers and the agencies. Right?

**Chairman Criswell:** Great. Thank you very much. Appreciate that. Chairwoman Bartels.

**Legislative Chair Bartels:** Thanks. So, in the proposal, the two, are the 250 farms that would receive this to be derived from the confidential list that Mr. Wedemeyer was talking about? No. Okay. So, where, where, who are the 250 farmers?

**Jake Wedemeyer:** So, one thing I want to say is that I recommended, so I'm a producer. So, that 15 acres I'll do, right, if it's a good standard. I'm one of those people in good conscience. I have a full-time job. I will not take that funding and I'm taking a hit making hay. Alright. What I did recommend is that, to vet out people that rely on farming solely as an income compared to part-time farmers like me, is that the IT-217 form and that's a tax rebate. So, if you make two thirds of your income from farming, you file that IT-217 form, right, with the Department of Taxation in New York State, you get a tax rebate. Another thing to, to determine, to gauge how much

philosophy farmer had between 2021 and 2022, is to compare the schedule EFS. That'd be a good way to vet out full-time farmers versus part time farmers, and also their actual loss.

**Legislative Chair Bartels:** Okay, so maybe, if I can just get an answer to the question first, and then yeah.

**Legislator Nolan:** Right. So, the fact that we don't have access to, by law, the list of all these farmers who could potentially benefit from us means we need to get a different outreach mechanism where that data is no longer closed, and so that we can really use it. So, the idea of making a direct subsidy available is partly to get people to walk in the door and sign up so now we're connected in a way that's not just through the programs where they're, they're going directly to Soil and Water. And Jake is quite right, we do anticipate having to have several different mechanisms to determine, but I, my original thought is that we would use the USDA census. And if they're actively farming and listed on the census, that they would qualify. And if they're a small farm less than 50,000, they don't have to show an income loss because even that paperwork can be burdensome to a small farm. If they're more than \$50,000 net income, then they would use one of the mechanisms that Jake was describing, a Schedule F, which is what they filed to show their economic, their income or loss to the federal government. I'm a little worried that many of these farmers will not bring us that info there. They're very private about it. Even members of our board that we approached to see if we could do a pilot, were not eager to give us that information. So, we will need to be, have some flexibility to determine if somebody has, has a loss. And they can demonstrate that through one of the other mechanisms. I think that if there's enough of a loss, then somebody, and somebody wants to have the assistance, they will come in the programs for soil health and cover cropping and pollinators will be much easier, they would just have to show either that they're already in a program or that they're willing to set up the program and have it documented, monitored in the ways that our current programs are. So, we've tried to make it extremely low burden in terms of the administration to get people in the door. Because we think that actually even Soil and Water District as it is set up right now has many more services available than many farmers know about and are taking advantage of. So, part of what this program does, it will be sending even more people to Soil and Water than are already, already connected with them.

**Jake Wedemeyer:** Okay, Travis is setting up a Facebook. Travis is setting up a Facebook page as well. So, we have a website that's kind of, it's okay. And then we're also setting up a Facebook page. And I have like a chain of texts, all the farmers that we know. I send them a text to keep them apprised and spread the word.

**Legislative Chair Bartels:** Okay, so, so can I do? Yes? Can we just, so I guess, you know, a couple thoughts. And to circle back to the position. First of all, I would feel much more comfortable if we had a sense of where it made the most sense for that position to land and stay and live because I think that's where we're making an investment in the future. And that's where I'd like to see this be something potentially that's longer term beyond the life of ARPA. So, that's the first thing. The second thing is, and I really need to think about it. But my observation is that three, well one, I'd like to know if somebody has a list of all the farms in the county and maybe Cornell, you know, maybe we need to reach out to Cornell and posing the question if there's no answer. Maybe, you know, if someone doesn't, then that's something we need to spend some

money on figuring out where all the AG is in, in the county, ranging from active farm so those are that are getting ag exemptions because they're paying the little farms, the big-time farmers, the part-time farms. If we, if there is no, that's, that's our first problem. If there is no database where that exists overall, then that's our first problem and we need to spend some money on that. But I would want to talk to Cornell as well and see if they have something that's not protected by the same thing, the same requirements that participation in the program that Jake is referring to, requires in terms of confidentiality. And then my, my third comment is that, again, I want to say that I feel that \$3,000 is too much money to offer just to get people through the door so that we can have them accounted for, but its potentially too little to offer to actually make, you know, meaningful and standing impact. You know, if there's a farm that needs \$30,000, for example, for a critical issue and that's going to be the make or break, I'd rather spend that then spend 3,000 on 10 farms to get them in the door and knowing that that may or may not have an impact. And it does, I do want to say, does very much concern me. I appreciate what Jake is saying in terms of haying. But it does very much concern me that by the, by the nature of what's required that people that are, people that have gotten ag exemptions on their, on their properties, in order to get the tax benefit and have their properties hayed would fall into being eligible for this, which I don't think is what we're meaning to capture, first and foremost.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you. Legislator Litts.

**Legislator Litts:** Okay. Chair Bartels, we don't have to spend money for those lists because they already exist. Anybody who farms in New York State is on a New York State Agricultural, Department of Agricultural list. There's also federal farmers that are on the federal farming list. I happen to be both New York state and federal. And that's your list of farmers. As far as the Ag exemption goes, every town has a list of who gets an ag exemption. And you can easily separate out the farmers from the people that are getting an exemption because they're haying their land because in order to qualify for an ag exemption, you have to either be a farmer yourself, or you have to be part of a farmers operation in order to qualify. And it's very explicit on the form. There's a back to check if you're part of another farmers operation and you have to list who that farmer is, you have to have a minimum of a five year lease on the property to the farmer. There's a bunch of requirements that the assessor has to check boxes off in order to give a person in ag exemption on their property. So, every town has that information. Not only do they know who they're giving an ag exemption to, but they also know the farmer that the operation is qualifying under. And, and, you know, I have land that that I lease from different people. And, I mean, I have several parcels up in the town Esopus. So, that assessor knows that Herb Litts is the farmer by which those people qualify for their ag exemption. So, that's very easy to get that information. You can go to every town assessor and they can separate that out. They not only can tell you what parcels are under there, the Ag exemption, but they can tell you the farmer that it's qualifying under, and that farmer doesn't obviously have to live in the town and they can live in two towns over. I, I cut hay in Dutchess County. Anyway, and that's federal land. I do federal land in Dutchess County. Anyway, so that information is readily available, you just need someone, an intern or somebody to contact the towns and, and also just call Ag and Markets up in Albany and they can send you a list of Ulster County's farmers. And you can go.

**Jake Wedemeyer:** We have it, we have it all on file.

**Legislator Litts:** Yes. And you can go to USDA, and they can give you the federal farms that are in Ulster County. And Jake has that, some of which Jake cannot give you because it's confidential information. But anyway, we don't have to pay somebody to create those lists. Those lists are already there. And in a matter of days you could get that information.

**Jake Wedemeyer:** Let me check with the State Soil and Water Conservation Committee to ascertain what we could provide or not.

**Chairman Criswell:** So, I'm going to, hang on, I'm going to take us to a 30,000 foot view right now. It's 6:30. And I'm fine with that. We're having this discussion, but we're way in the weeds right now. And so, what I want to figure out is, do we want to spend more time being in the weeds and trying to sort out these nitty gritty details or do we want to try and figure out is there another time that interested parties could meet to try and sort through some of this and, and try and work on, you know, if the Resolution needs to be tweaked more, the plan needs to be tutor? I'm just trying to figure out how to most efficiently use our time here right now. So, Legislator Sperry, I haven't heard from you.

**Legislator Sperry:** I just wanted to say, because I'm the Legislator on the Cornell board, I'd be happy to go to Cornell with specific questions if you guys want to funnel them to me and then I can speak with Jared or the Cornell board to get those answers to you guys.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you, because I do feel like there are some specific questions that really need to be thought out. And I'm just not sure what. I think we could just go round and round here tonight, and not moving forward. The questions that I'm hearing is, who is this person going to report to? That needs to be vetted. The question is, Is \$3,000 per farm enough? That that's clearly a question. Another one is, Do we have the right mechanisms to find the farms? It sounds like we're saying we do at this point. Are there any other glaring questions that, that? Yes, Chair, Legislator Bartels.

**Legislative Chair Bartels:** Well, it's a follow on to is 3,000 enough. Does every farm automatically get money?

**Legislator Levine:** Who qualifies, right?

**Legislative Chair Bartels:** Yeah, does every farm that qualifies automatically get money?

**Chairman Criswell:** So, it's really about, about amounts to farms, and what's the qualifying, and what's the amount? So, that really needs to get sorted. The other thing I wanted to bring into this was, so the ARPA team just went through a really good extensive process of vetting nonprofits, for funding. And I would suggest, working with the ARPA team to create some sort of mechanism. You know, it was a survey or some, something that that can be used, you know, as a criteria for who's getting it, what do they need to qualify, you know, because the nonprofits had to all provide, you know, their 501-C3, and they had to provide a little narrative of why they meet or whatever, I don't want to make this hard for the farmers. But I think we have to have some sort of consistent, you know, questionnaire or something that we're looking at. So, and I think it was a good process and not too burdensome for the nonprofits. I feel like this could be

even more simplified. So, Nate, I just wanted to get your quick thoughts on whether you thought that would be possible with your team.

**Director of Resilience Litwin:** Thank you, Chair. Yes, I do think it's possible. I guess I wanted to make a mention, mention that we do have a growing list of projects. But I think this is very important. And I'm, I'm glad to help and, and I do think we have the capacity to design at the right level, given the, the funding and, and all the input. I have been taking notes regarding how we find lists and all that is helpful to start pulling things together.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you. And a quick question to Legislator Nolan. Would you be willing to work with them?

**Legislator Nolan:** Yeah. I'd like to know when the next deadline we would need to hit in order to have this in front of the Legislature in September. And so, if we could move forward so that we potentially can get this scored in front of the Legislature for September? Because I think there are answers to all of these questions. I mean, at farm that is has less than \$50,000 in proceeds, those are people that are income qualifying for a lot of other kinds of assistance. And so, the idea that if we did have all 250 come forward, that some of those folks would not deserve that money just doesn't ring true to me. They all are income stressed, and they all are facing the drought and all these other circumstances. So, I think there's the answers to that. The question about, you know, bringing together all these lists and using the prior Small Business form is one of the reasons that the Office of Development and Tim Weidemann is desirable as a potential project, the person to report to, because he has done this for the other small businesses. So, I think there are answers that we can get. I'm certainly willing to work on. I'd love to go to Cornell Cooperative with Legislator Sperry. And there's, there's further outreach we can do with them. They're probably the ones that I've done the least connection with the so far on this. And if we could do a meeting, you know, those who have these concerns, to, to hash out a little bit more. I think at some point we have to fish or cut bait, you know, and I'm, you know, it's, if somebody has a better plan, I don't think it has to be this plan. But I think it has to be a plan that goes forward. And it needs to meet a minimum standard. I mean, we shouldn't just throw money wildly. But I don't think anybody could say that this proposal is throwing money wildly.

**Chairman Criswell:** I don't think, I don't think,

**Legislator Nolan:** It's definitely researched and its got support for what's in front of us.

**Chairman Criswell:** I don't think that's where it's at. I think it's just fine tuning these couple of questions. And if I can ask the Clerk to, could you tell us what it would take to get this on September docket? So, we have to score this, if the resolution has to be amended, we were going to vote on it as a committee, it has to get voted on in other committees. Is there something I'm missing here? And like, could you tell us what the backwards sort of timeframe would be for that?

**Fawn Tantillo:** Right. I know that. You there were some amendments that Amber also thought it would need to go through the other committees. I don't believe is passed any of the committees yet, has it?

**Chairman Criswell:** It has not.

**Fawn Tantillo:** So, it was so it was postponed in Economic Development. So, to be on September, it would have to pass all those committees. And they all had concerns. Economic Development had concerns about the position. I, I'm not sure what concerns were in,

**Legislator Nolan:** The same is here tonight, so I think they've been brought forward.

**Fawn Tantillo:** Okay, so.

**Chairman Criswell:** So, so I think what would have to happen is that there would have to be some sort of meeting of the minds to figure out those couple big issues that we just talked about. I don't know who would be doing that, with whom, but, but those would have to be sorted. And then it would have to be,

**Fawn Tantillo:** Amend the proposed.

**Chairman Criswell:** Yeah. Amended proposal would have to be revised a bit to, to then go to the scoring process for this committee, which would then go to the other committees for, for, for voting and scoring. So,

**Legislator Nolan:** So, might, correct me if I'm wrong, but my understanding is that nobody's really raised concerns with the resolution and the amount. It's the program that it would then be funded. So, I think the resolution, and Amber I think has seen that resolution and if she has needed revisions, I haven't heard from her about that. So, let's circle back on that. But I think we're talking about the program behind the resolution. And so, it's really the ARPA scoring timing. I would say that perhaps Chair Bartels and myself and maybe Legislator Litts, and Legislator Sperry if she wanted to be, and somebody from the ARPA team, and maybe also Chris Kelly from the Executive office that I've, I've worked been working with pretty closely. If the first five or six people could get together, and, you know, figure out how to fix this for us, tweak it, whatever needs to happen, I would be very grateful. I not invested in doing it this way because I think it's the only right way. I just want something strong to go forward.

**Chairman Criswell:** That sounds right to me. And let me tell you specifically what Amber's concerns were. The GL accounts were incorrect and it's set up as professional services, not as created as a personnel line in the, and that that would all need to be fixed.

**Legislator Nolan:** Well, if she could send that in writing, we can have the ARPA team look at that. Both the ARPA team and the Clerk's office have already seen it and signed off on it but I'm happy to revise it.

**Chairman Criswell:** Sounds good. Legislator Greene has been so patient. Legislator Greene. I'm gonna call on you and then Legislator Litts.

**Legislator Greene:** Just a small detail, but Legislator Litts mentioned that he has in Dutchess County, and I want to be sure that that this sort of subcommittee figures out where a farmer has multiple locations, how that's gonna be handled, and to be sure that the funding is going to farmers and Ulster County. It's just a small, but I, you know, it just got me thinking.

**Chairman Criswell:** That's great, thank you. And um, I would say let's put that in the criteria list and Legislator Litts.

**Legislator Litts:** Too many, too many buttons to push. I mean, I cut 13 farms. 10 of the 13 are in Ulster County. Three, its FDR, Valkill, and the Vanderbilt Federal Properties in Dutchess County. Anyway, you know, talking about moving this forward, and the Legislature approves many, many resolutions for paving, for all sorts of things, different contracts, that they don't even have amounts, and it just says that will exceed \$50,000. I think, I think this could move forward. I think we're all okay with the \$2 million. I think we're all okay on, on Ulster County farmers. I think these, these details can be worked out after this resolution passes. Just like a number of our resolution. For matter of fact, all of our capital projects, I mean, there are a maximum amount. And then a lot of those are reimbursed the type programs. So, the paperwork has to all add up at the end. But I think we could do the same thing with this resolution, as long as everyone thinks the \$2 million is what we should be doing. And set this up. And I mean, even, even our ARPA program to small businesses, CARES II, you know, the details of how that was all going to happen, were really on the back of an envelope when we passed the \$1 million to, you know, move that forward. So, I think a lot of this fine detailing can be done, you know, after we get through this process of basically what we're doing is appropriating the money, so we can appropriate the money and figure out how we're going to spend it after we appropriate.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you. My biggest concern, and the concern that came up in Economic Development is the reporting structure. So, I do feel like that has to get sorted before this moves forward. So that that's my big concern, is that that gets sorted. Thank you.  
Chairwoman Bartels.

**Legislative Chair Bartels:** Thank you, and I'm sorry, after this, I'm gonna have to run to pick up my daughter, but I, one, I definitely will commit to meeting with Legislator Nolan, and Legislator Sperry, and whomever else, Nate and Chris Kelly, and talking through this and we might want Dennis and / or Tim Weidemann, it depends on, you know, it depends on how much detail you want to get into on which aspects. And so, absolutely, I'll do that. And we can coordinate that however you want Legislator Nolan, um, but I'll make, I will absolutely make time available. I want to totally respectfully disagree with Legislator Litts, you know, the, the CARES funding was pretty thought out because there had been a whole CARES program that was well underway. And we just spent the previous resolution really talking to Amanda and Dennis, about how we didn't agree with the way that program was laid out. And we didn't move it forward because of that and as a result, the programming was changed to reflect what this committee and others in the Legislature wanted to see in terms of priorities, seeing the money go to direct aid. To just go to, if that were the case, you know, we could have gone through this full 34 million and just created buckets and just said, let's give two million to farming. Let's give, you know, two million to, to food insecurity. Let's give five million to housing. And just said you guys figure it out later. You know, like I think that the details are important. And you know, I

stress that I'm willing to support two million and even more to farming but I think we need to talk about what the program is. And I appreciate Legislator Nolan, the sense of frustration and urgency. I don't want to characterize you incorrectly, but you know, it's a process and it takes a little, it takes a little time. We're, you know, we're, we're going to get there. We're going to figure it out. But I do think some of these details need to be worked out.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you. Legislator Litts.

**Legislator Litts:** I mean, I, I agree with Tracey but also, we passed an ARPA Resolution to supply towns with up to, I forget what, it was \$50,000 or whatever matching funds for Water and Sewer and most of them didn't even have projects yet but the money is allocated to go to a town as long as they submit the paperwork and it gets approved and it moves forward. I don't see this being much different than, than that. But I agree. If we can iron out the administrative part, I think the other stuff just falls in place. Yep, I just like to see it move forward. That's all. Because the longer it waits, the more farmers are just more stressed.

**Chairman Criswell:** Oh, great. So, I'm gonna wrap this conversation up by saying Legislator Nolan, if you could reach out to those people who expressed interest in, in doing this next step, let's get those couple things straightened out that we talked to Legislator, Chairwoman Bartels, thank you. If we can get that rolling as quickly as possible, then we will get whatever adaptation then comes out of that. Hopefully, it will be a clear streamline reporting structure, new reporting structure. And if anything gets tweaked with the actual allocations of funds, you know, the \$3,000 or criteria around that whatever happens there. But let's get that then to the committee to be scored to then send out to the other committees so that they can score it so we can get this moving. Hopefully, we can get this on the September docket. That would be my goal. So, if I could just get you to like supercharge that meeting, get that set, done, push it through, get that decision made, and then get the word back to us. All right. Thank you for your patience on that. I appreciate that.

**Legislator Nolan:** Thank you, everybody.

**Chairman Criswell:** Yeah, you're welcome. Thank you. All right. So, a new business. I'm just going to quickly go through the some of the Legislative Priorities that we still have, kind of in the, in the ether for funding, is the community kitchens, the meat processing facility, a couple of workforce, those are in the food securities bucket. In the work force development program, programming, we've got the potential support of the film industry. We've also been talking a little bit about supporting nursing industry as well as EMTs. There's also some conversation still about funding for municipalities, which is like generators, some support with traffic issues. And then lastly is bus fare. And I want to tell you now that bus fare is now taken out of the mix. I had a conversation with Chris Kelly, and we're removing that from ARPA considerations, and that will be put more into the county bucket itself. And so good conversation, but it's not going to be in this committee anymore.

In terms of old business, there's the Main Streets program. So that did go out for scoring. Just in general, it got good scoring. The Goals and Mission it got a 67%, Equity Distribution of 74%, Community Impact 82%, which is quite a high score for that. Financial Management was 62%.

And it gave the grand total of 74.3%. One member of the committee wanted to wait to scoring till he actually saw the resolution itself. So, I am now pushing Tim to create that resolution so we can get that back as quickly as possible. But thank you all for, for getting those scores. And we'll have a further discussion about this and possibly even a vote at the next ARPA meeting.

I just want to give you a quick financial update and then Legislator Greene, I will call on you. So, we are at 8 million. What is left is \$8,644,655. If we were to fund everything that was on our docket tonight, the Parks Program, this Food Security and Access that we talked with Amanda LaValle about, and this Agricultural Crisis Relief, that would take us down to 4,300,000 roughly, so we'd start, we'd have about half of that left. So, Legislator Greene, thank you for your patience. I appreciate that. And I'm gonna give you the floor.

**Legislator Greene:** Yeah, we basically split the resolution that had to do with low-income energy retrofits and given that we are in a daily worsening climate emergency, building retrofits are critically important. The Council, The Climate Action Council, says that in New York 32% of the greenhouse gas emissions come from buildings. It's a little different, according to the Ulster County Climate Action Plan, transportation, I think is a little bit higher than buildings. But one is 32% and 28% and the other is more or less reverse. But the fact is that we really have to take seriously the benefits of energy retrofits in terms of less costs to low-income households and we need to have some real concrete examples so that when IRA or other funding becomes available, we'll be in a good position to capture that. So, that resolution was kind of split. It's not in half, it was a small fraction that went to Communities for Local Power, who have the highest regard, they are really working in so called disadvantaged communities, I like to say priority communities, with people that have incredible challenges when it comes to training and workforce development. And they have a cadre of contractors who really bend over backwards to work with people who are challenged, to get them trained and into the workforce. But I, as I said, last time, I think, what's missing, and what the full project, which has been scored and, you know, moved through a process, and I want to also say that it was my understanding that we were going to be putting a pause to look at everything you just mentioned, see how much was left, and prioritize that funding. But one of the two resolutions that had been through the process has already moved forward and is likely to pass. And that's the Resolution from Legislator Stewart about parks. And I just don't want for, I think it was 30,000 times three years for a, to help pay for a coordinator for Communities for Local Power and the good work they do. But I don't want the bricks and mortar to get lost. I want to see some real progress. And I don't know if Planning Director Doyle could speak to this but as much as I'd like to see these other excellent projects move forward, I don't want this to get stuck on a shelf and, and forgotten. I, and I think it needs to be addressed constructively. So.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you so much. And I definitely hear your, your concern for this. I think one of the issues that needs now, it needs a new resolution, because the other resolution is passed. We've moved beyond that at this point. So, this needs to sort of start again. And, you know, because it is no longer, there is no longer a resolution that's connected with this. So, Director Doyle, do you have any thoughts on how this could move forward? Can this, you know, become a new proposal, a revised proposal, pulling out the pieces that, you know, as Legislator Greene is saying, is basically split in half? We'd have to take that half and make it now a whole, and make it a new thing.

**Director of Planning Doyle:** So, the key the key piece that was missing was the, was a bricks and mortar piece. It was a \$500,000 ask, and we were going to use approximately \$100,000 of that for administrative expenses. So, so, there's, the numbers are still within, within working distance in terms of what we, in terms of what we proposed. The new resolution, if the committee believes that it's appropriate to submit one, the new resolution would basically go back and just basically say, now that you funded this position which can operate by itself, but we would, we would like to basically include the deep, deep energy dives with respect to some of the other rehabilitation work, housing rehabilitation work we're doing and to remind the committee, the county has an \$800,000 Community Development Block Grant that's running through the Planning Department that, that we could tap into, to use this, this funding. And the thought was that we would use this as, as Legislator Greene indicated, we would use this sort of as a pilot. There are other models out there that, if this works, there are other models out there that effectively we can also begin to look at. And what we're trying to do is get a representative sample in terms of what it costs to do deep energy retrofits. That representative, versus what it saves. And that representative sample then could then bring us to bring in the private sector to fund that, the deep energy retrofits on the basis, the fact that the low and moderate income people save more than they're, they're going to spend in terms of, in terms of their, their cost to service alone. They'll save that money and energy. But I would, I would, I just be aware that that's the case, that and I'm more than willing to submit a new resolution, if the committee believes it would be worthwhile.

**Chairman Criswell:** I actually think that's the only way that it's going to actually really get on and get, you know, real consideration at each meeting. So, if, if you would be willing to do that with whatever backup, then we can submit that to committee. I would probably want to go through another re-scoring process,

**Director of Planning Doyle:** Sure.

**Chairman Criswell:** ...since it will be a new resolution. But I do think that that would be the way to move things forward. So, thank you for that.

**Director of Planning Doyle:** And so, if I may just take a little bit more of the committee's time. And my apologies, this was, these are sort of pressing problems. And one of them has to do with the discussion that you had with regard to farming. And, and both Legislator Nolan and Legislator Litts mentioned that, and that is the drought. It is significant. We're asking, or we're starting an internal discussion to what we can do about the drought, particularly burn bans and those kinds of things and saving water grants. The City of Kingston has some real issues relative to its water supply system because of the work that they're doing on, on, on the dam and they've instituted drought restrictions. So, the Legislature should be aware and cognizant that this drought situation is, is, is very significant. The other thing I just want to put in your mind is in addition to the cost of farmers with respect to fuel, were coming out, as we come into the heating system, the fuel prices don't go down, I want everybody to remember there's something called a HEAP program, which is, which is a Housing Energy Assistance Program for your, for your low and moderate income people that is typically underfunded in a good year. And the kinds of numbers that you're starting to see for fuel oil this year, and for, and for LP, and for LP gas, we

may want to think about what we have to do in terms of that program. Otherwise, we may have a lot of very cold people in the wintertime unless we start to think about how that's going to work. And the administration has started some internal discussion about that as well.

**Chairman Criswell:** Thank you for bringing that up. And I think that that's obviously a greater conversation than the ARPA committee. That's a full Legislature conversation, which I hope we can have. So, excellent. Um, I think that's all that I had for old and new businesses or anything that anybody else has for old or new business. Since you're here, Legislator Litts, could you make a motion to adjourn? Are you allowed to do it? Wait, you're not a committee member. Can a Committee member make a motion to adjourn? I just like the way you say.

**Legislator Levine:** I'll make it in honor of both Legislators Litts and Corcoran and I will make the motion to adjourn, Mr. Chairman.

**Legislator Litts:** Thank you.

**Chairman Criswell:** Can we thank our guest Clerk for tonight? Thank you, Fawn. Appreciate it. And, do we have a second? Legislator Sperry, I think.

**Legislator Sperry:** Second.

**Chairman Criswell:** Alright. All in favor. Thank you so much. Thanks for your attention and have a great evening.

**Legislator Litts:** Everybody stay safe and stay healthy. Take care

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**Time:** 7:00 PM

**Respectfully submitted:** Amber Feaster  
**Minutes Approved:** August 31, 2022