

**Economic Development, Planning, Education, Employment,
Arts and Agriculture Committee
Meeting Minutes**

DATE & TIME: February 1, 2022 – 6:30 PM or (or immediately following Public Works, Capital Projects and Transportation Committee)
LOCATION: Powered by Zoom Meeting by Dialing (646) 558-8656, Meeting ID: 82357080963
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chairman Brian Cahill
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Fawn Tantillo
PRESENT: Legislators Herbert Litts, III, Thomas Corcoran, Peter Criswell, Chris Hewitt, Joseph Maloney, Megan Sperry and Legislative Chair Tracey Bartels
ABSENT: None
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Legislators Kathy Nolan, Laura Petit and Phil Erner; Deputy County Executives Marc Rider and Chris Kelly; Alicia De Marco, Comptroller’s Office; Dennis Doyle, Director of Planning; Tim Weidemann, Director of Economic Development; Sharon Williams, Office of Employment and Training; Nathan Litwin, Director of Recovery & Resilience, Dept. of Finance; Jaren Bruno, UC Cornell Cooperative Extension; Michael Baden, Supervisor, Town of Rochester; Steve Rice; Eric Gullicham; Pamela Murray; Shelly Turk; Tom Smiley and Barbara Stirewalt, Mohonk Mountain House.

Chairman Cahill called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM and asked Legislator Litts to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. He welcomed attendees to the meeting and asked the members of the committee to introduce themselves.

Motion No. 1: Moved to **APPROVE** the Minutes & Transcript of Legislative Programs, Education & Community Services from November 30, 2021

Motion Made By: Legislator Criswell
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Corcoran

Discussion: None.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Litts, Corcoran, Criswell, Hewitt, Maloney, Sperry, and Bartels
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 8
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Minutes & Transcript **APPROVED**

Motion No. 2: Moved to **APPROVE** the Minutes & Transcript of Economic Development, Tourism, Housing, Planning and Transit of November 30, 2021

Motion Made By: Legislator Criswell
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Corcoran

Discussion: None.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Litts, Corcoran, Criswell, Hewitt, Maloney, Sperry and Bartels
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 8
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Minutes & Transcript APPROVED**

Presentation – Department of Economic Development

Director Tim Weidemann presented information regarding CARES Small Business Funding. Chairman Cahill opened the floor to questions and comments. The committee discussed the struggle to balance decisions for ARP funding, administrative costs and how to measure the success of the program. (See transcript)

Resolutions for the February 15, 2022, Session of the Legislature

Resolution No. 11: Requesting Enactment Of A Senate Bill And Assembly Bill In The New York State Legislature For A Special Law In Relation To The Hotel And Motel Room Occupancy Tax Rates In Ulster County

Resolution Summary: This resolution requests that the New York State Legislature enact legislation amending New York State Tax Law Section 1202-1, increasing the Hotel & Motel Occupancy Tax rate for hotels and motels up to six percent (6%) and short-term rentals up to ten (10%) percent.

Motion No. 3: **Motion to DISCUSS Resolution No. 11**
Motion By: Legislator Criswell
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Corcoran

Discussion: See attached transcript

Motion No. 4: **Motion to POSTPONE Resolution No. 11 with sponsor's approval**
Motion By: Legislator Maloney
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Corcoran

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Litts, Corcoran, Criswell, Hewitt, Maloney, Sperry, and Bartels
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 8
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution POSTPONED with sponsor's approval**

Resolution No. 20 - Appointing And Reappointing Members To The Soil And Water Conservation District Board

Resolution Summary: This resolution will appoint James Delaune as a Member-at-large and Leonard Tantillo as a representative of the Farm Bureau from the present through December 31, 2024.

Motion No. 5: **Motion to APPROVE Resolution No. 20**
Motion By: Legislator Criswell
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Litts

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Litts, Corcoran, Criswell, Hewitt, Maloney, Sperry, and Bartels
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 8
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolutions ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 21: Appointing And Reappointing Legislative Members To The Soil And Water Conservation District Board

Resolution Summary: This resolution will appoint Legislators Herbert Litts, III and Kathy Nolan to from the present through December 31, 2022.

Motion No. 6: **Motion to APPROVE Resolution No. 21**
Motion By: Legislator Corcoran
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Criswell

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Litts, Corcoran, Criswell, Hewitt, Maloney, Sperry and Bartels
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 8
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolutions ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 22: Confirming The Appointment Of Sharon Williams As Director Of Employment And Training

Resolution Summary: This resolution will confirm the County Executive’s appointment of Sharon Williams as Director Of Employment And Training

Motion No. 7: **Motion to APPROVE Resolution No. 22**
Motion By: Legislator Corcoran
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Criswell

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Litts, Corcoran, Criswell, Hewitt, Maloney, Sperry, and Bartels
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 8
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolutions ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 29: Funding Capital Project No. 601 – ARP Small Business And Economic Recovery – Department Of Finance

Resolution Summary: This resolution will approve an amendment to the 2022 Ulster County Capital Fund by adding \$1,000,000 for funding of Round 2 of the “Ulster County Cares Small Business Assistance Program;”

Motion No. 8: **Motion to DISCUSS Resolution No. 29**
Motion By: Legislator Criswell
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Corcoran

Discussion: See attached transcript

Motion No. 9: **Motion to POSTPONE Resolution No. 29**
Motion By: Legislator Maloney
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Criswell

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Criswell, Maloney, Sperry, and Bartels
Voting Against: Legislators Cahill, Litts, Corcoran and Hewitt
Votes in Favor: 4
Votes Against: 4
Disposition: **Motion FAILED**

Motion No. 10 **Motion to APPROVE Resolution No. 29**
Motion By: Legislator Corcoran
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Litts

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Litts, Corcoran
Voting Against: Legislators Criswell, Hewitt, Maloney, Sperry, and Bartels
Votes in Favor: 3
Votes Against: 5
Disposition: **Motion FAILED**

Motion No. 11 **Motion to RECONSIDER and POSTPONE Resolution No. 29**
Motion By: Legislator Maloney
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Cahill

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Criswell, Hewitt, Maloney, Sperry, and Bartels
Voting Against: Legislators Litts and Corcoran
Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 2
Disposition: **Resolution POSTPONED**

Resolution No. 32: Approving The Execution Of A Contract For \$1,000,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Ulster County Economic Development Alliance, Inc. – Department Of Finance

Resolution Summary: This resolution approves a contract with Ulster County Economic Development Alliance, Inc. for \$1,000,000 for professional oversight of American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”) of 2021 and program delivery and administration for the Ulster County Cares II Small Business Assistance Program.

Disposition: NO ACTION TAKEN

Resolution No. 60: Appointing Member And Alternate Member To The Ulster County Planning Board – Town Of Saugerties

Resolution Summary: This resolution will appoint Joseph Ferraro as a member and Steve Hubbard as an alternate to the Planning Board representing the Town of Saugerties for a term from the present thru December 31, 2025.

Motion No. 12: Motion to APPROVE Resolution No. 60

Motion By: Legislator Corcoran

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Litts

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Litts, Corcoran, Criswell, Hewitt, Maloney, Sperry, and Bartels

Voting Against: None

Votes in Favor: 8

Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Resolution ADOPTED

Resolution No. 61: Authorizing Submittal Of A Grant Application For Funding To The New York State Department Of Agriculture And Markets To Develop An Agricultural And Farmland Protection Plan For Ulster County – Department Of Planning

Resolution Summary: This resolution authorizes submittal of a grant application to update the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan for Ulster County and the County Executive or the County Executive’s designee to submit letters, certifications, and other materials needed to satisfy the requirements of the grant application.

Motion No. 13: Motion to APPROVE Resolution No. 61

Motion By: Legislator Litts

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Cahill

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Litts, Corcoran, Criswell, Hewitt, Maloney, Sperry, and Bartels

Voting Against: None

Votes in Favor: 8

Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Resolution ADOPTED

Resolution No. 62: Authorizing The Ulster County Executive To Execute A Contract With The New York State Housing Trust Fund Corporation Represented By The Office Of Community Renewal, For Federal Funding For The Implementation Of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Homeownership Program – Amending The 2022 Ulster County Budget - Department Of Planning

Resolution Summary: This resolution authorizes the County Executive to execute an agreement (NYS Contract #1160HR306-21) and any amendments thereto, with the New York State Housing Trust Fund Corporation, in the amount of \$800,000.00, in the form as filed with the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature, or as modified with the approval of the County Attorney and the County Director of Planning to act as certifying officer including the filing of any certifications necessary for the purposes of implementing this award.

Motion No. 14: **Motion to DISCUSS Resolution No. 62**

Motion By: Legislator Corcoran

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Maloney

Discussion: See attached transcript

Motion No. 15: **Motion to AMMEND the title of Resolution No. 62 by removing the word “Homeownership”**

Motion By: Legislator Litts

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Corcoran

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Litts, Corcoran, Criswell, Hewitt, Maloney and Sperry

Voting Against: None

Votes in Favor: 7

Votes Against: 0

Disposition: **Amendment ADOPTED**

Voting on the Resolution AS AMENDED

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Litts, Corcoran, Criswell, Hewitt, Maloney, Sperry, and Bartels

Voting Against: None

Votes in Favor: 8

Votes Against: 0

Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED AS AMENDED**

Resolution No. 63: Approving The Execution Of A Contract For \$800,000.00 Entered Into By The County – RUPCO – Department Of Planning

Resolution Summary: This resolution approves an contract with RUPCO (Rural Ulster Preservation Company) to administer the 2021 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Housing Rehabilitation Program for \$800,000.

Motion No. 16: **Motion to APPROVE Resolution No. 63**

Motion By: Legislator Corcoran

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Litts

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Litts, Corcoran, Criswell, Hewitt, Maloney, Sperry, and Bartels

Voting Against: None

Votes in Favor: 8

Votes Against: 0

Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 64: Authorizing The Ulster County Executive To Designate Nick Hvozda As Environmental Records Review Certifying Officer For Small Business Assistance Programs Funded By New York State Homes And Community Renewal's Community Development Block Grant Program

Resolution Summary: This resolution appoints Nick Hvozda as the Certifying Officer for Environmental Records Review, including the filing of any certifications necessary for the purposes of implementing New York State Homes and Community Renewal's (HCR) Community Development Block Grant Program that was awarded \$1,095,558.00 in funding during calendar year 2021 to conduct two economic development assistance programs (CDBG CARES and CDBG Small Business Assistance) to assist small businesses in creating and retaining jobs that can be filled by income eligible individuals

Motion No. 17: **Motion to APPROVE Resolution No. 64**
Motion By: Legislator Criswell
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Corcoran

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Litts, Corcoran, Criswell, Hewitt, Maloney, Sperry, and Bartels
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 8
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Old Business

New Business – Chairman Cahill announced that the committee will be doing interviews for appointments/reappointments to the Industrial Development Board (IDA) in the near future. He asked if members of the committee were interested in taking a leadership role in organizing these interviews. Legislators Criswell and Maloney both expressed interest. (See transcript)

Public Comment

Chairman Cahill opened the floor to legislators, officials and those in attendance for public comment.

- Town of Rochester Supervisor Michael Baden discussed the ongoing work of the Planning Board to address housing needs.
- Tom Smiley and Barbara Stirewalt of Mohonk Mountain House discussed the impacts of room tax on their business and industry.

Chairman Cahill asked if there was any other business, and hearing none;

Adjournment

Motion Made By: Legislator Litts
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Hewitt
No. of Votes in Favor: 7

No. of Votes Against: 0

Time: 9:40 PM

Respectfully submitted by: Fawn Tantillo

Minutes Approved: March 1, 2022

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Arts and Agriculture Committee
Meeting Minutes**

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PRESIDING OFFICER: Chair Brian Cahill

LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Fawn Tantillo

PRESENT: Legislators Herbert Litts, III, Thomas Corcoran, Peter Criswell, Chris Hewitt, Joseph Maloney, Megan Sperry and Legislative Chair Tracey Bartels

ABSENT: None

QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Legislators Phil Erner, Kathy Nolan, and Laura Petit; Deputy County Executives Marc Rider and Chris Kelly; Alicia De Marco, Comptroller's Office; Dennis Doyle, Director of Planning; Tim Weidemann, Director of Economic Development; Sharon Williams, Office of Employment and Training; Nathan Litwin, Director of Recovery & Resilience, Dept. of Finance; Jaren Bruno, UC Cornell Cooperative Extension; Michael Baden, Supervisor, Town of Rochester; Steve Rice; Eric Gullicham; Pamela Murray; Shelly Turk; Tom Smiley and Barbara Stirewalt, Mohonk Mountain House.

Fawn Tantillo

All right, I appreciate everyone's patience. Mr. Chairman, the meeting is yours.

Chair Cahill

Thank you very much, Clerk Tantillo. I just want to say thank you, everyone, for your patience waiting so long. We're about an hour long. We should have started. I just want to take a couple minutes before we call the meeting to order to introduce the legislators on this committee. We have some new legislators and some returning legislators. So, I'll start with myself. I'm chairing this committee for the second year. And this is a reformation of this committee that now includes a couple of other areas that were in other committees previously. This is my fourth term in the legislature, non-consecutive. And I'm looking forward to a very good term here. So, I'm just going to go with how I see these guys on, on zoom here. So going to Legislator Corcoran, if you don't mind.

Legislator Corcoran

Yes, it's a, it's an honor to be back on the committee and working with you, Brian, with Herb and Peter. And welcome to new committee members. I look forward to working with you guys. Thanks for having me back.

Chairman Cahill

Then, I'm gonna ask you, if you are not speaking to put yourself on mute.

Legislator Litts

If he can mute, that'd be awesome. Okay. Did you call me Brian?

Chair Cahill

I did. Thanks.

Legislator Litts

Legislator Litts, District nine, Western Lloyd, Eastern Plattekill. Happy to be here. I really enjoy being on this committee. I think we do really good work and just can't wait to get started on this term.

Chair Cahill

Thanks, Legislator Litts. Legislator Maloney.

Legislator Maloney

I'm Joe Maloney, District 2. I think it's my second go round on Economic Development.

Chair Cahill

Thank you. Legislator Criswell.

Legislator Criswell

Peter Criswell, District seven, which is a portion of the City of Kingston, this is my second term is a legislator. Looking forward to work on with this committee. Thank you.

Chair Cahill

Legislator Hewitt.

Legislator Hewitt

Good evening, everyone. I represent district 21 towns of Rochester and worsening. I have a background in economic development and keeping money local and I'm excited to join you all.

Chair Cahill

Thank you. And last but not least, Legislator Sperry.

Legislator Megan Sperry

Good evening, everybody. I'm Legislator Sperry, District 17, which is Town of Esopus, a little bit of the Town of Esopus, and the Town of New Paltz, and my previous experience with economic development was in the Town of Rosendale, as the Chair of the Economic Development Commission.

Chair Cahill

Thank you. And then before we get the meetings for the those folks who are going to be giving feedback or information to the rest of the committee and the guests that we have, because we do have quite a few guests, there's 30 people on this call. I just ask that you identify what department you're from or who you represent prior to going forward. We have new legislators, new term, and I just want to make sure that everybody knows who's talking and what, who they represent. Okay, so with that, I'll call the meeting to order and I'll ask Legislator Litts to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Cahill

Legislator Litts is muted.

Chair Cahill

Here Yeah, is that better?

Chair Cahill

That's better.

Legislator Herbert Litts, III

I pledge allegiance to the flag, of the United United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with Liberty, liberty and justice for all.

Chair Cahill

Thank you. So we have a little bit of an unusual situation with the meeting minutes for this committee since there was to two other, there was another committee that had minutes that have now come into this committee, so we have to approve them. And I think we have some of the members from that, the November 30 Committee meeting for it was the Legislative Programs, Education and Community Service Committee. So we'll need those minutes approved through this committee. And I believe we do have a couple of people on our committee who were there on that committee. Anyway, at least one: Legislator Criswell. So I'll accept a motion to accept those minutes as submitted.

Legislator Criswell

I'll make that motion.

Chair Cahill

And a second?

Legislator Corcoran

I'll second it.

Chair Cahill

Okay. All those in favor?

Committee Members

Aye.

Chair Cahill

All right. Are there any opposed? Any abstentions? Thank you.

Fawn Tantillo

Mr. Chairman, it is hard for me to see the votes. So if you could just, um, if anybody votes no, just let me know or anyone abstains.

Chair Cahill

Right. So what we're going to do, Clerk Tantillo, from here on in, is we're going to ask for approvals, No votes and abstention. So we'll have, you know, a record of all three for each vote. That's something that the Chair asked us to do. So we're going to go ahead and do that for our committee meetings.

Chair Cahill

So the second one is going to be approval of minutes and transcript of Economic Development, Tourism, Housing, Planning and Transit, November 30, 2021, I'll accept a motion to approve as submitted.

Legislator Corcoran

I'll make the motion. Corcoran.

Chair Cahill

Second, anyone?

Legislator Herbert Litts, III

I'll second it.

Chair Cahill

Litts, okay. All those in favor?

Committee Members

Aye.

Chair Cahill

All those opposed? No Opposed?

Chair Cahill

And are there any abstentions? No abstentions? Thank you very much.

Chair Cahill

So tonight, we have a presentation from the Director of Economic Development. Tim Wiemann. And Tim is gonna walk us through, I guess, the CARES activities that what you're going to give us okay, thanks. The second round of the CARES Act, Grant said they, you see, is presenting. So leave it to Tim. And I think you're gonna want to share screen, Tim, at some point?

Director Weidemann

Yeah, I would appreciate that. I'll go through a quick slide deck. But first, let me thank you, Mr. Chairman, for inviting me and members of the committee eager to continue a conversation with you in future meetings. I'm usually in attendance and happy to answer questions and happy to provide updates on our work, which as you can imagine, is kind of all encompassing lots of different things in the hopper. So today, I'd like to share a little update on our Ulster County CARES Small Business Assistance Program, which was a program funded with state funding to help businesses adapt to recover from the pandemic. We are looking for an allocation as the resolutions on your agenda tonight indicate of additional funds out of our ARPA funding to continue that program as we've

exhausted the funds that we've received from the state so far. And you know, maybe as a placeholder, I'll just mention that we're also working on a number of other projects, one that I think I'd love to share at a future time Cresco Labs, a cannabis company that's looking at a site in Ellenville, which we're working through with the local officials, conversations about the site that they've chosen and the process that they're going through to get Planning Board approvals, and look forward to future conversations on that as well. So I'm going to share my

Chair Cahill

Yep. So Tim, I don't know if you want to accept questions during the presentation, or do you want to wait till afterward, you can jot them down with him later, it's up to you guys how you want to proceed? I'll leave it up to you, Tim.

Director Weidemann

Yeah, I appreciate I'll be really quick on the presentation. And that way, I can actually shift gears and take notes if there are questions. Following so it's, for many of the committee members to who were in attendance when we presented this at the ARPA committee meeting last week. This is a brief recap. So I'll do it fairly quickly. And if anybody wasn't in attendance at that meeting, and would like to go deeper on anything, I'll let you raise the questions and then I'll go deeper.

Director Weidemann

So again, we have a program that's pre existing the Ulster County care Small Business Assistance Program that's geared towards providing assistance to our low income small businesses again as they pivot From and recover from the pandemic. You know, I think the thing we all know to be true. All Ulster County businesses all Ulster County residents have absolutely been affected by the pandemic, I had a conversation with legislature, legislator Hewitt, who pointed out that some of them have been affected in different ways. Some have been negatively affected categorically, they've had to close their business for some period of time, or they've had to lay off people, or they've seen supply chain issues, other challenges, some have actually thrived during the pandemic as a nature as a result of the nature of their business operation, maybe catering to remote audience, maybe tourism industries that over the course of even the pandemic, we saw a bump up in spending locally. So many have suffered, many have benefited from the situation, but all of them have been affected.

Director Weidemann

And in particular, we know that our low income business owners and their employees have been disproportionately affected, partly because of some of the challenges that they face. Even before the pandemic lack of access to flexible capital, there may be impaired credit history, previous financial distress either in their household or in their business, smaller profit margins, and then lack of access to some of the education and training programs that larger businesses might have access to.

Director Weidemann

And as a reminder, Ulster County really is a county of small businesses, about 95% of our businesses in Ulster County have fewer than 25 employees. And as well, you know, it's worth mentioning this kind of term, low income that I'll throw around. And this is based on Housing and Urban Development, US Housing and Urban Development definitions of low to moderate income households. And we have a sizable portion of those as well. 40% of our total population is residing in low income, lower moderate income households.

Director Weidemann

So we had a program that are awarded up to \$35,000. For businesses that created or restored more one or more full time equivalent job. This was funded through a grant from the state, which was state funding received from the feds, through the CARES Act, one of those first stimulus acts that came about during the pandemic, it was meant to spur innovation and adaptation to the new reality of COVID. And life under COVID, provided up to 100% reimbursement of eligible costs, and was different from some of the other programs that were out there being hyperlocal income qualifying and able to cover 100% of the cost that a business had. We put out a request for submissions, that kind of pre application back in October, we immediately saw strong demand, we've so far received 335 pre applications, we have about 178, it's actually crept up slightly around 180 applications that are in Process Pending final submission, we've got about 130 that are final applications that have been submitted. Some of those, you know, are part of this initial bucket of awards that we've made 29 of those that we've committed funds to so far, we have two that are pending funding, but ultimately will be included in that total. Oops.

Director Weidemann

So from a dollar standpoint, we were awarded originally \$850,000 plus \$150,000, for administration and program delivery. As you can see, we've already committed more than that, initially 250,000, we've received approval from our state funders, to move some of the program delivery budget into direct assistance. So we actually have 950,000. And with the two pending applications, we expect to be right at \$950,000 of committed and awarded funds. So again, we've exhausted this initial funding that we received from the state. So far in the full applications that are awaiting funding, we already have about \$440,000 worth of requests in the kind of long queue that is, you know, many of them are likely to be never never complete a full application. But just the demand out there, that's indicated by the pre submissions, suggests another \$5.5 million in overall projects.

Director Weidemann

So what we're proposing with the ARP funds is to continue this program. This program is designed under strict requirements from the state under their community development block grant program, again, targeting low to moderate income households and business owners. And we're suggesting that we follow those same guidelines, which are more restrictive, honestly, than the ARPA guidelines, but really do target the businesses that have been most severely impacted and have the biggest challenges in adapting to the COVID pandemic, by allocating a million dollars out of the American Rescue Plan funds. And there are resolutions in tonight's agenda that affect that. This would enable us to basically double the number of businesses that we've been able to support from about 30. Now to about 30 more.

Director Weidemann

And what we intend to do next, if that is awarded, we feel we have a competitive advantage to go back to the state for an additional allocation out of the state's CARES funds. We discussed this with the Office of Community Renewal, which is the agency at the state level that awards these funds. And they believe that if we can demonstrate that there's a match and that we've started to expand those funds that would be eligible to reapply for additional CDBG CARES funding, which means we could have a third round of this to support another 30 businesses depending on demand and need. Again, as indicated by the initial submissions, we think there is that need out there.

Director Weidemann

In the end, this would mean, you know, over 100 businesses around 100 businesses that can be supported, saving or retaining or creating more than 300 jobs in Ulster County, and really, in some of those micro enterprises that often just are too small to take advantage of the programs that we offer an economic development. So a target audience that I think is in need, and ultimately is often underserved by some of the larger economic development programs. This would be proposed as a contract to implement the program. Through UCEDA, which is the current arrangement for the initial funding we received from the state. That was a county application County was awarded fundings and entered into an agreement with UCEDA to implement the program, we would propose to continue that arrangement with additional funding. And if this is moved forward by the legislature in their February session, we expect that by late February, early March, we could start making these commitments.

Director Weidemann

We have some questions from the ARPA committee that I believe by tomorrow, we'll be able to submit a response there was questions about the geography of the awards so far. And as well questions about the application form itself. And we have a copy of that application form that we'll be sharing, and Chairman Cahill, if you'd like I can also send that to you for you to share it with the members of your committee. Thank you for the time.

Chair Cahill

Thank you very much. I appreciate that. Tim, thank you. So I'm just want to I'm gonna have a little trouble with so many people in the meeting. But I do see that legislator Maloney has a question. But before we start, I just want to let everyone know that the way I am going to run this committee will be the legislators on this committee will have first crack at all questions. Legislator Nolan, could you please mute your microphone? The legislators on this committee will have first crack at questions. And we'll go to other elected officials who are on the call, and then we'll go to everybody else. So right now we're going to go to Joe Maloney. Thanks, Joe.

Legislator Maloney

Thanks, I got a couple of questions I may come back later with. I saw 180. So there was 330. It was quick. So I didn't jot down the exact, but about 330 people initially applied without a full load an initial application, but about 180 people actually applied.

Director Weidemann

So I can clarify, let me just bring my slide back up. So we had 335 Pre applications, I'm bringing my screen back up here and I'll share these numbers. The pre application is really intended to weed out ineligible applicants. So for instance, not for profits are ineligible for these funds. Businesses outside of Ulster County are ineligible for these funds. And so we have a simple pre application tool that basically weaves out those ineligible applicants, 335 people have submitted that pre application form. And then those that are eligible, if they're a for profit business, and they're in Ulster County, then they get sent the full application, which again, I will share through the chair. And we've got 178 folks who have started that application 132 have completed it. That's what those numbers are indicating.

Legislator Maloney

So we could have upwards of 150 or more businesses that are actually fit the criteria.

Director Weidemann

That's correct.

Legislator Maloney

So out of those 150, you then choose the best one, what I'm wondering is out of a, and we're just trusting that we're choosing the best, it's a lot of discretion. But there's probably these are. I know, I've started to ask. I mean, I own a small business, and I would only know about this as a legislator. But I've started to talk to people around Saugerties, not a lot of them, not a lot of people know, but I bet you a lot of them would be eligible. So we could be talking about 500 businesses being eligible. I mean, we just get to a point of I mean, I'm just asking, like, is this the job of government? And is this what we want to be doing with our funds? It makes me uncomfortable. We do have payroll protection. We do have Emergency Relief Loans. There are a lot of other things out there for this. You're talking about the third round? I think we're approving the second round right now. So before we even approve, we're already talking about what we're going to do on the third round. I mean, this is day to day operations working on these things that aren't even approved yet. You mentioned five and a half million at one point which is way more than we're talking about right now. I think we it's a new legislature We haven't even had a caucus. We did put it off in ARPA. I hope we I hope the 23 body legislature really decides whether this is a this is where we want to go with these funds. I'm, I'm uncomfortable at this point.

Director Weidemann

If I might, Chairman Cahill, just to clarify, you know that there is likely to be more demand than there is funding even with these additional allocations. But I think it's worth noting, first, that these are taken on a first come first served basis based on who's eligible for the program, the primary distinction there is that this is funding, that is that requires the applicant to meet income eligibility requirements. And so that's that's the thing that will take 500 and trim it down to a smaller number. So just wanted to clarify that.

Director Weidemann

And as well, you know, I think there's, there's, you know, the reality of the situation here is that we have a number of programs at the federal level that have, you know, through various mechanisms, and the first that we took advantage of was through state funding the CARES Act, to stimulate our local economy, and in particular, to target the businesses that weren't able to take as much advantage of some of the other programs that were out there. And so that's the intent at the kind of legislative level at the federal level. And that's what we're trying to affect here with this program here in Ulster County.

Chair Cahill

Anyone else have any questions or comments?

Chair Cahill

Legislator Hewitt.

Legislator Hewitt

Thank you, legislator Cahill. Thank you, Tim, for the presentation. It was very informative. I think that the purpose of American Rescue is to rescue our main streets and rescue our economy. And small businesses are the heart and soul of this economy. And I'm wondering why small businesses that priority over nonprofits because I think nonprofits are values based businesses, they not only are fulfilling their mission of serving people and providing services, they're paying rent, they're paying payroll, they're providing jobs. And I would like to see closer to \$10 million of this funding be spent on nonprofits and businesses. Their values are about not only their mission, but

the planet, people and place, profit comes last. Oftentimes, it's not about no money. It's about the profits and the excess revenue being poured back into the business and strengthening the mission. So I'm in support of not only this proposal, Tim, but I'm excited about the nonprofit proposal, you also have planned. Thank you.

Director Weidemann

If I might, Mr. Chairman. So just to clarify, you know, I completely hear you, Legislator Hewitt appreciate that. Unfortunately, in the program that established this, the CARES funding, nonprofits were categorically excluded from the state's allocation. So we weren't able to apply for not for profits for this. But as you know, and as maybe Nate has his hand up to explain, there is a separate portion of the ARPA funds that's being proposed for assistance to not for profits.

Chair Cahill

Thank you and Nate, I see him name could you please identify yourself and let us know your affiliation? So before we go on with your question,

Director Litwin

yes, thank you. My name is Nate Litwin. I'm the director of recovery and resilience in the Department of Finance. So I am an Ulster County employee. And I'm glad to be here for my first time and meet the committee tonight. I'd be glad to I just had my hand up mainly to just provide a little bit of the background of the American rescue plan Act and the Coronavirus, local fiscal recovery funds, which is the portion of ARPA that this money comes from. There are four specific uses of this funding source. And certainly, small business and nonprofits who have been impacted by the pandemic are a major targeted beneficiary of the funds. So it's very good in that sense and that it's flexible. And it's it there is broad discretion that comes with the funding. But it is trying to get the money out to particularly small business and nonprofits among other beneficiaries of the funds.

Chair Cahill

Thank you and Chairman Batels. I apologize. I didn't see your hand up prior.

Chair Bartels

That's okay. Thank you. Thank you Chair Cahill. Um, so, you know, from my perspective, I really appreciate Legislator Hewitt's comments and I for me, they really they highlight some of the challenge of what we're tasked with doing and that is, there's so much more need than there are funds and I do Feel a little bit like a broken record. But it really concerns me that on some level, and I don't mean this specific to the project before us, but that on some level, we're evaluating on a, what's ready to go first come first serve basis. In other words, these are the projects that are before us now. And yet, there's a queue of those that we've discussed and those that we have not yet discussed, legislator Hewitt at the ARPA meeting brought up an idea that hasn't even been contemplated by the ARPA group or by the legislature as a whole given that, that he's, he's new to the legislature, legislator Maloney said that he also had ideas and, and I really welcome all of them comes to the table, you know, I think that it's a balancing act of, of really being aware of the expediency and, and the urgency of need, but also that, at the end of the day, we've committed a significant amount of these funds, and by the end of this month, it could easily be as much of a third of the funds. So for me, it's not that I don't think that this project is valuable. It's that I really am struggling to measure this project against all the rest, knowing that the decisions we make, and the impacts of those decisions are going to be felt and trying to make the decisions that have the longest felt impact.

Chair Bartels

So, you know, I, I'm looking forward to getting answers to the questions that were raised at the ARPA committee to have an understanding of what was already distributed through the first the CARES Act 1 to also understand and I do struggle a little bit with understanding that, that this isn't a need based application. I know that that was clarified at the last meeting, saying that the need is defined as the, the income level, so the income, so so it's the income level of the applicant or the workers. And yet the, the funding may not go necessarily to those workers, right. So so we could be defining the need of the business based on the people that work there and their income level. And yet, we could be funding a business that's potentially thriving. And I may be wrong about that. But I don't I don't see that as, as a as a non starter in that application. So I do have some some further questions on the application. And again, for me, I'm not necessarily opposed, but I'm not ready to move right away, because I do want to step back and evaluate against the full breadth of the proposals that are before us.

Chair Cahill

Thank you. Chairperson Bartels. I just have one question, Tim. So we dedicated there's money dedicated to administration, in this package, and the legislature just approved three opera ARPA administrators in the executives budget. Correct. So should we be duplicating it? Are we duplicating an effort here or so. So maybe the folks who are working for the executive office be administering this fund rather than, you know, having putting in additional strain on that, on that, you know, limited funds going forward? So it's something you've considered or talked about?

Director Weidemann

Yes. And so let me explain that, of the \$1 million request. current budget proposal for it is 850,000, in direct financial assistance, 100,000 in program delivery cost, and then 50,000 in admin, the 50,000. And admin really represents just 5% of the overall ask the additional 100,000 is for program delivery. And that primarily is marketing and promotion of the program, if necessary, and when necessary to make sure that we have high quality applicants, we found in our first round that that really wasn't necessary, we initially got a flurry of activity, and that is generated a number of applications. And so we're able to reallocate some of that program delivery to direct financial assistance. In the request, we've structured it the same as our original request to the state, anticipating that we may want to do more targeted outreach, we may find that in this first round, which we've been doing this analysis now that there are some communities that are underrepresented in terms of the submission of applications. And so we may want to take out an ad in the paper in that area, we may want to reach out to a community group and have them help us do that outreach. So until we make those determinations, we've allocated that 100,000 For program delivery. But I would anticipate coming back to this body to request a reallocation to direct assistance if those funds are needed for that purpose.

Chair Cahill

And any of the legislators have any questions before I ask another one Legisltor Criswell.

Legislator Criswell

One question I keep asking myself against any of these ARP requests is longest term, outcome, you know, so we're putting in a lot of money to projects and what I keep thinking of this as seeds. And we're planting a seed. And what I want to see is I want to see the seed grow for 35 years or 50 years or 100 years. And so that's what I'm trying to weigh this money against. And I know that there are different objectives in the ARPA funding, and some is saying immediate assistance to organizations, I get that. And I think we also need to look at this as a one

time, pot of money that we're getting, and what is our longest and best term use of it. So I just want you to know that that's my thinking about all these all these requests that are coming to me. And so I'm wondering is, you know, a short term infusion of cash, the best use of this money, and it could be, but that's, those are the questions I'm asking.

Chair Cahill

I think Legislator Bartels has her hand up. And then Deputy Exec Kelly will go next time. Go back to you, Tim. Okay.

Chair Bartels

Thanks. Thanks. Thank you. So I just wanted some clarification from something Tim just said I, I, I thought so the \$100,000 in this next round is earmarked for advertising. But I thought that you just said that the 30 the next 30 have already been identified and would be ready to go by the end of the month.

Director Weidemann

There are an additional 30 that have submitted applications and are in the queue. So I anticipate that that means we will not need that. But I think for the purposes of this submission, which was crafted before we knew that that would be the case, we structured the budget the same as our initial request to the state.

Chair Bartels

Okay, thank you.

Chair Cahill

Deputy Exec Kelly, you're up.

Deputy Executive Kelly

Thank you. I just wanted to address Legislator Hewitt's point on non for profits. That is one of the legs of the resolutions we put forward this month. Because we did think it was important to help those organizations, which a lot of them have had issues with payroll, they've had issues with staying open providing programs, a lot of them have been under increased need. And we certainly recognize that. And that is why between small business assistants who suffered, like Tim said, disproportionately during this as the non for profits, as well as the housing crisis, which is our other projects. So in terms of long term investments, investing in small businesses, like Tim said, or 90% of Ulster County businesses, I can't think of a better proper use of emergency relief funds, then to assist the small businesses, which are the core of the county workforce. So in terms of best and proper use, I do think this is it. I also agree that we do have to look at these more broadly, not every best idea has been surfaced at this moment. But I do want to stress there is a time limit here. And if we start entering into discussions or projects that start to take too long, we're going to miss first the point of the money. It was meant to provide relief during for the adverse economic impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic. I think the second part of this is there is an actual timeline, December 31 2024. So we want to make sure that we're conscious of the projects that we engage in or you know, the much needed deliberations were all in our constructive while keeping in mind, the sensitivity of time here. Thank you.

Chair Cahill

I'm going to let Legislator Maloney go next then Tim, if you don't mind, because I'd like to hear legislators' points of view first.

Legislator Maloney

Sure, just to reiterate a little bit, what Legislator Criswell was saying, and what Chair the Chair pointed out. We really do. I mean, I think we could end up you know, giving out sprinkling, we're going to be able to find businesses, if you go out there and Ulster County 200,000 people, and you start looking for for groups and people that need just a tiny bit of help, you're going to find an infinite number. I know it fits, we're checking a box. We do have to think about planting a seed and actually seeing something, you know, 1520 years from now, and I'm just not sure. Just checking a box is good enough with this money. And I think we can come up with some bigger, better things. Did I hear 100k for advertising? Is that what the Chair brought up and then 40,000 for administrative work that we're going to give to the EDA, it does seem that the county is doing a lot of the administrative work, but we're going to hand 40,000 for that, but it seems like we're doing all of this. The advertising doesn't seem it'd be well thought out that the Chair just pointed out, I just have a lot of questions still, and I just wanted to point them out hammer at home, because I really think this should not be just a quick approval.

Chair Cahill

Director Weidemann, your thank you for your patience.

Director Weidemann

Yeah, no, no, I happy to be able to kind of respond to a few more things if I might quickly. So first off the \$100,000 for program delivery, a portion of that is marketing and promotion of the program. It also involves what is committed in the original grant application, which is to provide business counseling and support to the businesses that request assistance. So there are other components to that. And then it's 50,000 for administration, which is 5% of the overall cost, there are administrative responsibilities, that UCEDA as the sub recipient will take on, and that's to cover those costs. The other thing I just noticed, I couldn't agree more with the sentiments about planting a seed here. But I would just urge you to consider that our businesses in the county have been, in many of them desperately impacted by this pandemic. And and I think our investment here is to make sure that we continue to have a thriving ecosystem of micro enterprises, especially ones that often are overlooked by some of the other programs out there. I'll point out that in the analysis we're doing in response to the ARPA committee's request, we have about half of the businesses awarded so far are minority owned businesses, about two thirds of them are women owned businesses. And so these are businesses that ultimately I think we would agree we want to continue to support and see thrive, they often face disadvantages as they try to start a business trying to balance their business with their household and family needs, and ultimately add a lot to our community and often do so without much recognition and support from other sources.

Chair Cahill

Thank you very much. Any other questions for Director Weidemann? I'm sure he'll hang around till we get to those resolutions. Okay, with that? Thank you, Tim. And I appreciate you taking the time and answering everyone's questions. And I do appreciate the very thoughtful questions that were asked. That will give us something to chew on when we get to the resolutions here.

Chair Cahill

So with that, we're going to move on to our resolutions for the month of February and resolution number 11 is the first one which is requesting enactment of a Senate bill and an assembly bill and in New York state's legislature for a special law in relation to the hotel and motel room. occupancy tax rates in Ulster County, otherwise known as a Home Rule request.

Legislator Criswell

I'll move that for discussion.

Chair Cahill

And is there a second for discussion?

Chair Cahill

Okay, so we have a motion and a second and anyone have anything? Or any questions I want to ask her legislator Maloney give us a little background on his resolution, he's the one that submitted it. So go ahead Legislator Maloney.

Legislator Maloney

That's what I was gonna suggest, I could just do a three or four minute spiel, and then take any questions. So and I'll try to put it all out there in a couple of minutes. So right now, like the Chair just pointed out, this is just this doesn't do anything. This what what we're doing here just gets permission from the state to allow us to then change what we currently have on the books for our short occupancy tax, which we'll call the bed tax. So there's three different types of businesses that are affected by the bed tax. We have some representatives here today from the lodging coalition, I see. Those are "all inclusives". Then you have motels and hotels, and then you have short term rentals, Airbnb and those platforms. We happen to be not just the Airbnb, kind of center capital of New York State, but I think we're the all inclusive capitol, we're kind of in between Albany and New York City. So we actually, I think, need to have a discussion with the changing times. Inside those discussions, once we get approval. It's that that's at the point when we talk about next resolution and resolutions we can talk about, which I've already spoken to some some members of the lodging coalition about how they do get taxed unfairly. They're getting the 2% tax on, on food, not just a room on the, the fine dining on Billy Joel, on horseback riding. That's all when you pay five or six or \$700 a night for a real experience. By the way. These are businesses that do employ people and pay real money. They are real tourism and economic drivers. So I think it's a discussion for that second resolution that we have to have and see. As long as it's we have to make sure it's legal because the state has things in the books we have things in the book But I do think we need to find a way to possibly give them away to just charge the bed tax on the room. And that will be part of the second discussion.

Legislator Maloney

The second discussion will also involve, once we send this off and get approval to do this, the second discussion will also involve do we want to go up on motel hotels to force 4% to 6%, to 3% to 5%. We're so many other counties already are right now. I think we have 38 counties in New York state that have a higher bed tax than us we are 2% There are a handful of counties that have none. And us and Delaware are at to everyone else. And most of the ones surrounding us, Dutchess County, Orange County, they're all up three to 6%, New York City's at about 6%.

Legislator Maloney

And the other discussion to have is short term rentals, which are driving force behind our rental issue and our home buying issue and a big part of our housing issue. And that's do we want to go even higher on them. These are people many times wealthy individuals from out of county, this would be a tax that will not affect people inside or individuals that live in our county. These are these are individuals that have money. We talked about the "all inclusives". And then there's discussions about sharing that with municipalities. There's discussions about earmarking for housing, these are all discussions that are involved in the next resolution, and the net and other resolutions.

Legislator Maloney

This first resolution is just to get permission to play with that bed tax number. I will tell everyone else and interesting fact that there's also a part of every counties bed tax that is number of nights or shorter that you're staying. So the bigger that number is, the harder it is to have somebody you know, in a short term rental, which people are doing now, reserving for 30 days or 40 days or 50 days. I thought that would be a topic to talk about. But we're tied for the highest where 90 days, they're their counties and 14 days, I would have suggested being at at least 30. But I was happy to see we were at 90. So if anyone has any questions, I'd be happy to try to answer them. I guess that was my quick rundown.

Chair Cahill

Thank you, legislator, Maroney, legislator Criswell.

Legislator Criswell

So if we do get permission from the state, is that a onetime thing that we'd have to do? And then it would be evergreen? Or is it something that we would have to reapply for, you know, every year or every five years? Or? What's the story on that?

Legislator Maloney

That's a great question whether it would be a 90 day or a year or the whole term. I'll find that out. I didn't even I have not even thought about that. I assumed we'd have some time. But I'll get you an exact time. I bet you Chris for Gucci would know it off the top of his head. Or if would be unlimited. I don't I'm not sure I'll find out.

Chair Cahill

Sir, any other questions from legislators? I'm trying to search through I have to go through a couple of screens here. Legislator Hewitt Go ahead.

Legislator Hewitt

Thank you. Legislator Maloney. I was I was wondering where the 10% tax came from, for short term rentals. Just as that number

Legislator Maloney

I've actually discussed with Chairman Cahill, maybe moving that to eight just not to scare people off, but it's it's not to exceed. So we could ,we could go to three, we could go to two and a half percent. We could go to 3%. It's just not to exceed 10%. I personally, will, will be pushing for, you know, open, robust debate and discussion on the pros and cons of going a little further with the short term rental tax than even motel and hotel and obviously, all inclusive but I do think we should go even higher on short term rentals.

Legislator Hewitt

Thank you. I bring it up because we found in the town of Rochester that it's primarily small families that have short term rentals and wealthy individuals from outside the county are more of an exception, so we created separate rules behind long term residence.

Legislator Maloney

Yeah, well they don't pay to that when you host when you're Air b&b and you're just you don't pay the bed tax the person renting the room is paying the bed tax and Airbnb pulls it automatically. I've I've actually asked that question Just out of nowhere on on legislators last time around when I was here having these discussions and people in the community that I talked to did when people say I just got back from vacation I said oh we're just where'd you go? You stay in Airbnb or hotel? I don't I've never had a person be able to tell me what they paid for their, for their bed tax or their occupancy tax. So it's, it's not something I think 10% would be a high number but we can talk about that. I don't expect to go up to 10 but it Certainly, we're we can go up to just not to exceed, we could, we could go to three, that it just gives us permission to go up to 10. We could change that to eight. You know, I'm not, we haven't even had a caucus yet, just as I asked before, to consider not acting or postponing on some of these other resolutions, I'm comfortable waiting a month, and really, really going over this, you know, privately and one on one conversations to get through things, but obviously in caucus

Chair Cahill

Thank you Legislator Maloney. Legislator Corcoran.

Legislator Corcoran

Yeah, I could agree with some of the points you've made. I mean, especially hitting our "all inclusives" and reducing that to an occupancy just based on the hotel because I think they've been unfairly taxed over the many years that they've been around, because they're basically the heart of the county. My question was, you know, also about the, the percentages that are put into this resolution, if we're kind of asking for permission and and to move on to have discussion, why are we mentioning specific numbers in here, increasing two to six and two to 10.

Legislator Maloney

It's not two to six, it's not to exceed six, not to exceed 10, on short term rentals, six on the overall bed tax, you're kind of giving the state something, you know, parameters that you're going to be within. So if a state senator, or an assembly member had in an issue, you know, you kind of got to give them a, a basic understanding of what we're doing. So then they'll approve and let us start working on this. So we went fairly high, knowing that it's going to take 12 or more of us, and possibly 16 If there was a veto. So but those numbers are arbitrary.

Chair Cahill

Thank you.

Chair Cahill

So, Legislator Maloney, you said you wouldn't be adverse to postponing it a month, and then, you know, working it through committee and through the caucuses, on maybe tweaking some of those items within the resolution and

fine tuning it a little bit more before we actually write it up and have the attorneys look at it and all that stuff. You're okay with that?

Legislator Maloney

Yeah. So I anticipated that, especially without a caucus. I'm fairly comfortable that we've had attorneys. Look, I'm fairly comfortable with the legality of it. But yeah, I know the specifics of it. I think it's something that I want the whole body's opinion on.

Chair Cahill

Great, thank you. Any other legislators have any questions for legislator Maloney? Okay, so let's say Maloney, would you like to make a motion to postpone it for a month and then we can bring it back next month?

Legislator Maloney

Absolutely. I'll make the motion.

Chair Cahill

They have a second.

Legislator Corcoran

I second that.

Chair Cahill

Okay. All those in favor, say?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye. Aye.

Chair Cahill

Opposed?

Chair Cahill

And are there any abstentions? Okay, so we voted to postpone that for one month. Thank you, legislator, Maloney and nice work on that. I appreciate your time and effort on that. Mr. Chairman,

Fawn Tantillo

Just one housekeeping thing. I see a caller at 518-852-0147. May I get your name?

Legislator Erner

Yeah, it's Phil Earner.

Fawn Tantillo

Thank you, Legislator Erner.

Legislator Erner

You're welcome. Pardon my tardiness.

Chair Cahill

Legislator Litts.

Legislator Litts

I realize we're postponing this a month. But I do see a lot of people in the audience here that probably came to this meeting to to speak on the subject. Are you going to allow them to speak or are you going to invite them back next month.

Chair Cahill

So I'll invite them back next month, of course, where they speak this month are not of course, Legislator Litts. But what I would like to do be because of the late start, I would like to get through to the resolutions. And then, you know if the folks that called in to discuss that, since we have postponed it. You're welcome to come back next month, you're welcome to reach out of any member of this committee in the next month or hang out until we're done with our resolutions, and we'll discuss it even further then. But I would like to move on with the resolution, Legislator Litts, if that's okay.

Legislator Litts

Good idea.

Chair Cahill

Okay, thank you. So resolution number 20 is appointing and reappointing members to the soil and water conservation, conservation district.

Legislator Criswell

Moving for discussion.

Legislator Litts

I'll second.

Chair Cahill

Okay, yeah. Chair Bartels.

Chair Bartels

Thanks. I just wanted to say I know this. It's new to Economic Development to have Soil and Water and agriculture under their purview. I'm really I'm happy. I'm happy that we're taking on agriculture and I'm happy to see Cornell Cooperative Extension here as well as long as as well as the education component. I didn't get to state at the head of the meeting but very excited for the future of this committee, and I also just want to say as for this and then next resolution, which are appointing the legislative members, I'm grateful that that former Legislator Delaune is willing to continue to serve and current Legislator Litts and longtime member Len Tantillo. And returning member, Legislator Nolan. Really happy to see the board fill out. So I just wanted to make that comment. Thank you.

Chair Cahill

Any other discussion on resolution number? 22 or 20? Rather? Okay, all those in favor?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye.

Chair Cahill

Opposed? Are there any abstentions?

Chair Cahill

Thank you very much. Resolution number 21 is appointing and reappointing legislative members to the Soil and Water Conservation District board.

Chair Cahill

Okay,

Legislator Corcoran

motion.

Chair Cahill

Second?

Legislator Criswell

Second.

Chair Cahill

All those in favor?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye.

Chair Cahill

All those opposed? Any abstentions?

Chair Cahill

Okay, thank you very much. Resolution number 22 is confirming the appointment of Sharon Williams as Director of Employment and Training. And I see we have Ms. Williams with us here this evening. Thank you for attending. Appreciate it. I'll accept the motion.

Legislator Corcoran

Motion.

Legislator Criswell

Second.

Chair Cahill

Thank you. Is there any discussion prior to voting? Okay. All those in favor?

Committee Members

Aye.

Chair Cahill

Opposed? Any abstentions?

Chair Cahill

Okay, thank you. And I just want to welcome Miss Williams board and give you an opportunity. If you like to say a few words, you're more than welcome to I'll give you this opportunity here. And thank you very much for attending.

Director Williams

No, thank you, Chairperson Cahill, I really appreciate it into the other committee members and all the legislators. Thank you for that confirmation. I am looking forward for taking on this role. My journey here has been wide and winding I've had a lot of opportunities in a number of industries, from nonprofit from government for profit. But the common thread through all of them has been workforce development. And as the new Director of Office of Employment and Training and workforce development, you know, my goal is to sort of amplify the three parts of workforce development, that's training and referral for job seekers opportunities for matching the right employees with the right employers, and more importantly, setting up a center of innovation and best practices, so employers can attract the best employees and retain them. So this is going to be an exciting journey for me, and I'm looking forward to working with all of you. Thank you.

Chair Cahill

Thank you very much, and welcome aboard. Appreciate it. So we're going to go on to resolution number 29, which is funding capital project number 601, AARP Small Business and Economic Recovery Department of Finance. I'll accept the motion for discussion, at least

Legislator Criswell

I'll make the motion.

Chair Cahill

A second?

Legislator Corcoran

Second.

Chair Cahill

Legislator Corcoran. Okay, now, I believe this is the support for number 32. Is that correct?

Chair Cahill

Yes, yes. Right. Okay. So,

Chair Cahill

Um, we had a pretty lengthy discussion prior Oh, after director women's presentation. I don't know how the committee feels about moving this forward tonight, or following the lead of the ARPA committee and postponing it for a month and letting the newer legislators get a little bit more familiar with the project and the implementation of it and you know, getting a little bit more background on it. I'll entertain you know, a motion to vote or a motion to postpone or whatever anybody wants to do here.

Legislator Maloney

I'll make a motion to postpone until at least a caucus.

Legislator Criswell

I'll second support that there's there's a fair amount of questions that are still on answered. So I'd say at least giving us a chance to get those questions answered would be fair. Okay.

Chair Cahill

Okay,

Chair Cahill

So we have a motion and a second for postponement and Chair Bartels, Chairman, Chairperson Bartels, it's gonna take me a little time. Chairperson Bartels, to get used to that.

Chair Bartels

Okay. Call me anything. Um, I'm also supportive of, of taking, taking a taking a breath. It's, it's, it's not to say that I'm not supportive of the project i in order to for me to get to the point of supporting the project one I need the questions answered and two. I really I think we do need to take That zoom out that Legislator Criswell spoke about in the ARPA committee, and be able to assess I know, we're expecting to see from the executives team, an analysis of those legislative proposals that fell outside of the discussion parameters. And, and I'm also expecting that we're going to see in short order an analysis of all the committed funds and, and the new projects that have been proposed. So I'd like to have that one big look before moving forward. So I feel more comfortable with the postponement as well. Okay.

Chair Cahill

So how do you guys feel about having the executive staff speak before we vote? Would you be okay with that committee members?

Chair Cahill

You're okay with that?

Legislator Corcoran

Yes.

Chair Cahill

Okay. So I think, Mark, you had your hand up first. And then Tim,

Deputy Executive Rider

I just wanted to clarify that with the ARPA committee, they postponed it to the next meeting, which is actually, I believe, next week prior to the legislative session. So there was not a I mean, we were in that committee in those discussions. And, and we didn't oppose any kind of postponement because we knew there was going to be another meeting. If you postpone it in this committee, I mean, this is one resolution that has to go through four committees, we were just speaking. And that's why public works when over, you know, we spent an hour and a half, two hours in public works on these resolutions. If one of these committees postpones it for a full month, then the work in the other committees, I mean, it's still going to Ways and Means which it may not even do this month, if it gets postponed by this committee. With the ARPA committee having full powers of the standing committees. I would just ask that, you know, I'm happy to answer questions here and help you all feel more comfortable, but know that the ARPA committee is doing its work.

Chair Cahill

Thank you. Director Wieman, you had your hand up, he's still good, or

Director Weidemann

Yeah, I was gonna make the same point. So.

Chair Cahill

Okay, Thanks. And Deputy Executive. I'm sorry, Joe. I thought I saw Chris Kelly there. But I didn't

Legislator Maloney

say well, I'll just say, um, if I had to vote right now, I'd be a no. But we all it goes through four committees for a reason. I just hate hate the idea of saying, you know, then we'll get to ARPA And we'll be hearing. Well, it already passed economic development. And DPW. I and we don't even have yet the answers that we asked for. In ARPA, I believe we asked questions in ARPA. We don't have we don't even have them. For this committee. I'm pretty comfortable waiting a month on this, because we still are talking about bringing up other ARPA spending funding. I think this should be looked at as a backup. If we don't come up with what Legislator Criswell and Chairwoman Bartels and I and others have said, these big things that we're going to feel 15 and 20 years from now, then, yeah, we can, we can go in and throw million dollars around to, you know, sprinkle money all over the place at the last minute, but let's, let's aim big, and we still have time to aim big. So I'm a yes on postponement. But uh, no, I'm forced to vote.

Chair Cahill

The other legislators before I go to Deputy Executive Kelly, Legislator Bartels.

Chair Bartels

Thanks. Yeah, I mean, I think that moving forward, the structure of the art committee is going to be a little bit different design usual month because of the flow of committee. So normally, the art committee is likely to have, it will definitely have one meeting prior, as it did this month prior to the rest of the standing meetings. But it's likely to have two meetings prior to the standing meetings, which would include a meeting prior to resolution deadline. So it would be at that meeting, working with the executive team, determining what's going in the packet,

because that didn't happen this month. And what was put it you know, we have this in the packet before us. I mean, I think there's, you know, you could look at it both ways, it's a it's a, it's a fair point that Deputy Executive Rider makes that, you know, that ultimately, this, you know, the staff gap in this case, because it's now the last committee rather than the first is the art committee. That said, you know, again, I think that that, that zoom out, you know, that look at all these projects against one another and really trying to understand and again, I know, I know, I'm a broken record, but the need is greater than then then the, the pot right? We have we have more more demand on these funds, then we have funds and so given that, you know, I'm not so ready to jump into this project this this month, what, whether it moved out of this Committee to the next committee or not, I, I need to step out. Now I know there's there are other projects that may come before us that have strict time sensitivity, or may be getting more unified support as as rising to the top of the surface. But that said, we haven't had those conversations in the legislature, in the caucuses and in the body as a whole at this point, because it's so early in this term.

Chair Cahill

Thank you, Chair Bartels I think, Deputy Executive Kelly

Deputy Executive Kelly

So we've had resolutions passed on providing direct aid to small business in August of last year, during the capital program. During just this past budget session, we reaffirm that commitment to this program, we've now provided all of the detail. And now this third committee in a few days, we only receive the questions from the Legislative clerk's office today, in order to get back to the ARPA committee, this again speaks to the order, we are getting questions and collecting them from every committee, they get there, each of them are a decision point. And we're doing our best by providing all of our staff to give you all the details in a timely manner.

Deputy Executive Kelly

I think in terms of this specific program, CARES, there's a demonstrated success, a demonstrated need, I get the sense that we want to hold back. And that that is not something that the executive office certainly wants to do in our discussions with the Chamber of Commerce and other small businesses. And just in this last application around just our experience, it's there, it's real. I don't know what postponing and this committee is going to do to change the need or ability to act on it. And he's careful, these ARPA funds are supposed to be stimulated, they're supposed to hold these small businesses together, I don't see how waiting discussing and keep going when we've had this out there since literally, last June is going to do to change that dynamic.

Chair Cahill

But I just want to make a point of order. This has been out there since last June. But for many of the legislators, this is their first legislative committee meeting. And so we have to give those folks an opportunity to get their feet on the ground and understand what's going on. And as chair of the committee, I certainly want to give them that opportunity. You know, I didn't, I didn't know everything when I walked in the door. And I certainly don't expect the newer members of the committee to know everything as they walk in the door as well. So we will, you know, do want to do things expeditiously. But we also want to do them thoughtfully. So I think Chair Bartels, you had your hand up? No. Okay. Any other questions or comments? I think Nate, you say every hand up there. Yeah,

Director Litwin

thank you, legislator. I just think I can speak as a new player myself, and I do appreciate your sentiment about doing things thought thoughtfully. But I also think I, I came in, and at the end of November, I've had the benefit

of an extra month compared to new legislators, but there is a framework. So I have seen that much. And I know it's a framework that may shift. But from where I stand there is the 2022 capital projects and the buckets that have been funded. And and I think that's a pretty thoughtful approach that's happened. It's and I think if you look at the totality of it, it does incorporate 10 different buckets. Smart this I think it's \$2 million in total is the bucket for small business. And that is only one part of a totality of \$34 million. There are other and I realized they can shift but as they exist currently the buckets and I think some of them will be transformative. I think some of them will be long lasting. I can speak as somebody who's looked closely at the final rule and the Treasury the Treasury regulations that there is you know, I guess a caution by the federal government about capital projects because they know capital projects can take longer that said there's still it's still there and then still be done and I think we we have some of the buckets designed and set up for for some more for like quality in to support something that will be built that will be sustaining. So I guess I just want to give the legislature a sense that there has been a broad framework that I've seen so far. And I asked for patience, because I think there will be other things presented that will be long lasting.

Chair Cahill

Legislator Maloney.

Legislator Maloney

Yeah, just quickly. Um, I think that's one of my biggest issues is it was just referred to as there's been demonstrated success. I think that's what we're asking for. You have to demonstrate some success. I know you gave out money. That's not demonstrated success. And that's what worries me that giving out this money is success. It's not, and I just had questions about controls fraud. I didn't get any answers on any of those things in real time. And had you been working on this for that long, you should have an overall, I don't think it's an approach that many of us are comfortable with whether we've been here for 10 years, or whether we've been here for four years. And just to point out, I think there's been more Deputy Executives talking on this meeting, every time we make a point or have a question. We get bombarded with 10 minutes of explanation we just got talked down to because we wanted to postpone and we were explained the process that we might not make it this month. I'm well aware of that. I don't want to vote on this this month. I don't think it's ready. I don't think you've demonstrated success. And that's why we need to talk about it. And I don't think it's big enough. I don't think it's deep enough.

Chair Cahill

Any legislators on the committee want to say anything? I see Legisltor Nolan.

Legislator Criswell

I just have one quick thing to add, Legislator Cahill.

Chair Cahill

Oh, yeah. Pete? Sorry. I can't find you. Thanks. Thank you,

Legislator Criswell

Money's designated for buckets. So this is a bit of a problematic, can you hear me?

Chair Cahill

It's breaking up a little bit, but we got you. You're frozen that? I think I went out? No, no, we hear you hear me now? Yeah.

Legislator Criswell

Okay. Okay. Great. So I just wanted to talk about the monies designated for buckets. Because this was a, this became a discussion when we were being asked to vote on that resolution. And I know that I was given the indication that those buckets were going to have a lot of flexibility around them, when we got down to actually starting to think about spending the money. And so I just wanted to remind everybody that those, in my opinion, those were the conversation is and I think Chairwoman Bartels that she and I have understanding going into this, I don't know if anybody else remembers those conversations. But those are my rememberings of when that resolution came before us.

Chair Cahill

Thank you, Legislator Criswell.

Chair Cahill

any other legislators on the community before I go to legislator, Nolan?

Chair Cahill

Go ahead, Legislator Nolan.

Legislator Nolan

Thank you Chair Cahill, I, um, I spoke in favor of passing this in public works. And it did it. It did pass unanimously. And the sense of urgency is that the constituents who showed up at meetings last summer, thought they were going to get money last year. And people in my district are basically saying, When are we going to get these funds? The county has this money, and it's supposed to be coming to us that need relief? And where is it? And so I think, you know, there's a balancing that we have to do between the need for good process and getting the money to the people who need it. I'm very taken by figures of high minority businesses, high women led businesses applying for these funds, and basically waiting at this point for the legislature to release them. And if there's a reason that what we've done for the past six plus months is not been done. Well, then I think we should hold up. But I think it has been done very well, was a very robust public process in the summer involved last year. This all was reviewed during the budget process at the end of the legislative calendar. So I I'm, I don't like to urge colleagues to move forward if there is a concern that there's a red flag, but I don't see red flags. I just see. Well, we'd like a little more time. And so I would just like to put on the table, you know, especially since there's a call to say that it was the executive versus legislative split here. As a legislator, I'm hearing from my constituents, when are those phones going to come to us? And I'd, you know, like to be able to tell them, we're moving as fast as we can to get them to you.

Chair Cahill

I just like I have a question for Director Wiedemann, if you don't mind or Deputy Exec Kelly, whichever one you guys want to answer, what would be the impact of postponement for a month on this on these two resolutions? Because it'll end up being 29 and 32, as well, right.

Director Weidemann

I would say that, given what we're hearing from applicants would range from possibly some unable to pay their rent and ending up evicted from their commercial space to some having to postpone rehiring employees who've been laid off for another month. You know, I want you all to understand that this is not, you know, without consequence. And I feel that, you know, I'd be remiss to not point out the, the situation, the dire situation in some cases that our businesses are in. And as legislator Nolan says, that they've they've known that the county has received ARPA allocations and has held those funds, and we get calls on a daily basis, asking how those funds can be accessed and and indicating the desperate need for those funds.

Chair Cahill

Chairperson Bartels.

Chair Bartels

Thank you. Um, you know, I, I respect the, the need of the applicants, although I have, I haven't, I didn't have not seen any of the applications. Nor do I know, even for those that have already received the funds, how they were, how they were spent. That was one of the questions that we asked, and I'm expecting that we'll see that at some point. But as far as the county holding ARPA funds, the county has already expended. As I said, by the end of this month, it'll probably be a third of the ARPA funds. We're committing to respite homes in the county, we've committed to a crisis stabilization center, we've committed to constituent services. We have hired the three people that are that are working. And that was a debate within the body. And it was it was conciliation, and it was an agreement where we agree that the three people were necessary, that's close to a million dollars of the ARPA funds, we have expended a tremendous amount of these funds we have before us this month, \$2 million in a water connection, a project that I do think has a time sensitivity, and we're going to hear about in another committees. So it's not as if we're sitting idle, we created an art book committee, that's a special committee with standing powers that is going to be looking at all this that has had one meeting so far this month, and we'll be having another and we'll be meeting two times a month regularly.

Chair Bartels

So, you know, I I don't mean to sound aggressive. But I think this suggestion that we're sitting in waiting, we know that many municipalities with across this county who also received funds have yet to disperse funds, because these are very difficult decisions, where we're absolutely going to spend these funds. And we're going to make wise and deliberative decisions. Well, within the timeframe that we have. I just, I want to reiterate that there that it's difficult and there needs to be a sensitivity and there's a lot of need. And not a not a not every not every is going to be able to make the cut as it relates to our funds may be that we decide to spend other funds on some of these projects, but not we do not we do not have enough funds to cover every suggested proposal.

Legislator Maloney

Call the vote.

Chair Cahill

Any other comments.

Legislator Hewitt

I just have one more things that

Chair Cahill

Legislator Corcoran had his hand up first here, Legislator Hewitt, then you can go after that. Thank you.

Legislator Corcoran

I just want to agree with Legislator Nolan. I've had many people contact me waiting for these funds. And again, I appreciate the, the new legislators that are here wanting to hear more and know more about it. But I can tell you I've heard enough and we go to vote tonight I'll be voting yes. And I'll be voting no to postponing

Chair Cahill

Legislator Hewitt.

Legislator Hewitt

Thank you, Legislator Corcoran, that helps me a lot because I'm torn between the balance of urgency to save businesses every month that goes by and more expenses build up. Businesses are failing hundreds per month. And the balance between answering our set of questions. We have good questions we want to see the proven success. I think legislator Maloney is correct in that but I've heard the counties like Dutchess County are urgently helping people and dragging our feet doesn't feel right. And I would be voting us to move forward.

Chair Cahill

Thank you, Legislator Hewitt. Legislator Maloney.

Legislator Maloney

Just quickly, one last thing, Mike, I know it feels good. But we can't forget that we get sometimes it becomes like a sixth floor bubble. If we think that we're taking a couple of 1000s of dollars and spreading it around to 30 people, and we're saving local businesses and Ulster County, then I mean, there's no nice way to say this. That's not the reality. We are not saving all these businesses, we are not if you think that in a couple of months, we this money will have made much of a difference. I really think you're kidding yourself. And I'm sorry to be the, you know, the naysayer, but it's reality. That's the real world. There's 200,000 People that live in this county. And if they were in on this, the vast majority of them would go, I think there's some bigger, better things we can do with this money. We're talking about these businesses, they're making phone calls, they're calling we need this money. Are they going to need the same amount of money next week? Next month? Are we going to continue? Is it going to be the same businesses, we're talking about 30 businesses right now? We need to think bigger, and we are not going to save hundreds of businesses with this money. It's not going to happen. We're going to end up wasting all the money and not have anything to show for it. That's the reality. I'm sorry, I have to say,

Chair Cahill

Legislator Litts and then Legislator Criswell.

Legislator Litts

Um, I don't know. I mean, this is not new, we've already handed out will be the first million dollars from the CARES Act. This is federal money. It's not coming out of our, our budget, from the taxpayers in Ulster County. It's federal money, and who would we much rather serve a large conglomerate big business or the backbone of the county, which is small business? I mean, I don't know. I mean, we can put this all in one big project and, and spend the money to some contractor that's going to come in from somewhere and build some Taj Mahal for us.

But I really want to support the small business. People in the county, who live here who work here. They need the money. I know we're not gonna have all the businesses in the county. But why not held some it's federal money. It's given to us for this purpose. I think we should just call the question.

Chair Cahill

Legislator Criswell had his hand up. So we'll let him speak. And then I think Director Wiedemann also had his hand up, if he wants to go, we'll let him go. And then thank you.

Legislator Criswell

Thank you. So this, this is obviously complicated, because I think we all want to support our small businesses in the county, clearly, we really want to do that. And we want to look at big, best and biggest use of of these funds. You know, we haven't even started a conversation of, you know, some major infrastructure upgrades that we could do that could help all businesses, if we upgraded our broadband across the county, you know, there are things that we could do to put this money to work that would help hundreds and hundreds of businesses, small businesses, the person who's starting their own small business out of their home, you know, up in the mountains that can't even get broadband. So I think there's just a lot of things that we haven't even started discussing. And there's a lot of pressure, that the work isn't done. We have to spend this money right now. And I'm just asking just what Chairwoman Bartels says if we could just have two seconds to take a breath, get our footing and figure out the bigger picture here.

Dennis Doyle

Chair Cahill

Director Weidemann, do you want to make one final comment?

Director Weidemann

No, no, I like that.

Chair Cahill

Okay. Legislator Litts Oh, sorry. Legislator Sperry hasn't spoken yet. We'll let her go first. Thank you.

Legislator Megan Sperry

Thank you for that. Um, I specifically asked during the ARPA meeting, if you could give us a breakdown of the types of businesses that were applying for these funds. And I know earlier, you mentioned that there are predominant it's been predominantly women owned businesses and also minority owned businesses, which is great, but I think the bigger picture is are these, you know, restaurants? Are they barber shops are they like we, I think in the ARPA committee want to know the demographics of the need so that we can understand how we're helping these like small businesses and how that's going to trickle out into the community as far as supporting. The other thing is the urgency that is kind of being presented to us this evening. I know it's I'm feeling a sense of disappointment from the executives office and pushing back. And I'm just wondering, if we were to vote tonight, and we were to vote to, you know, agree to these funds. When would the small businesses be getting the money? Like if we push this back until next month, you're saying that people are going to lose possibly their rent or they're not going to be able to make the rent, they're going to lose their lease. So if we were to vote yes, tonight, are they

going to be getting their money by the end of the week? Or they're going to be getting their money in two weeks? Like, how does that trickle down?

Chair Cahill

Let's hear I'm sorry, Legislator Weidemann. We even know you're not a legislator. And I'm guessing you're pretty glad about that. Director Wiedemann.

Director Weidemann

Tonight. Yes. Just a second question. First Legislator Sperry, you know, it is it is entirely truthful to say that if this body were to pass this in the legislature and other committees pass it this month, the businesses received the assistance a month sooner than they would if you postpone it, it is complicated. These are reimbursement funds. There's a lengthy process to get that cash in hand. But the truth is, they would get it a month earlier. And your first question, duly noted, part of our response will include a summary. A summary is a summary of the types of businesses.

Legislator Megan Sperry

Thank you.

Chair Cahill

Director Weidemann, can I just ask a real quick question here. So we will have this before us in the Ways and Means Committee, is that one or two meetings, Chair Bartels one or two meetings of ways and Means before session?

Chair Bartels

Two meetings, it'll come to it'll come to the first meeting, for sure. And then the committee can act or or postpone to the next meeting.

Chair Cahill

So good. So I think there's there is a list available of the businesses that have been awarded this money now, is that something you could share with the members of these committees, you know, basically, with four committees, just about every legislator is going to be involved in this vote. Right. And, you know, I think it would be good if we could have an opportunity to see, you know, where these where these businesses, what businesses are getting the money, the amount of money they're getting, and, you know, to kind of kind of help us along and with Ways and Means Committee meetings coming, we absolutely have an opportunity to look at this a little longer. And, you know, if we're not happy with it, and you're one of those meetings, and we can reject it in Caucus as well. So we have three more opportunities here to take a look at this prior to that. But if we vote no on this tonight, then we're definitely waiting to march. Right. And so I'm a little uncomfortable postponing it. You know, with the possibility that, you know, we'll take another month, you know, but we also will have an opportunity to hear, you know, from other folks in our caucus, whether or not they can make a compelling argument to maybe reallocate that money somewhere else between now and session. So, any other comments or questions before we go to the vote? Legislator Hewitt.

Legislator Hewitt

Just briefly, I noticed that a lot of the people in this committee are also on the ARPA committee, and Legislator Maloney and I both attended, I'm planning to attend the next one. Is it possible to move it out of this committee and rely on the ARPA committee to make the next decision?

Chair Cahill

So we have the ARPA committee in two Ways and Means committee, then we have caucus in session. So there'll be four more opportunities to vote on this and I know that the execs have just loves that, but that's the truth. Right, so Chair Bartels.

Chair Bartels

Yeah. And just for the sake of order, I believe it go it'll go Ways and Means - ARPA -Ways and Means, right, so go Ways and Means - caucus - Ways and Means - Caucus,

Chair Cahill

Caucus, and then session. So you know, there's plenty of opportunity. But that so on the on the other side of that there's plenty of opportunity for us to get as much information about the successes that people have talked about, the impacts that this money has had. And you know whether it is actually valuable tool for the ARPA money. So with that is there if there's no other questions or comments I will call the question on postponement. Legislator Corcoran, go ahead.

Legislator Corcoran

Oh, I was gonna make a motion to move resolution 29 forward.

Chair Cahill

Well, we have a motion on the floor to call for postponement first.

Legislator Corcoran

Okay.

Chair Cahill

Legislator Litts.

Legislator Litts

So I just wanted to tell you say that there was a motion for postponement. So you can vote on moving it forward until you take a vote on.

Chair Cahill

Exactly. So I was calling on the, the postponement anymore conversation on the postponement. Okay, all those in favor of postponement. Yeah, for all those opposed to postponement

Chair Cahill

So we have four, so it's a tie. So it doesn't pass.

Fawn Tantillo

Correct. I just need to get who... Hewitt voted not to postpone. Cahill, Corcoran and Litts, Okay. Thank you.

Chair Cahill

Okay. On the resolution.

Legislator Corcoran

Resolution, resolution put forward. Resolution 29.

Chair Cahill

Second,?

Legislator Litts

I'll second.

Chair Cahill

Okay. All those in favor?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye. Aye.

Chair Cahill

Opposed?

Chair Bartels

Can I speak actually?

Chair Cahill

Well, yeah, sure. Go ahead. Sorry. I should have asked that question. I apologize. Sorry.

Chair Bartels

So, you know, I realize we're in a in an in an uncomfortable position in this committee, and actually the in in an effort to actually make the new legislators have more information and feel more comfortable. I'm surmising that probably the new legislators feel the least comfortable. Because of the, the process that that's that this is put us into. And that's complicated by my being here, because for the new members, when I'm present, and it's a full committee, the quorum changes. So that's a tremendous amount of power for a chair to have. I given the tenor of the debate, and the fact that we're going to be able to have this conversation in the next two committees. I'm going to, I'm going to vote to allow this to go to the next committee, even though I voted to have it postponed. But I just, I'm speaking out loud and on the record, and as it's coming to my brain to say that I have serious concerns about, about dealing with these projects on on. And I know that everyone doesn't agree with me on this, but on what appears to me as being a first come, first serve, attempt, the characterization of the approval of this as having gone through the budget, and the capital projects, and creating the buckets is exactly why I stood up on the legislative for when we approved the capital program and said, I'm approving the capital program, I'm voting yes. But we've never agreed to these numbers. And I've had this conversation with the executive staff. You know, it may be just a difference of opinion. But the reality is, again, we have \$34 million to spend. And I know that we're

all coming at this with the best of intentions, all of us with with wanting to see the best use of these funds, for the most lasting impact, and also for dealing with the most most potentially urgent impacts. But we're thinking long lasting not not only short term, so everyone's brought up really, really good points. Tonight, and and this is probably the first of many heated debates when we actually are going to get down into the really difficult discussions of what is it that we're going to what is it that we're going to fund and the fact that this calendar has put us in a turnaround? Again, I'm willing, I'm willing to either get off the call or to allow this to go to the next committee, but I'm going to be no less critical at the next committee. And so I just want to be I want to be clear about that.

Chair Cahill

Unmute sorry. Thank you. Chair Bartels. Legislator Litts.

Legislator Litts

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I find it kind of ironic that we're all clamoring to accept CARES Act money to the tune of a million dollars to fund our small businesses. And now they're, so this program who really isn't new, we've we've accepted applications, we've vetted applications, we sent those applications up to the state under CARES they had to approve it, they vetted them, and they approved them, they send them back down, we send them to the county. Our county council, they reviewed them, contracts are drawn up, the contracts are sent out to the individuals that are accepting the money. If if you would please reach out in your districts find people that have gotten this money. So when you get this list that you're asking for, reach out, they're probably people that, you know, I've had several people in my district come to me and say, My God, you know, we fought the pandemic, it was terrible. We didn't know what we were gonna do. And then we get some federal money through the county, that allowed us to keep in business that allowed us to bring an additional employee back. It allowed us to purchase a piece of equipment that is going to expand our business. So it's going to totally increase our production and what to talk to the people in your district that have received this money. I think it'd be an eye opener for you. I mean, this is not a brand new thing. We're starting from scratch. This is round two. And it's only round two because of the ARPA funds. We spent all the CARES money which we we clambered about when we got a million dollars to to to help our small businesses we accepted that would open arms. And it was part of the state process. I mean, listen, I'd love to have \$100 million to spend spend around the spread around the county and help out our businesses throughout the county. We don't have \$100 million. We were given a million.

Legislator Litts

We went through the process. And that's going out to small businesses. Now we're looking for another million. And then there's a possibility. I mean, we talked about round three, round three might be coming from additional CARES money, that if we if the if they're going to give out an additional million, we might have to match it. So for every everything we spend, they'll give us more money. So I mean, who else do we want to help in this county? I mean, but the people who built this county, and Peter, you got your hand up? I know you want it. You talked about broadband, any infrastructure bill, there's money that is dedicated to broadband. So this would be by spending ARPA money for a broadband is going to lose us money, federal money that's going to be dedicated to enhance broadband. So that money is coming. Let's not spend this on broadband, because then we're not going to get the broadband money when when that starts coming down the pike. Anyway, I said enough.

Chair Cahill

Thank you LegislatorLitts. Listener Maloney.

Legislator Maloney

Yeah, I hear the word vet, even though it's just a word. I love it. It gets vetted. What does that mean? It gets vetted. Secondly, we could go back before COVID, we go back 10 years ago, we could go back 100 years ago, and we could go out there with a million dollars. And we could find businesses that could use that money like that. We could do this forever from this point forward when COVID is gone. So if your point is think about these people were helping think about government's job is not we don't have enough money in the world. And what were the big you know, the biggest issue for businesses is when you talk to economic development, they tell you water districts, sewer lines, infrastructure and taxes. This is not helping either one of those things. This is a feel good handout. That is a momentary help that we don't have any controls over. So that's that's how I feel about it. It's very different. And I wish we had 100 million right. We just give that out. I wish we had a billion we could give that out. What have we done in the long run? Not much.

Legislator Litts

This is not new helping our business. I mean, we had the Ellenville million.

Legislator Maloney

how'd that go?

Legislator Litts

In that? We spent it all and it was a success

Legislator Maloney

Oh, spending it. I heard that before. Demonstrated success is spending the money so yes, Ellenville millions was a success. I actually I can't believe you just brought up Ellenville millions.

Legislator Litts

Yes. Ellenville Million.

Legislator Maloney

Ellenville millions was a disaster. We don't have anything to show for it.

Chair Cahill

Let's listen to each other and not speak over each other. I would appreciate it. Thank you.

Legislator Litts

I'm done.

Chair Cahill

All right, Legislator Criswell, and then we're gonna go to Director Wiedemann. And I think then we're going to call a question.

Legislator Criswell

I don't think any of us want to hurt our small businesses. And I think that we're being that the idea that we're questioning it is putting us in the in the bad guy position, I just, I'm not going to buy that. We all want to help our small businesses, what I'm asking us to do is take a moment to ask hard questions. So we need a million dollars. Is the million dollars coming from the ARPA funding? Didn't we have a big surplus last year? Why can't we take the million dollars from our surplus? Why can't we find the million dollars somewhere else? We haven't even asked that question. So we haven't even had a moment, it's already just been assumed that it's coming from the ARPA funding, and it's a done deal. What I'm asking us to do is to ask those questions, get all those questions answered. And then if we get those questions answered to our satisfaction, yeah, let's find it. Let's make let's give this money to these small businesses. But until we actually get those questions on the table, and answered, I just don't think it's a fair process.

Chair Cahill

Thank you, Legislator Maloney, do you have another comment or your hand up for the last time. Okay, thanks. Alright. So Director Weideman and then we're going to call the question and this is going to be on resolution number 29.

Director Weidemann

Very, very briefly, I just I just want to reiterate that this program, the CARES program, which is I think one of you pointed out, this is a request to provide additional funding to an existing program that was designed after input from our businesses was received, heard, and then informed an application for funding and the design of a program to provide assistance as per the request that we were hearing from our local businesses. So I understand there are new legislators here who weren't a part of those discussions. I apologize for the sense that we're trying to push this down anyone's throat, that's certainly not the intention. It's really just a genuine reflection of the, the need that's out there, the urgency of that need and the long effort that myself and my team have put into developing this program. And that backs up the requests that we've made. So I just wanted to make that clear after some of the comments that were made.

Chair Cahill

Thank you for communicating that. Chair Bartels And then I am going to call the question.

Chair Bartels

Thank you, Sorry, I just through the Chair, I'd like to ask the Chair of the ARPA committee, Legislator Criswell, I know, I know that. You just asked for the breath, or can I just ask you to clarify, are you Is it your position that you would like to hold for the month on this?

Chair Cahill

Yes, it is.

Chair Bartels

That I'm going to be supportive of the Chair of the ARPA committee.

Chair Cahill

Okay, so then those in favor of resolution 29. All those in favor?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye.

Chair Cahill

All those opposed? So it fails. Three to five looks like

Chair Cahill

and then. Does that make 32?

Fawn Tantillo

Mr. Chairman, may I clarify that vote who were the yeses were...yourself Mr. Litts and Mr. Corcoran?

Chair Cahill

Yes.

Fawn Tantillo

And you voted yes. To move this on. Chair Bartels? I thought you voted with Mr. Criswell?

Chair Bartels

Yeah, no, no, I voted. No, I'm raising my hand to be recognized by the chair.

Fawn Tantillo

Okay. I just want to get the vote.

Chair Cahill

Lets get the vote square first.

Fawn Tantillo

Mr. Hewitt, you voted not to move it on.

Legislator Hewitt

Correct.

Fawn Tantillo

Okay.

Chair Cahill

Okay, Chair Bartels?

Chair Bartels

Yeah, so I would like to ask in view of what's just happened if there would like if there would like to be a reconsideration of the postponement?

Legislator Maloney

I'll move that, A simple. Yeah, just a simple reconsider motion.

Chair Cahill

Yes. A motion to reconsider.

Legislator Maloney

I'll make the motion.

Chair Bartels

On the postponement,

Chair Cahill

On the postponement I will second.

Chair Cahill

Okay, all those in favor of postponement.

Committee Members

Aye.

Chair Cahill

All those opposed to postponement? Any abstentions?

Chair Cahill

Okay. So resolution number 29 has been postponed for one month on to resolution 32, which is approving the execution of a contract for \$1 million entered into by the county, Ulster County Economic Development Alliance develop Department of Finance. Since that's the contract that supports the capital project, I guess we should, you know, not waste a lot of time and just move to postpone it one month,

Fawn Tantillo

Or you could take no action,

Chair Cahill

Or we can take no action and then automatically comes back. Right.

Chair Cahill

So that what's committee's favor on that?

Chair Cahill

So actually, I actually I am a sponsor of that correct. This came from executives office, right? To this committee?

Fawn Tantillo

Yes, sir.

Chair Cahill

I'll make a motion to take no action.

Legislator Litts

You don't need a motion.

Fawn Tantillo

We don't need to make a motion for that.

Chair Cahill

Okay, so then we'll just move on to resolution number 60, which is appointing member and alternate members to the Ulster County Planning Board for the Town of Saugerties

Legislator Corcoran

Motioned

Committee Members

Second,

Legislator Litts

I'll second.

Chair Cahill

All those in favor?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye.

Chair Cahill

Any opposed? Any abstentions?

Chair Cahill

All right, resolution number 61, which is authorizing submittal of a grant application for funding to the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets to develop an ag agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan for Ulster County from the Department of Planning.

Legislator Litts

I'll move that.

Chair Cahill

Second. I'll actually second it. Any conversation or discussion? Okay, all those in favor?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye.

Chair Cahill

Any opposed? Any abstentions?

Chair Cahill

Okay, thank you. Resolution number 62 Authorizing the Ulster County Executive to execute a contract New York State Housing Trust Fund Corporation represented by the Office of the community renewal for federal funding for the implementation of the Community Development Block Grant Homeownership Program amending the 2022 Ulster County budget Department of Planning. I'll taka a motion?

Legislator Maloney

Can I just make a comment?

Chair Cahill

Let's have motion for discussion at least

Legislator Corcoran

Motion for discussion.

Legislator Maloney

Second,

Chair Cahill

Okay. Legislator Mooney.

Legislator Maloney

Um, is this. I got my notes here is this. I don't have the contract in front of me. But when I looked at it, was this the one we had \$40,000 going to administrative fees to planning? Or was this the next one?

Dennis Doyle

No.

Legislator Maloney

Dennis?

Dennis Doyle

The short answer to that question is is that there's no administrative fees during planning?

Legislator Maloney

Where's the administrative fees going? I

Dennis Doyle

t goes to the sub recipient, as well as the program delivery fees, which is RUPCO. which is the next contract after this. Sorry, Mister, I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman.

Legislator Maloney

All right. Could you just give us a little something about that?

Dennis Doyle

Um. sure. The to this [inaudible] going through it. This is an \$800,000 revenue pass through grant, in which Repco is a sub recipient, which is the next, which is the next resolution on your agenda. I just want to I just want to point out that this is not I don't know what the title The resolution is. But this is not a Homeownership Program. This is a housing rehab program. But the title of the resolution is wrong. That could be my apologies, but it isn't it's an HR program not a not a Homeownership Program. And this will this will do housing rehab throughout the county and scattered site. The only place we can't work is in the City of Kingston because the City of Kingston has its own separate CDBG CDBG CDBG funds. And so we're by were restricted by the by the source of the funds from from doing work within the City of Kingston.

Legislator Maloney

And none of the administrative fees are staying in the county.

Dennis Doyle

That's correct. There's a... I'll just read it wrong. That was passed many years ago, I think two or three years ago that basically indicated the county would not take administrative fees for these projects.

Legislator Maloney

Thank you.

Chair Cahill

Any further discussion? Okay, all those in favor?

Committee Members

Aye.

Legislator Nolan

Chair, may I say something here. Um, may I? Before you vote?

Chair Cahill

Go ahead.

Legislator Nolan

From what Deputy Doyle said that if this committee would amend the title of the resolution in committee, then it could come to the floor already ready to go. And it sounds like it's just two words. If the deputy, I mean, if the director has that, um, it might be more efficient.

Chair Cahill

Right. So that would be the question. Do we have the actual title for that?

Dennis Doyle

You could say housing rehabilitation program?

Chair Cahill

Okay, so we could a ...clerk

Legislator Litts

Dennis - isn't that the name of the program? It's the community.

Dennis Doyle

It's not a it's not a Homeownership Program. I mean, I would just define it as housing rehabilitation. And you can leave program out, you know, you know, it's Community Development Block program. You don't have to put homeownership in you just leave it as, as you can take homeownership out and just use it as a CDBG program. And then you're not character's eyes characterization in terms of what it's going to do and the contract takes care of that.

Chair Cahill

Right.

Fawn Tantillo

So your suggestion is just to delete the words Homeownership Program in the title.

Chair Cahill

I would just delete homeownership,

Legislator Litts

homeownership, yeah. Okay, all those

Fawn Tantillo

in favor of the amendment. We have a motion to make that amendment.

Chair Cahill

I'm making it right now. Can we take a motion to amend the title of resolution number 62. And thank you, legislator, Nolan.

Committee Members

So moved. Second, back then.

Chair Cahill

All those in favor of changing the title of resolution number 62. I take an on the resolution. All those in favor?

Committee Members

Aye.

Chair Cahill

Opposed? Abstain.

Fawn Tantillo

Sorry, Chairman Bartels. Did you vote on that?

Chair Cahill

Chairman Bartels is not on screen, so she cannot vote.

Chair Cahill

Okay. Resolution number. Oh, she's back now. Would you like to vote on number 62? Chair Bartels.

Chair Bartels

Yes, please.

Chair Cahill

And you are Yes.

Legislator Bartles

In favor.

Chair Cahill

Thank you very much. Resolution number 63, which is approving the execution of contract for \$800,000 into by the county rub code Department of Planning, which is the execution of that block grant ahead of it correct.

Chair Cahill

Mr. Doyle?

Director Dennis Doyle

That's correct. I apologize.

Chair Cahill

That's alright.

Chair Cahill

So I'll accept a motion.

Legislator Corcoran

I'll move that.

Legislator Litts

Second.

Chair Cahill

All those in favor?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye. Aye.

Chair Cahill

All those opposed? Any abstentions?

Chair Cahill

Okay. So this will be our last resolution. Authorizing the Ulster County Executive to designate Nick Hvizda as the environmental records review certifying officer for small business assistant program funded by New York State Homes and Community renewals Community Development Block Grant Program.

Legislator Criswell

I'll make the motion.

Legislator Corcoran

Second.

Chair Cahill

All those in favor?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye.

Chair Cahill

Opposed?

Chair Cahill

Okay. Thank you. So that gets us through the resolution. We don't have any old business on the agenda. And a new business under agenda is the IDA. As you folks know, we have put out a call for Ida Members, we're going to be interviewing and pointing new members to the Industrial Development Agency board of directors in the coming weeks. The chair sent a press release out asking for both this board and the RA to have application sent in for the IBA, the deadline will be February 14. And it's the hope that we can as a committee or actually I'm going to request that if there are any legislators on this committee that would like to take a more leadership role in the whole organization and interviewing of the idea board members, I'd be willing to discuss that with anyone who'd be willing to head that up with me I'd be I could use the assistance, quite honestly. And I'd be glad to to accept any help I could get with that. And just to give you a timeframe of what we're looking at, we're going to accept applications through February 14. And of course, you know, if anything comes into the date, days following that, we'll accept them. But not too much after that, because we're going to try and start interviewing the candidates, the week of I just want to get the date, correct the 21st of February, and hopefully have that completed, and maybe even get these IDA board members appointed in our March meeting. That's, I think, a reasonable target to do this. So Is there any discussion that anyone would like to have on that topic right now?

Fawn Tantillo

You want to pick a date on that week for interviews?

Chair Cahill

Not not quite yet, Clerk Tantillo. I'd like to see what we're up against, and the quantity that we get and the number of people. And again, I want to give the members of the committee a chance to respond if they want to help out. And, you know, I know that legislator Maloney has already expressed an interest in doing it. And I see, let's say, Criswell has his hand up.

Legislator Criswell

And just a quick, quick question. Was there I might have missed it was there actually sort of a job description or a note of, you know, some sort of notice that went out about the criteria that you're looking for?

Chair Cahill

I think the chair included an overview of the responsibilities of the IDA board members and her press release today. And that is, and I think it's also available in the is in the charter, or is it in the rules of legislature? It's in one of those two as well. Right. The description, it's in a charter that the responsibilities and duties of the IDA board members,

Fawn Tantillo

And they have extensive information on their website?

Chair Cahill

Yes, they do. Legislator Litts

Legislator Litts

Are the interview is going to be conducted by the entire committee like they have been in the past.

Chair Cahill

So yeah, so that's kind of like, you know, kind of what I want to have a discussion tonight, the last time we did that, I think it worked out pretty well. You know, we scheduled them and we got everybody together, we did it over zoom. And we gave all the interviewees a 20 minute block, we provided them with questions prior to the interview that we're going to have. And then we're probably do a similar thing, unless, you know, folks have different ideas on how they want to approach it. But that seemed to work pretty well, a lot of people will argue about the result of the IDA board last time around. But I think that, you know, from our perspective of selecting the members, the process that we use went pretty smoothly. Overall, I'll say, right. So yeah,

Legislator Maloney

All legislators are welcome to come in and ask questions?

Chair Cahill

Every Yeah, that's what we did. Last time we did or every legislator, we invited them, you know, multiple times to come and sit in on the interviews, and many did. You know, I would say most legislators, but a lot of legislators did come in and sit in when it was, because don't forget, I think we ended up with like 20 applicants last time,

clerk Tantillo was heavily involved in organizing that. And we had a lot of candidates last time. And, you know, like I said, We gave him 20 minute blocks, and we had to fit it around everybody's schedule was very difficult to do. So what I'm thinking we're going to do is these are going to end up being in the late afternoon, evening, and maybe even the weekend, doing these interviews when people are have more availability, I think we did do a Saturday, round of interviews last time, and we may end up doing that again. So again. I'm going to request that Herb and Tom, you guys go back to your caucus, and please beat the bushes for candidates for the IDA board, just like last time, and I'm going to request that our committee members and our caucus do the same. I've sent a couple notes out already. You know, we really want to a true representation of our community on these boards, and not handpicked, cherry picked people who are going to, you know, just do certain things for certain people, right? It's very, very important that we get a wide, a wide spectrum of our community on these Ida boards, legislator Sperry ahead.

Legislator Megan Sperry

Is it possible as we're inviting people to apply and getting like a heads up if they are going to apply to compile a list of people that are interested just so that we're not asking like the same? You know, a couple of us are asking like the same people. And also so we can keep track. So you know, we can kind of diversify like the ask.

Chair Cahill

Yeah, so I think, Clerk Tantillo, that we can put these on the one drive, righ? folder

Fawn Tantillo

We have already. We have a list we've started on the OneDrive. With there. I have I can put up their resumes from the folks that are currently on the board that want to be considered for reappointment, and new ones as we get them. We've had a couple of people apply that did not send us resume. So I've reached out to them to ask them for more information. They just have like a little paragraph in the, on our program, but we'll and we had people that send us full resumes. So I can send that link to all the members of this committee. That'd be great. The information on there right now is not redacted. So I'm going to ask you not to share it outside the legislature. But

Chair Cahill

It will contain confidential personal information on these folks and we should treat it with the confidential respect that it deserves and not share it actually don't show anyone just you can look at it and leave it there on the OneDrive, right? Please don't print them. And the clerk will take care of all that stuff when the time comes for the interviews, and you'll be able to see everything, everybody will be able to see the same documentation. But I just asked you to please don't print it and keep it confidential. And so we'll be hearing more on that in the coming days.

Chair Cahill

And Tim. Did you have a question?

Director Weidemann

If I might just point out that we've had discussions with this committee prior to the, the new members being seated that are an attempt to try to align our tools in the toolbox, so to speak. And so I know, in past interviews and discussion, there was, you know, conversation with each candidate about their ability to work kind of across the various organizations that represent our economic development work, certainly would appreciate a return to that

conversation when this body takes up those interviews is it's such an important thing to have all of our tools kind of pointed in the same direction. So just appreciate that from the last time round, and would encourage and support that conversation as part of this interview. Yeah,

Chair Cahill

I'm sure that will be one of our questions, Director Weidemann. Thank you. Any other questions before I ask Legislator Litts to call for an adjournment.

Legislator Litts

I'll make a motion for adjournment.

Chair Cahill

And before I accept, I just want to say thank you very much, especially to the new folks, this has been a pretty long meeting. It's been a long day. For a lot of us. I've been in meeting since three o'clock myself. So you know, I know that, you know, this is not typical, you know, five hours of sitting committee meetings is not a typical night for us. So I know that I also offered opportunity for the folks from the lodging coalition if they wanted to speak but I don't think any of them made it through this evening.

Legislator Litts

Mr. Smiley is here.

Chair Cahill

Mr. Smiley, if you'd like to...

Fawn Tantillo

And Barbara is here.

Chair Cahill

I'm sorry. I didn't see who else is here. I have trouble seeing everybody.

Chair Cahill

Thank you. So if you folks want to say anything now, I'm fine. Before we adjourn, or if you'd rather wait till the next meeting when this comes back up. Either one. You're welcome. And you're welcome to correspond with us individually, at any time, or whatever you want to do.

Legislator Hewitt

And supervisor Baden has his hand up too

Chair Cahill

I don't see that. Let me see.

Chair Cahill

Okay, surprise rating. Go ahead. I'll let you go first. And then we'll go

Chair Cahill

to Mr. Smiley. Thank you. Um,

Mike Baden

I guess this is actually more a question to the chair. So I watched the organizational meeting of the legislature and i i respectively understand that that housing was changed to the Health Committee. Does that mean that this committee will not be addressing any resolutions involving housing? Or will you also be in conjunction with them? I'm just trying to get clarification.

Chair Cahill

I don't think we will, quite honestly, unless there is, you know, a pilot, you know, deviated pilot. We may, we may address it, but I don't foresee us chair cartels. Do you see how any housing issues coming through this committee in the coming year here? Coming couple years?

Mike Baden

Yeah, the reason for my asking, Chair Cahill is you know, I, many of you may know I'm I'm now starting my 13th year on the county planning board, was the chair of my town planning board for nine years, now my fifth years supervisor and the Planning Department plays a very major role in housing. And while I do do understand the need for it to be considered a health issue, I would support what I heard Legislator Maloney say and and Legislator Litts, to some degree, that perhaps a standalone committee was would be more appropriate I, I would hate to see all the work that the planning department does on housing, sort of be be lost.

Mike Baden

And if I remember correctly, I believe there was a new planning position in the planning department put forward in the budget for somebody specifically to deal with housing. So I may be the planning department will now be answering to that committee in which case they will still be playing a role but it was just a little concerning to me that that that voice and that all that work would would somewhat be lost. So thank you for hearing me.

Chair Cahill

Thank you. Go ahead Chair Bartels.

Chair Bartels

Thank you Thanks sorry I my my internet connection is a little unstable but I think I got I think I got all that the end of it. I'm most certainly planning is still going to play a roll, without a doubt, and I did speak with Mr. Doyle in advance of making these committee changes and acknowledged that with the committee changes it, it meant that there would be more committees that planning needed to report to. And I'm grateful that that that will be the case. But, you know, it may be we've acknowledged that it may be somewhere down the road that we will end up with a standalone housing committee. But for at this point that the housing issues you're referring to will happen in in the Health Human Services and Housing Committee and planning will be there for those conversations as well.

Mike Baden

Okay, thank you for that clarification. Appreciate it very much.

Chair Cahill

And then, Dennis, go ahead.

Dennis Doyle

If I may, thank Thank you, Mr. Chair, I just want to say that the look that Chair, Chair person, Bartels and I did have a discussion about this, and, and more than willing to come back to this committee to discuss housing issues and the breadth of work that the county planning department does, as well as the important function of the County County Planning Board in terms of dealing with regional issues, and economic development and housing issues. And I think we don't want to lose that, that discussion. And many times, I think what ends up happening is we we become much more transactional in terms of our contracts discussion, and, and not a not a broader discussion about policies and coming back to this committee to talk about economic development and housing policies. And I know, Mr. Weidemann would agree with me that, that they're intertwined. And and what we're seeing right now, in terms of people looking for work, and I know, Mr. Smiley still here is serving on an advisory committee with us. And one of the things that is really impacting our resort industry and our hospitality industry is the affordability and lack of housing. So it creates a staffing issue for that.

Chair Cahill

Thank you. Mr. Smiley, would you like to, I know, I called on you before, and you're more than welcome to have a comment now. Thank you.

Thomas Smiley

Quite alright. And thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to speak. For those that don't know me, my name is Tom Smiley. I'm the CEO of Mohonk House, my family's owned and operated the property since 1869. We do employ about 600 individuals right now. In better times, just a couple of years ago, we're up over 800. And it essentially, you know, any increase the occupancy tax, it definitely creates a challenge for us as an operator. I know there's a perception among many that, oh, it's just paid by the guest. And the guest may not be able to tell you the percentage. But when we have a guest on the line making a reservation, or when we're booking a contract with a group contact. They're quoted the total cost, what the actual bottom line numbers they have to pay. And they're going to compare that against what they're going to bottom line pay somewhere else. And so I just appreciate the, the committee's willingness to let this was carried for a month for a chance for us to speak with any legislators. So thank you for that, because it does potentially have a significant impact on our operation. And as such, our employees and the community. Thank you.

Chair Cahill

Thank you very much. And I noticed Ms Stirewalt, is that correct?

Chair Cahill

Yes, it is. I work with Tom here at Mohonk Mountain House. General Manager here. And I echo his sentiment and appreciate having being able to have dialogue as constituents, which we are and it's so we would like to very much have the opportunity to speak to any legislators that have questions about our concerns. I am Tom both represent the Ulster County Lodging Coalition as well. And there are many that are...have concern. So we look forward to being able to speak next meeting.

Chair Cahill

Great. Thank you very much. Thank you. With that now, legislator, let's do your thing.

Legislator Litts

I've already made the motion. The motion is on the floor. It has not been seconded yet.

Legislator Hewitt

Second.

Chair Cahill

Legislator Hewitt All right. All those in favor?

Chair Cahill

Aye. All those opposed?

Chair Cahill

No abstentions? Thank you very much. And again, I appreciate this.

Legislator Litts

I think it's dinner time.

Chair Cahill

Good night. Thank you for for everything. Appreciate it. Take care.