

**Economic Development, Tourism, Housing, Planning & Transit Committee  
Committee Meeting Minutes**

**DATE & TIME:** February 2, 2021 – 6:00 PM or (or immediately following Legislative Programs, Education & Community Services Committee)  
**LOCATION:** Powered by Zoom Meeting by Dialing (646) 558-8656, Meeting ID: 946 8728 8237  
**PRESIDING OFFICER:** Chairman Brian Cahill  
**LEGISLATIVE STAFF:** Fawn Tantillo, Laurie Lichtenstein  
**PRESENT:** Legislators Lynn Archer, Thomas Corcoran, James Delaune, Herbert Litts, III; Mary Beth Maio, Abe Uchitelle and Legislative Chairman David Donaldson (left at 7:30)  
**ABSENT:** None  
**QUORUM PRESENT:** Yes

**OTHER ATTENDEES:** Legislators Laura Petit; Deputy County Executives Evelyn Wright and Marc Rider; Alan Macaluso, Director of Information Services; Kevin Smith, Trails Advisory Committee; Mary McNamara

Chairman Cahill called the meeting to order at 6:21 PM.

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**Motion No. 1:** **Motion to Approve the Minutes of December 1, 2020**  
**Motion Made By:** Legislator Litts  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Delaune  
**Discussion:** None.  
**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Archer, Corcoran, Delaune, Litts, Maio, Uchitelle  
**Voting Against:** None  
**Votes in Favor:** 7  
**Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** **Minutes Approved**

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**Presentation Draft Housing Needs Assessment – Deputy Executive Evelyn Wright and Director of Planning Dennis Doyle**

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**Resolution No. 428 -** Setting A Public Hearing On Proposed Local Law No. 16 Of 2020, A Local Law Amending The Ulster County Charter And Ulster County Administrative Code By Deleting Article XXXIX From Each (Department Of Tourism), And Amending The Ulster County Charter And Ulster County Administrative Code With Respect To Article XVII (Department Of Economic Development), To Be Held On Tuesday, December 8, 2020 At 6:05 PM

**Resolution Summary:** This resolution would establish a date and time for a Public Hearing on Proposed Local Law 16 of 2020 intended to change the County Charter to make the Department of Tourism a division of Economic Development.



**Disposition:** **Approved**

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**Resolution No. 51 - Appointing Member To The Ulster County Planning Board – Village Of Ellenville**

**Resolution Summary:** This resolution will appoint Richard Travers of Ellenville to represent the Village of Ellenville on the Ulster County Planning Board for a term from the present thru December 31, 2021, completing the term of Johanna Winer.

**Resolution No. 52 - Appointing Member To The Ulster County Planning Board – Town Of Gardiner**

**Resolution Summary:** This resolution will appoint Glenn Gidaly residing in Gardner NY (New Paltz mailing address) to represent the Town of Gardiner on the Ulster County Planning Board for a term from the present thru December 31, 2024

**Resolution No. 53 - Appointing Member And Alternate Member To The Ulster County Planning Board – Town Of Hurley**

**Resolution Summary:** This resolution will appoint Mitchell Cohen of West Hurley and Lisa Mance as an alternate to represent the Town of Hurley on the Ulster County Planning Board for a term from the present thru December 31, 2024

**Motion No. 5:** **Motion to Block Resolution No. 51, 52 and 53**  
**Motion By:** Legislator Litts  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Corcoran

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Archer, Corcoran, Delaune, Litts, Maio and Uchitelle  
**Voting Against:** None  
**Votes in Favor:** 7  
**Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** **Approved**

**Motion No. 6:** **Motion to Approve Resolution No. 51, 52 and 53**  
**Motion By:** Legislator Litts  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Corcoran

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Archer, Corcoran, Delaune, Litts, Maio and Uchitelle  
**Voting Against:** None  
**Votes in Favor:** 7  
**Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** **Approved**

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**Resolution No. 54** - Designating The Ulster County Department Of Tourism As The Official Tourism Promotion Agency Of Ulster County – Department Of Tourism

**Resolution Summary:** This resolution will designate the Ulster County Department of Tourism as the official tourism promotion agency for Ulster County, thereby making it eligible to apply for and accept matching tourism promotion funds on behalf of Ulster County during calendar year 2021, and to represent Ulster County for the promotion of Tourism

**Motion No. 7:** **Motion to Approve Resolution No. 54**  
**Motion By:** Legislator **Litts**  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator **Corcoran**

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Archer, Corcoran, Delaune, Litts, Maio and Uchitelle  
**Voting Against:** None  
**Votes in Favor:** 7  
**Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** **Approved**

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**Resolution No. 55** - Authorizing The Chair Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute An Agreement With The New York State Department Of Transportation (NYSDOT) To Accept New York State Funds For Ulster And Dutchess County Public Transit Service (LINK) – Department Of Public Transportation (Ulster County Area Transit)

**Resolution Summary:** This resolution will authorize the Chair to execute an agreement, and any amendments thereto, with the New York State Department of Transportation to accept reimbursement for the operation of the LINK service (Project ID Number 8823.80) including Saturday Service in an amount not to exceed \$360,000.00

**Motion No. 8:** **Motion to Approve Resolution No. 55**  
**Motion By:** Legislator Litts  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Corcoran

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Archer, Corcoran, Delaune, Litts, Maio and Uchitelle  
**Voting Against:** None  
**Votes in Favor:** 7  
**Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** **Approved**

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**Resolution No. 56** - Approving The Execution Of A Contract Amendment For \$8,380.80, Causing The Aggregate Contract Plus Amendment Amount To Be In Excess Of \$50,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Accumedic Computer Systems Inc. – Information Services

**Resolution Summary:** This resolution confirms the approval of an amendment to a contract with Accumedic Computer Systems, Inc. extending the term from 12/31/2020 to 12/31/2021 for an additional \$8,380.80.

**Motion No. 9:** **Motion to Approve Resolution No. 56**  
**Motion By:** **Legislator Archer**  
**Motion Seconded By:** **Legislator Uchitelle**

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Archer, Corcoran, Delaune, Litts, Maio and Uchitelle  
**Voting Against:** None  
**Votes in Favor:** 7  
**Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** Approved

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**Resolution No. 57** - Approving The Execution Of A Contract Amendment For \$2,356.00, Causing The Aggregate Contract Plus Amendment Amount To Be In Excess Of \$50,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Info Quick Solutions, Inc. – Information Services

**Resolution Summary:** This resolution confirms the approval of an amendment to a contract with Info Quick Solutions, Inc. extending the term from 10/27/2020 to 7/31/2023 for an additional \$2356.00.

**Motion No. 10:** **Motion to Approve Resolution No. 57**  
**Motion By:** Legislator Litts  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Uchitelle

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Archer, Corcoran, Delaune, Litts, Maio and Uchitelle  
**Voting Against:** None  
**Votes in Favor:** 7  
**Votes Against:** 0  
**Disposition:** **Approved**

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**Resolution No. 58** - Approving The Execution Of A Contract For \$178,793.00 Entered Into By The County – NTS Data Services LLC – Information Services

**Resolution Summary:** This resolution confirms the approval of a contract with NTS Data Services LLC., for a term from 1/01/2021 to 12/31/2023 for \$178,793.

**Motion No. 11:** **Motion to Approve Resolution No. 58**  
**Motion By:** Legislator Litts  
**Motion Seconded By:** Legislator Corcoran

**Discussion:** See attached transcript

**Voting In Favor:** Legislators Cahill, Archer, Corcoran, Delaune, Litts, Maio and Uchitelle  
**Voting Against:** None  
**Votes in Favor:** 7  
**Votes Against:** 0

**Disposition:**                      **Approved**

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**Old Business:**

Enterprise West

Legislator Archer reminded the committee that the Legislature wanted to be part of an Advisory Committee for the future plans for “Enterprise West”. She asked who will represent the legislature and if the meetings would be open to the public.

Deputy Executive Wright said she will have Tim Weideman attend the March meeting to discuss how the legislature can best communicate with the Advisory Committee.

Industrial Development Agency

Legislator Archer had questions regarding the Industrial Development Agency’s (IDA) change in policy and the impact that change had on the Kingstonian.

Chairman Cahill said he planned to have IDA representatives come to this committee quarterly and had invited them to the March meeting.

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**New Business:**

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

**Motion to Adjourn**

**Motion Made By:**                      Legislator Litts  
**Motion Seconded By:**                Legislator Corcoran  
**No. of Votes in Favor:**                7  
**No. of Votes Against:**                0  
**Time:**                                        7:25PM

**Respectfully submitted by:** Fawn Tantillo & Laurie Lichtenstein (transcript)

**Minutes Approved:**                    March 2, 2021

## Economic Development, Tourism, Housing, Planning & Transit Committee

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**PRESIDING OFFICER:** Chairman Brian Cahill

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**PRESENT:** Legislators Lynn Archer, Thomas Corcoran, James Delaune, Herbert Litts, III; Mary Beth Maio, Abe Uchitelle and Legislative Chairman David Donaldson (left at 7:30)

**ABSENT:** None

**QUORUM PRESENT:** Yes

**OTHER ATTENDEES:** Legislators Laura Petit; Deputy County Executives Evelyn Wright and Marc Rider; Alan Macaluso, Director of Information Services; Kevin Smith, Trails Advisory Committee; Mary McNamara

**Legislator Cahill 00:03**

There is no public comment during these meetings and there's no questioning of Legislators at this time. Depending on how things go, I may open the floor afterward, if we can get through here quick enough. And after Dr. Wright's presentation, if there's some questions from the folks who are joining, hopefully, we'll be able to have a few minutes where we can answer some of those questions. Okay?

So, with that, I'm going to call the meeting to order. And would everyone please rise, and Legislator Litts, could you please lead us in the Pledge to the Flag?

**Legislator Litts 00:45**

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

**Legislator Cahill 01:04**

Thank you very much. We all have the minutes from the last meeting. Is there any questions about them? And if not, I will accept a motion to approve the minutes from the December 1, 2020 meeting.

**Legislator Litts 01:18**

So moved.

**Legislator Cahill 01:20**

And a second.

**Legislator Delaune 01:22**

Second.

**Legislator Cahill 01:23**

All in favor?

**Committee Members 01:25**

Aye.

**Legislator Cahill 01:26**

Any opposed? Thank you.

So, we're going to just get right into it tonight. Let me just ask this question. Is there anyone that wants to talk on the resolutions that has to go prior to Dr. Wright's presentation? Because I suspect that's probably going to take a little bit of time. But if there's any resolution, like from UCAT, or from IS, or anything, we can probably pull those up a little sooner.

If not, I'll just turn the floor over to Dr. Wright. And I'll ask Fawn if she could please allow Dr. Wright to have the screen so she can present her plans?

**Fawn Tantillo 02:07**

Do you want to do it, Dr. Wright or do you want me to put it on my screen?

**Deputy Executive Wright 02:13**

Whatever is easiest.

**Fawn Tantillo 02:14**

You can go ahead and put it up if you want, then you can connect with the presentation.

**Deputy Executive Wright 02:18**

Great. Ah, looks like I need permission.

**Fawn Tantillo 02:24**

I think you should have it.

**Deputy Executive Wright 02:30**

"Host disabled participant screen sharing."

**Fawn Tantillo 02:33**

Oh, hang on only hosts, all participants. Okay. Let's see how that goes.



**Legislator Cahill** 02:44

Those at home be very careful with what you share. (Laughter)

**Deputy Executive Wright** 02:56

Okay. Can folks see my screen?

**Legislator Archer** 03:03

Yes, ma'am.

**Deputy Executive Wright** 03:04

Great. Alright, so I'm going to provide you with some updates from the Housing Action Plan Study. We are still finalizing that the text and the recommendations. I'm expecting it to be out late this month or early next month. So, I've got updates from you, I'm going to focus on two things. Basically, the data and analysis of the data, some of the highlights there. And then also, what we think that the county can do. And with a focus on things that that the Legislature in particular can do.

So, hang on, let me minimize you guys. Okay. So the goals of the Housing Action Plan, which is what we've come to call the Housing Study, you may remember when we talked about this in this committee, last year, we had a little bit of a debate about whether we really needed a housing study or not, or we wanted to focus on designing solutions.

And we came to, really that we did need to make sure that everybody had data on our housing issues. But really use that data to help us first broaden the understanding of what's influencing our housing affordability situation, what's put us where we are, and then what can we do about it. And so we ended up calling the study the Housing Action Plan for that reason, so, the focus really becomes on action.

And, you know, in addition to those goals, I think, the deepest goal that that we came to, in preparing for this study was really that we need to have a community wide conversation about how we can work together to address our housing crisis. Because without that, it's just we're not going to be able to accomplish what we set out to do.

So before getting into the housing study content, I just want to acknowledge that really tremendous service of the nine members of the Housing Advisory Committee. These folks met monthly with us from June till December. Really worked through the data, the feedback and input we got made lots of really great subjects. It was really a powerful group.

I also acknowledge the folks from Pattern for Progress, Joe Czajka, and his team who conducted the study for us. They were fantastic to work with. And of course, Dennis Doyle from the planning department who, who both led us and instigated us all the way along.

So, some of the key things that we saw in the data, some of these things are not going to surprise you, perhaps none of these things will surprise you, per se. But I've been really, I think, for me, the data was even worse than what I was expecting. You know, knowing, thinking that we knew what the crisis was, I was actually somewhat shocked by it. And so I'll share with you some of the things that really jumped out for me. And I have, I have some graphs and things to show you on some of these points.

So, the first observation just from the simple demographics, is that Ulster County's population is aging. I'm sure that that everyone knows that. But the implication is that we're not necessarily right now providing the kind of housing that our seniors, our increasing population of seniors, are looking for, in terms of wanting to remain in the community, but maybe not in the home that they're in.

And that has a follow-on effect to the whole community. Because if those folks are stuck in, say, single family homes, that aren't quite right for them anymore, would like to be able to move somewhere, you know, perhaps closer to town, or with fewer responsibilities or more services—we're not only not serving them well, but we're also not serving the folks who could be the new occupants of their homes. So that's, that's one piece of the puzzle that's really important for us.

Another thing is that the housing crisis is really caused by two factors. One is rising housing prices, but the other is that our incomes are stagnant or declining. Excuse me, and this is one of the things that really surprised me the extent of it. That over the last near decade that we had data for, incomes are declining across the county, except for the very highest income earners. And I'll show you some data on that. While at the same time, excuse me, both home sale prices and rents are continuing to rise.

So, that nearly one third of homeowners and more than half of renters are now living in homes that are unaffordable, meaning that there's they're spending more than 30% of their income on housing costs. And of course, COVID has only exacerbated these trends.

So, here's just an illustration of that, that aging. So this is the what demographers call the age pyramid. And what you can see if you compare the blue lines, which are 2010. And the green lines, which are 2018. This is all census data, you can see that in the lower age brackets, the proportion of young folks is getting smaller, and in the upper age brackets, especially in the 65 and older bracket, our population is growing. So, again, that's going to have an impact on the type of housing that we have and who we're able to serve.

So, we see that for both renters and homeowners, housing costs are up and incomes are down. For renters, the income side of that equation that's more dramatic. And that's because wages are down more at the lower end of the economic ladder than the upper. So, overall, the median household income of renters is down 13% on an inflation adjusted basis, between 2010 and 2018. Where median rents, and 2018 is the latest data that we have from the census, so we would see a greater rise now. But over that 2010 to 2018 period, the median rent across the county was roughly flat at an inflation adjusted basis.

For homeowners it's kind of flipped around. The change in median income for homeowners is a little bit less dramatic. They're basically stagnant, but home prices have risen more dramatically than rents, at least over that Up to 2019 period. And I'll show you some more recent data on home prices that show that how this has been exacerbated under COVID.

So, I know there's a lot of numbers on this slide, but I think it's so important for us to know about so I'll walk you through this. This is dividing Ulster County earners into quintiles. Which means that we take the bottom 20% of income earners and then the next 20%, the next, the next, and the next. And what you can see here is the median, or the mean income, within those quintiles in 2010, and 2018. And so down at this end of the spectrum, we've got the lowest 20% of earners, and on average, their incomes are down more than 14%.

As we work our way up the income scale, the decreases are lower. And it's only when we get to the top 20% of income earners, that incomes have actually risen, when adjusted for inflation, over that eight year period. And for the top 5% of earners, the increase is even greater. So, this is something that I think we all sort of knew that inequality was increasing. But this shows just how dramatically it's happening here in Ulster County.

And so, when we look at where are the majority of our jobs, what we can see is, is first of all, none of the average wages in those sectors where the majority of our jobs are, are in that upper quintile, right? These are all in the bottom half of the income spectrum. And the majority of these salaries are just insufficient to carry the real costs of housing in our county today.

So, government is our largest wage earning sector, or job sector, and more than 20%. It's also got one of the highest average wages. But when we start digging into some of the other sectors that are large, you know, health care, average wage of \$43,000; retail \$30,000; accommodation and food services \$22,000. So, many of these wages are just insufficient to carry our rent or a home purchase price.

**Legislator Cahill 12:19**

Deputy Wright, can I ask you a real quick question. Sure. So, do the schoolteachers and school administrators fall under government?

**Deputy Executive Wright 12:28**

That is a good question. I can look that up and let you know. I don't know for sure.

**Legislator Cahill 12:36**

Thank you.

**Deputy Executive Wright 12:42**

So, this is one way to illustrate the real challenge of making housing affordable here in Ulster County. So, what we're comparing here is, first of all, what HUD calls the fair market rent. This is a study that Housing

and Urban Development Agency does a for every market in the country to figure out what a fair market rent is. That's how they base all of their subsidy programs. So they determined in 2018, the fair market rent in in Ulster County for a two bedroom apartment is \$1,155.

So, in order for that to be affordable, in a full time job, 40 hour a week job. And by affordable again, that means that you're spending 30% or less of your income on housing, you would need an hourly wage of \$22 an hour. But in fact, the average hourly wage of a renter and Ulster County is closer to \$13 an hour. And at that wage, using that 30% ceiling, you could only afford a monthly rent of just under \$700 a month. In order to afford the fair market rents, someone earning that average wage, would actually need to work 67 hours per week. So, that's the degree of the challenge that is in front of us.

**Dennis Doyle** 14:09

Evelyn, if I may, just quickly, I think it's also important to point out that the fair market rent is nowhere near what current rents are in Ulster County. So, when we look at people that have what they call Housing Choice Vouchers, and are able to essentially pay fair market rent, what we find is they're unable to find any apartments available to them to take the vouchers and pay fair market rent because they're out of reach now, in terms of what fair market rent is versus what actual rent is. So, the problem is actually worse than what you're seeing on this graph.

**Deputy Executive Wright** 14:40

That's right.

**Legislator Cahill** 14:41

So, that income based on a one income family or a two income family per hour.

**Deputy Executive Wright** 14:52

Yeah, this would be based on a one income family. So, yeah, another way to say this is the average renter could not make it on one income.

So, all the data that I've shown you so far has been for the county as a whole. Everywhere that we could, we also looked at data on the municipal level. And so this study is going to have about a 10 page snapshot for each municipality, going through all the municipal level data that we have. And the body of the report is going to talk about how, how these, this data varies across the county.

So, this is one just illustration of how the challenges differ across the county that I wanted to show you. The left hand map shows you what the median household income is in municipalities. And so you can see, you know, we're varying from in the in the low \$40s, and then in the lightest green sections to the upper \$70s to \$85,000, in the darker greens in shading. And so, you can see that there's quite a bit of difference across the county, in terms of where the median household income is.

The map on the right shows you the percentage of households who are severely cost burdened. And what that means is, they're spending more than 50% of their monthly income on housing. And once you get to that point, you are so vulnerable to any unplanned expense. Any, you know, medical bill or car repair or kind of anything unexpected, you've got no breathing room. And so the families that are severely cost burdened, are really on the margins.

And what I find interesting about putting these two graphs next to each other is that you can see that the two communities that have the highest fraction of households that are severely cost burdened, are the village of New Paltz, and the Town of Gardiner. If we look over here on this map, the village of New Paltz has one of the lowest median household incomes, that's because of the student population. Right? So, we've got some a large population of very low income folks. And a tight rental market.

But Gardiner has median household incomes. And so it's something very different that's driving up severe costs or Gardiner than it is in the Village of New Paltz. There, it's very high housing costs, even though incomes are higher. So, that's just one good illustration, common [inaudible] County with housing affordability, the challenges are different everywhere. And so, it's going to really be important to dig in at the municipal level, and really look at what's going on in each part of our county. And that's one of the kind of the upshots of the study when we when we talk about solutions, which is where I want to move next.

**Legislator Cahill** 18:07

Dr. Wright, real quick before you go off of that slide, if you don't mind. So, in communities like the City of Kingston and the Town of Ulster that have a substantial number of subsidized housing. How does that skew those results? I mean, I know just like for me, we have Ulster Gardens, we have Chambers Court, and Chambers. There's two over at Chambers, and Ulster gardens. And I think there's probably a total of around 600 units in those three complexes. Right? And, you know, they're all subsidized units. So, that is going to skew the income levels down and the affordability up. Right? Is that Is that a fair assessment?

**Deputy Executive Wright** 18:52

That's right. So, what you're seeing is that I would say the percentage of folks who were severely cost burdened, would be even higher in those municipalities without that, without that subsidized housing. So, despite the low median incomes there, that's one of the things that's mitigating the fraction of households that are severely cost burdened.

**Legislator Cahill** 19:15

Right, but they also wouldn't be there if there was no housing. That's the other part. Because they do come from all over the county into whenever there is subsidized housing opens in the Kingston, Town of Ulster, wherever else it opens up, people come from all over the county to those localities to live there. I just think that's important to note, right? is they're not all they're not 100% [inaudible].

**Dennis Doyle** 19:43

If I may. That doesn't skew the figures in any way, shape, or form. These are incomes for those folks if—these are incomes versus—these are income that represent severely cost burdened. So, these are essentially people that are paying more than 50% of their income within those communities. So, the problem would be worse, had they not been there, but the fact that they are there, it doesn't skew the results here. What it does suggest is, is even though you have a lot of subsidized housing in those communities, there's not enough.

**Deputy Executive Wright** 20:26

The last data slide I want to show you is just what we've been able to see in the data in terms of how COVID has exacerbated these trends. Of course, we know about the super high unemployment rates. We have a lot of anecdotal information, like Dennis already mentioned about the folks who are holding housing vouchers and can't find apartments for fair market rent. So, we certainly have a sense that, that rents have really gone up. But the only place we have real data is for home sales in terms of price.

So, I wanted to show you this. We saw in the previous graph, that home prices had kind of wobbled in the early 2010s, and then started to increase after 2015. And what we've seen with home sales, this is through October, is a continued and steeper increase in home sales prices. And an even steeper increase—this is the median price, but the average price is rising even faster. And of course, that's pulled up by the higher end of the market.

So, what we did with Pattern and with the committee was really try to look at what are the things that are causing this. And we know that that there are structural considerations in our economy that are leading to the low wages, that's something that we really started trying to tackle with the Ulster County Housing Plan.

When we look on the housing supply and housing cost side of that equation, some of the drivers that we see are, first of all, that we just don't have enough housing. There's just low inventory, everywhere that we look.

And part of the cause of that is that we've had very little new construction in recent decades, except on the very high end. So, we are building large, high priced homes on large lots. We're not building what we started calling the "missing middle." We're not building for folks who are looking for a mid-priced home, let alone a starter home.

And we think part of this is that there's a high cost of development. The cost of everything has gone up: raw materials, labor, land infrastructure. And so, when developers are looking at a project, driving it to the highest end, and the highest profit margin makes sense, from their perspective. It's just more profitable to build those homes. Because the margins are higher, given that the high costs.

We also see in in many of our communities, a lengthy and sometimes uncertain approval process. So, it has been difficult to get projects sited, and especially larger projects sited. And we've seen community opposition to new construction. I was really dismayed a few months ago, a new apartment building was proposed for a vacant lot right around the corner from me, that's a weedy mess. And I was so excited that

somebody was going to build something there. It's across the street from where there's another similar sized apartment building. And I was really dismayed that my neighbors came out and complained to the City Council and the project was turned down right from the start. And I think that's not uncommon, unfortunately.

So, when we look at what strategies can we take to increase housing supply? You know, what we came to is that the first, last, and most important strategy, is that we need to really educate and engage the community on how important this issue is. And not just because we care about people and we care about their well-being. It's really a community issue, and it's an economic development issue.

We have a major employer on our Housing Committee who told us, I consistently have positions, often really well paying positions, that are going unfilled because my potential employees cannot find an affordable place to live nearby. And we've heard the same thing from other major employers in the county. It's going to be a constraint on our economic development if, you know, companies that are thinking about relocating or expanding here, can see that the housing market is really tight and there's no place for their workers to live.

So, you know, as in the case of my neighborhood, with the project that was proposed, the only people who came out to weigh in on that decision, were the folks in the neighborhood who got upset about it. We didn't have the community as a whole, we didn't have the employers and the business leaders, and the elected officials out saying, this is great, we need more, we need more apartments. You know, let's do this. And that's what we really need is for that debate to become less one-sided, because of the understanding of what this is costing us.

Moving beyond that, and in terms of policy recommendations. You know, what the county can do in its own power is somewhat limited, because these decisions are all made at the municipal level.

And so what we're looking at is ways that the county can help municipalities identify zoning and regulatory changes that increased supply. And that's where at the planning department has and the planning board have been doing for years. But that's something that we can look at ways to, to focus and intensify.

Another thing that we can do, and that the county can support, is proactively identifying sites for new development. Trying to get away from these one-off fights about I don't want this project here. And have a community conversation, at the community level about, okay, we know we need to build some more housing, where does it make sense to do it? Let's start from there and designate some sites where we can do it. And then move forward looking for developers and good projects for those sites.

One way to do this, that that hasn't gotten a lot of use here in Ulster County, but the Housing Development Corporation when we were interviewing prospective developers for the Golden Hill Project, we went up and saw, you know, we saw projects that had been submitted by some of the proposers.

And so, the developer had, there were two schools, one public and one private, that were no longer in use that were redeveloped as apartments. And then in between, there was a couple of city blocks that had homes that were, you know, approximately 100 years old would not been out of place in Kingston. Some of them were a vacant lot, some of them were homes in disrepair. And the developer pieced together, you know, titles on 30-some parcels, rehabbed the single family homes that they could as apartments. And then on the vacant parcels, built new homes that matched, the, you know, the building vocabulary of the neighborhood, that were designed as two and three family homes.

And one of them was a really impressive project in Schenectady where the developer, and the City, and the Land Bank had pieced together like 30-some parcels to create a project that then was large enough to go get low income housing tax credits. They call this scattered site redevelopment.

And so, it really kind of opened our eyes to the power of that approach. Where you can piece together, parcels that allow you to do infill, and to do rehab in a neighborhood. Rather than just doing these larger projects that may change the character of the community or attract more attention.

We can also look, and again, this is working with municipalities to streamline the approval process so that a developer has a better sense of what they're getting into when they start a project. They have some predictability. They know from the start, what they're going to need to do and what hurdles they're going to need to clear.

And finally, you know, we've been talking so far about just single family and multifamily homes. But another real desperate need we have here in Ulster County is for an increased supply of supportive housing that provides services to folks with mental illness and substance abuse issues, as well as transitional housing for folks who have been homeless. We don't have a good supply of either of those types of housing in the county. It's a perennial problem for us. And there again, siting is an issue that we need to work on.

So, when we take a look at what the county can do, specifically, I think the one of the most powerful things we can do is really support municipalities in all of those steps. Looking at their zoning and where they can update it to increase the availability of places to build housing, streamlining the approval process.

Another piece of this is to look at ways to reduce home energy costs through stronger building codes, better building code enforcement, rehabbing our existing housing stock. Home energy costs are a major component of housing costs. And so, if we can get those down, we can sort of automatically increase the affordability of the housing stock that we have. And ultimately, helping municipalities find ways to proactively increase housing supply.

So, we have been looking at creating a program that we've modeled on the Climate Smart Communities Program. Which is a state level program that has engaged municipalities around the state in like a menu of options to address the climate challenge. And it lays out different categories of reducing energy consumption and preparing to adapt to climate change, and gives us a menu of actions that municipalities



can choose from and earn points. And when you get a certain number of points, you can become a Bronze Level Community, or like Ulster County, a Silver Level Community. And then state grant funding becomes available when you get to these levels of certification.

And so, we've been looking at ways that we can create a package that would combine incentives and technical support to help municipalities who want to tackle this problem do that. And one of the things that we need to do in designing that program is think about what are the incentives the county can offer? We don't have a pot of money, that we can just hand out as grants. But we do have some of those Capital Programs that municipalities can apply for: open space funds, community development funds. And we could think about, do we want to use some of those funds as one kind of incentive for municipalities to participate in a program like this. Or do we want to identify other pots of money that we could use in a grants program for communities that want to work through a process like this.

Another thing that the county can do is help with that site identification process, and for housing, development of all kinds, senior housing, workforce, housing, supportive housing, the kind of scattered site projects. The County Planning Department can help municipalities look for good sites, identify criteria for what makes a good site and support project development. We can also, like we did on Golden Hill, identify county properties or foreclosable properties that would make good housing sites and work through projects there.

One of the things we talked about in this committee, just about this time last year, was a Home Rule request that would give the county explicit permission to use infrastructure funds, out of that capital program that we used to call the Build Ready Program for specifically housing related investments. And Dennis can talk you through the technicalities around this. But my understanding is that the current authorizing legislation that we have specifically named industrial development, as well as what those infrastructure funds are for. And there's a little bit of debate and ambiguity about what localities have the power to do with those funds. And so, explicitly writing community development and housing into that authorizing legislation would be helpful.

We should certainly think about where we can identify funding for ongoing housing efforts. Of course, we're very budget tight at this point, we're looking for ways to fund any, you know, many important priorities. But this is one we want to think about—where can we identify funding going forward to support these efforts.

And finally, I would say, above all, what the county can do is be a leader on this. That, you know, going back to that strategy of educating and engaging the community around how serious our housing crisis is, and what an impact it has on the health of our community and ultimately on our economy. And turning people out proactively to say, we got to work on this. We got to get together and change the way we're doing things so that the crisis just doesn't continue to get worse and Ulster County ultimately becomes unaffordable for most of the people who live here now. So, taking that leadership is really the number one thing that that we can all do.

The last thing I want to address, because I know some of you are interested in this, is the Land Bank. And that doesn't—I don't think that's going to appear as a recommendation in the study. But I want to update you because we have been exploring this as you asked in the in the resolution last year.

So, Empire State Development, who controls the number and location of Land Banks in the State, and who only has a few slots left for Land Banks, has told us that they don't plan to approve another Land Bank and Ulster County, we already have one. And they're not interested in another one. And they urged us to go speak to Kingston, about expanding the Kingston Land Bank.

We've been in a fairly ongoing discussion, Dennis and I, with Mike Gilliard, the Land Bank's director. And so far, there's not a feeling on their part that it's timely to pursue expansion. They have been really focused on getting their own house in order. They've had a number of plans and steps that they've worked through to do that. And they just don't feel like it's, it's something that they can handle. And it's a conversation they don't really want to have.

At the same time, we've really been asking, what is it that we want to Land Bank for anyway? And what do we think it's going to do for us. And, you know, when we started these conversations, there was the sense that there's some kind of magic power that Land Banks have to clear title and get properties back into the market.

And as far as we've been able to learn, there is no such magic power. The clearing of title happens in the foreclosure process, what the land bank creates is a structure for the municipality, or the county involved, to take properties that have been foreclosed on out of the auction pool and transfer them to the Land Bank for further action.

And so, we think that we might be able to pursue many of the same functions using our Housing Development Corporation, in the same way that the county surplused the Golden Hill site to the Housing Development Corporation, for the purpose of developing housing. We may be able to use that for additional sites by pulling properties out of the foreclosure process, out of the auction stack, and directing them into the Housing Development Corporation.

So, it may be that when we're clear about what we really wanted the land bank for, that we might be able to use tools that we already have in order to do that. And so, that's something that we can look into further.

Let me stop there and see if there's anything that Dennis wants to add or clarify that I may have left out.

**Dennis Doyle** 37:26

Thank you, everyone, just a couple of things. One would be is that the demographic data that's here is compelling. And everyone should be aware of the fact that this problem doesn't get better without a public

policy response. The county can't do it all. But it certainly can lead in those ways that can help others essentially, that are that also play a role here provide that response.

I would say that the County Planning Department, through the County Planning Board, is already using portions of that study. We have provided responses to the City of Kingston relative to its proposal to amend the zoning statute to allow for inclusionary zoning and require 10% of all new units to be affordable.

We provided materials to the Town and Village of Saugerties with respect to their comprehensive plan, and calling for the Town and Village to develop a Housing Action Plan, using the data that was in this study to indicate how difficult things were within the Town and Village of Saugerties with respect to affordability.

But we need—not only do we need a sort of a responsible and educated citizenry, we actually need a political will to essentially say that housing development is as important to this county as open space protection.

And what we've seen in this county effectively is that nearly every community in this county has an open space plan. None of the communities in this county have a Housing Action Plan. And moving in that direction and making it sort of an okay thing to do, and a cool thing to do, is as critical from an economic development standpoint, and a human decency standpoint, as open space and as some of the other things that the county is pursuing with respect to its Green New Deal.

So, from my perspective, the idea of essentially making this a priority, moving forward with the decisions that we make with respect to public policy has to be at the forefront. And we have to convince the business community and we have to commit, convince our political leaders to stand up and be counted when neighborhoods stand up and say, we really liked the idea of affordable housing as long as it's not here. And that's generally what happens.

And so, when we see new construction, whether it be affordable or whether it be market rate, we should be prepared to enter that discussion in a manner that essentially helps move a project forward where it's needed. And the reason I also add market rate is the idea of housing supply, we simply do not have enough. And the stuff that we do have don't meet the needs. So, what we're seeing is, as we move essentially away from large lot housing needs into an aging population that is looking for places to live that are that don't require them to mow a lawn, or I would, I would add shovel driveways, it becomes increasingly important that we can support that even at a market rate development.

And to give you an idea of some of the disparities in here. The examples I would use is, for example, the City of Kingston doesn't allow accessory dwelling units within the city. There are other restrictions with respect to that. And when we have discussions with respect to short term rentals, and the county has discussions with respect to how they can maximize their income based on a room tax. That discussion should also come with the fact that effectively short term rentals remove substantial portions of the of the

of the housing stock from being bought for residential purposes, and rather seeing it bought and sold for investment purposes.

And so, when you start to look at the at the short term rental issues. One of the things that we've been doing is effectively telling communities that it's time to most communities should have short term rental laws. The Town of Woodstock has been a leader in this mainly because it was so impacted by short term rentals. The Town of Marbletown has a great statute Town of Gardiner is considering a statute which we are currently reviewing. The City of Kingston has reached out to us with respect to short term rentals. So, there's other things that we can do to make our housing stock work harder and work smarter that we need to think about as well.

But I can't emphasize enough at the political courage to stand up and support projects as they're being considered, especially with respect to a voracious and usually a continuous neighborhood opposition, is something that you really need to think about.

And I would use the examples in Woodstock of the RUPCO project, which was vilified during its approval process and has proved to be a good neighbor. And hopefully, the same thing with respect to the Landmark Project in the City of Kingston, which took three years to go through an approval process. And a number of court cases in order to get that settled, with, quite frankly, no support from the elected officials within the city.

**Deputy Executive Wright 42:40**

Thanks, Dennis.

**Legislator Cahill 42:42**

Great. Well, thank you. So I got a couple of quick questions. So, what are the next steps for the committee? Is it going to extend its life and work towards implementing this plan, once it's finalized. I know this is a draft version of it, but is there the intent to you know, keep it alive, and then follow it through, I guess is a good way to put it.

**Deputy Executive Wright 43:04**

So one of the things that we're thinking about recommending, and I wanted to run this by you all, is creating a Housing Task Force. That that would be ongoing. And that would help with implementation all this. So, the committee was really kind of single purpose and time limited for the study. We have let folks on the committee know that we think it would be a good idea to create a body that would, in an ongoing way, help with implementation. It should have a slightly expanded membership, you know, we, we might want to include representatives from other county departments, for example. We don't have anyone explicitly representing tenant and landlord communities on the committee, and that would probably be good to include. But we have kind of teased the Housing Committee members that we think it would be a good idea to do this. And if they would think about extending their service, we would be really grateful for that.

**Legislator Cahill 44:00**

Yeah, I agree with that. I think that would be an excellent next move for the committee to—they're so familiar with the data and you know, the needs that they probably have a little bit more of an incentive to want to see some things take place.

Legislator Archer.

**Legislator Archer 44:18**

Yeah, this is really helpful and very informative. But again, to the point you made earlier, not something that's new to us but it really kind of getting the facts are and what possible steps we can take to help improve it.

When you talk about extending the task force and I mean, I see a lot of this is not just educating the public, which is a big part, but I also think it's educating the town's and getting buy-in and kind of a collaboration with Home Rule. It does require—and I know that You know, there's been a lot of work done with the planning boards and how they interact.

But I almost feel like we have to take it to the next level. I know, it's an issue that's cropped up recently in my own community. And we've got a small group looking at it realizing, you know, that we have some vulnerable people out there that are having, you know, really big challenges.

And so, I also feel like it has to be something even with maybe our committee, economic development. It kind of goes back, we've talked about this before about, you know, and maybe this, we can get a small team together to say, okay, so how do we tackle engaging the communities, getting buy-in. I love the scatter approach, because I think, particularly with the amount of rural towns that we have, it could be a real value-add in that approach, and could be something creative.

So, I almost feel like, you know, that group may be great for communication and community outreach, but I also think we need a group that's going to own it, in the policy world and in economic development world. So, that would be something I would put out there is maybe we should talk and explore a little more.

**Deputy Executive Wright 46:14**

Yeah, absolutely. I agree. And, you know, this, this idea of the we've been calling it Housing Smart Communities Program, that may not be the eventual name that we all land on, but this program, that we could model on the Climate Smart Communities Program, that would help communities, you know, look at a menu of different options that they could choose from, as appropriate to them. You know, that would require some significant technical support, which the which the, you know, the Planning Department can do, but probably with the help of either a consultant or another staff person. So there's some real work to do there.

You know, when looking at the Climate Smart Communities Program, as a model, one of the first steps that communities take in that program is to pass a resolution saying that they're joining the program, and, and sort of walking through why it's important to them, and then committing to work through the steps in it.

And then they form a committee that, you know, a Climate Smart Task Force, that is going to usually be a combination of elected officials, municipal staff, and community members, that's really going to engage the community in the process.

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And so, you know, part of the benefit of that program, in addition to the technical actions, is the community engagement and the raising of the profile of the issue. So, I think all of those components, the support, the commitment, the community engagement, they're all necessary.

**Legislator Cahill** 47:47

Legislator Delaune.

**Dennis Doyle** 47:48

I would add, the thing I, if I may, Brian. The thing I would add to that is, is that it's not just the communities that we have to consider, it's also essentially, to bring the business community along and to allow them to join this chorus of voices that talks about housing as a critical need for them. So that you end up with essentially a coalition of discussion, those folks that will join the discussion that not that are not just housing advocates, and not just planning boards. But also community leaders and respected individuals within their community that represent substantial economic shares.

That, for example, Mohawk Mountain House, which was on it was on our committee, that that represent those shares that you can sort of speak to these issues and say how important it is. Rather than essentially, political individuals being sort of bombarded by neighborhood groups, that are essentially saying, well, we certainly don't want that here in our community. There's an us and them discussion which we have to avoid.

And if there's one thing I think that the pandemic talked to us about, and there's one thing it's in the data that Evelyn just presented is the fact that the term essential worker is now understood by everyone. And where you're trying to reach now with some of these housing policies and housing goals, is to reach down to make sure that the essential worker can still afford to live here.

**Legislator Cahill** 49:20

Legislators Delaune, I know you've been waiting patiently. Thank you.

**Legislator Delaune** 49:23

Thank you. I just want to say kudos to all those involved in this. You know, these are all issues that, you know, we've all thought about kind of separately, but you've brought it all together. And thank you for that. And I love the idea of addressing the issue of infill housing, because that's where housing should occur,

should occur where there's infrastructure existing. You know, rather than and now, you know, kind of transition into the open space issue. Because that makes a lot of sense to incorporate Open Space as part of projects, it's another important component. And I would think that open space, and farmland conservation can easily coexist, and should coexist with housing development.

And just finally, for me, one of the things that just is so frustrating is that the lengthy approval process with all of the communities in Ulster County. That cost money. And so if you're going to do a project, that's going to take five years to get approvals for, then you have to build projects that are going to have an adequate return. So, that is causing folks to not build affordable housing. And if we can make it easier for folks to do a project, in a timely manner, then perhaps we will see some more affordable housing occur.

**Deputy Executive Wright 51:04**

Yeah, absolutely. And you know, just what you stated about open space and agricultural protection, you know, that's why to me, the kind of holy grail of the municipal process, is really getting to that proactive identification of sites. You know, so that we're not higgledy-piggledy fighting over, you know, this project has been proposed or, oh, I'd rather have open space there, or that's not a good site for it.

If we do it in a proactive way, the community can balance and can designate, where we should be building where we should be preserving. Ideally in a way that gets some community consensus around it. And then, we can have streamlined approvals around the sites that we've picked. You know, if we could get to that point, boy, we could really unlock, you know, both a lot of building and really thoughtful preservation.

**Legislator Delaune 51:58**

So, just last thing and that is, I would like to see the land conservation community as a part of that process. Because they do have that knowledge and expertise. And, in some cases, the financial wherewithal to assist in the process.

**Deputy Executive Wright 52:17**

You know, we went to, and we looked for a representative from that community to serve on the committee and didn't find one. And so, you know, help in engaging that community in this discussion would be really helpful. Absolutely.

**Legislator Cahill 52:33**

Legislator Uchitelle, did you have your hand up?

**Legislator Uchitelle 52:35**

Yeah. And actually, I just thought of something else to respond to that. So, first of all, Deputy Executive Wright, very impressive. And, you know, thank you for convening the group and producing, you know, this output. You know, this is, I think this is the wakeup call that, you know, to a dream, we're already awake into. So, much appreciated.

On the topic of the conservation and open space. You know, I'll add, that the, you know, the Kingston Land Trust, which I used to serve on the Board of, you know, from my understanding has been a bit of a leader in that space is even spoken to, you know, at conservation group conferences about how housing can be part of, you know, land and open space protection, and kind of how those things come together. The idea of a Land Trust, you know, really gained momentum among that group.

I am optimistic, I'm trying to be optimistic about the future for that for my constituents here that are served by the Kingston Land Bank, or would be served by the Kingston Land Bank. So, and I appreciate that there might be other paths forward for the ways the county can achieve some of those mechanisms.

I do want to respond to one of the comments that you made about economic development. I realized it wasn't the main focus of the conversation, but because it came up, you know, you mentioned that housing is an impediment, or lack of housing is an impediment to economic development. And because, you know, firms that might want to relocate here won't be able to, you know, have any places for their employees to live.

And I will just point out that their employees are already living here. Those are my constituents. And those are, you know, Legislator Cahill, Legislator Litts, his constituents and everybody else. And I would encourage the conversation would be, you know, companies, leaders, that might be part of our economic development prosperity to, you know, instead of, in addition to having the housing conversation with them, to have the workforce development conversation with them as well. Because their constituents, their employees, are already here. And I want to find housing for them as well.

**Deputy Executive Wright 54:57**

Yeah, and thanks for flagging that, I did not mean to say that that was the only reason or the only factor in economic development. So, I appreciate you mentioning that. I will say that in the more traditional economic development model, which is not what we are, by and large pursuing in terms of attracting large companies to move here. But that is one of the things that comes up immediately is—I already have a workforce, some of them will move here, is that going to be easy to make happen? And in our case, the answer is no.

So that's a—that rules out a strategy for us that we don't really want to prioritize in our toolbox above, you know, workforce development and promotion of talent within Ulster County. But it is one of the things that immediately comes up is, you know, I'm going to be needing to relocate several dozen people here, you know, management people, or whomever. Is that going to? Is that going to be workable? And a quick look at our housing market? We'll say, no, it's not.

**Legislator Uchitelle 56:01**

And if I could build on that, I do want to acknowledge I appreciate you saying that. And I appreciate that we are taking a more workforce aligned approach. You know, I do want to call out, though, that, you know—I know, you had Mr. Smiley on the committee, right? And you know, I think it shows a bit like



when you mentioned the wages, and the kind of the crunch on the workforce. I think we when you have companies like Mohonk, for whom housing availability is such a big deal because their employees are among that lower wage earning group, or lower-to-middle wage earning group—and they don't have housing. And it really is a problem. When they're experiencing isn't the inability to bring people here—what they're experiencing is people not being able to stay here.

So, it really, you know, our largest industry is really, you know, hurt immensely by the fact that we don't have housing for that population, for the population that works there. You know, I think it's worth really highlighting that. That it is an economic development issue there, because it would be a huge loss to lose one of those, you know, hospitality companies. You know, they're a big part of our economy here.

**Deputy Executive Wright** 57:34

Yeah, absolutely. You know, I'll say that, that they would like to build more housing for their workers. And there are state regulations on what they can do that are getting in their way. But it's so serious for them that they would actually like to build housing themselves.

**Legislator Cahill** 57:50

So, one last thing, I think we're going to wrap up this portion of our meeting, unless there's other Legislators have any questions or comments. The only thing I ask is, is there a plan to take this on the road? Is there a plan to take this presentation to the municipality town board meetings or planning board meetings? Town board meeting specifically, I think would be best, right? But is there a plan to do that, to roll that out? And would you like some guests to come with you to show that you have some support? And I'm going to request that folks on this committee volunteer to go with you when you go, if you want us to be there.

**Deputy Executive Wright** 58:24

Fantastic. I would love that. I have been invited by the Woodstock Town Board via Deb DeWan,, who was a member of both our committee and the Woodstock Housing Committee. So, looking at trying to schedule that in March. But we would love to take this to every municipality in the county. And we'd love your help in setting that up. And you're more than welcome to come. Thank you.

**Legislator Cahill** 58:44

Great, thank you.

**Dennis Doyle** 58:46

The other thing was we're also talking about taking it to the Chamber of Commerce as well. I'm sure that that's there. Right. I think the first place we have to take it is to the Legislature itself, though, just be aware of that we will be coming to you and asking you for it for the support for that plan as well.

**Legislator Cahill 59:06**

Okay, well, you have my support. And I'm pretty sure you have the support of this committee. I won't speak for everyone. But I know that I see a lot of heads nodding up and down tonight. And it's a credit to the work that you folks have done on this committee, and through the pandemic, in such a short period of time from anything in government that we can do in under 12 months, and have something to present of this magnitude that is actionable. And something that we can work and take forward. That's a credit to the committee and the leadership of Dr. Wright there. And I just wanted to take a moment and thank you for that.

Because I know that that was one of the first things we bombarded you with when we started this committee last year. And that's only a year ago, one year to this meeting, right. And so, again, thank you very much. Appreciate your time.

And if you wouldn't mind hanging around, we don't have a real huge agenda. And I would like to open it up for questions from the folks that hung around from the public for a little bit. I'll give him a couple of minutes each, you know, to ask questions or whatever. But I think we'll go ahead with the rest of the agenda right now. That's okay. All right. Thank you.

All right. So on resolution 428. Legislator Bartels reached out to me tonight and asked if we could postpone this, once again. She's contemplating withdrawing it. But she did ask me if we could postpone it one more month I guess.

**Legislator Litts 1:00:33**

Mr. Chairman, I'll make a motion to postpone.

**Legislator Cahill 1:00:35**

Is there a second?

**Legislator Uchitelle 1:00:37**

I'll second that.

**Legislator Cahill 1:00:38**

Okay. All in favor?

**Committee Members 1:00:40**

Aye.

**Legislator Cahill 1:00:42**

Opposed. Thank you.

So, Resolution No, 49 is: Authorizing The Chair Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute An Intermunicipal Agreement With The City Of Kingston For Maintenance And Repair Of The Ulster County Midtown Linear Park (PIN 8761.92), for the Planning Department.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:01:03

I'll accept a motion.

**Legislator Archer** 1:01:05

I'll move it.

**Legislator Litts** 1:01:06

I'll second it.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:01:08

Any discussion?

**Legislator Litts** 1:01:10

Well, it says that there's no monetary value, but we're going to pay \$10 I think for a year.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:01:17

Yeah. 10 bucks. Right. Right. Legislator Archer.

**Legislator Archer** 1:01:22

Yeah. And if there's some capital plan, that will be on the county too, correct?

**Legislator Cahill** 1:01:30

Right. Yep.

**Legislator Uchitelle** 1:01:32

Can I can I just interject. Fawn, I don't know if you see, there's a question in the chat about the recordings. I just wanted to call that out.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:01:42

Yes, they will be. These are minutes, basically. Right. Yeah. Right, Deputy Clerk Tantillo, right? Thank you.

**Fawn Tantillo**

And I sent the slides to you during the presentation. Copies of the slides, they'll be attached to the minutes as well.

**Legislator Archer** 1:02:03

Thank you.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:02:05

Okay, so back to a resolution No. 49. All in favor?

**Committee Members** 1:02:10

Aye.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:02:11

Opposed? Great. Thank you.

So, Resolution 50 is: Authorizing A Public Hearing As Required Under Article 25AA Of Agricultural Markets Law, Regarding The 8-Year Review Of Agricultural District No. 1 And Providing Direct Notice To Affected Municipalities, through the Planning Department.

**Legislator Litts** 1:02:30

I'll move it.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:02:31

Okay, we have a second from Legislator Delaune. Any discussion? Okay, all those in favor?

**Committee Members** 1:02:38

Aye.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:02:41

Opposed? Okay, great. Would the committee be okay, with lumping number 51, 52, and 53 together, which is appointing members to the planning board and ultimate members to the planning board.

**Legislator Litts** 1:02:53

I'll make a motion we blocked 51, 52, and 53.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:02:57

Okay. Any discussion on those appointments? Okay, all in favor?

**Legislator Archer** 1:03:05

On the block.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:03:06

Yeah, it's a block 51, 52, 53? Yes, yes. On the block? Yes.

**Legislator Archer** 1:03:12

On the block.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:03:13

Yep.

**Legislator Litts** 1:03:14

Yeah.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:03:16

Okay, we're good.

Okay. Resolution No. 54, which is: Designating The Ulster County Department Of Tourism As The Official Tourism Promotion Agency Of Ulster County.

**Legislator Archer** 1:03:26

Chairman?

**Legislator Cahill** 1:03:26

Yes.

**Legislator Archer** 1:03:27

I'm sorry. We never voted on the block. Now we need to vote on the resolution.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:03:33

Oh, I thought we voted on the resolution. I'm sorry. Yeah. All in favor of?

**Legislator Litts** 1:03:38

He said on the block.

**Legislator Archer** 1:03:39

On the block, yeah. Yeah. Yes. On the resolutions.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:03:42

On the resolutions all favor?

**Committee Members** 1:03:45

Aye.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:03:46

Thank you for keeping me...

**Legislator Archer** 1:03:48

That's okay.

**Legislator Uchitelle** 1:03:49

The problem is that block is a verb and a noun. (Laughter)

**Legislator Litts** 1:03:54

Well, he said to block it, I made the motion, and we said yes. And then he said on the block, meaning all of them blocked, then we all said yeah.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:04:03

Right. Now, we'd like to move things along here, you know. Okay. So, then we read No. 54, which is designated the Department of Tourism as the official tourism agency for the county. Any... I'll accept a motion.

**Legislator Litts** 1:04:23

I'll move it.

**Legislator Uchitelle** 1:04:24

Second.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:04:25

A second. Any discussion? Director Burger, would you like to add anything. No, we good or? Okay. Thank you. All those in favor?

**Committee Members** 1:04:35

Aye.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:04:38

Opposed?

So. Resolution No. 55 is: Authorizing The Chair Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute An Agreement With The New York State Department Of Transportation (NYSDOT) To Accept New York State Funds For Ulster And Dutchess County Public Transit Service (LINK) - Department Of Public Transportation (UCAT)

**Legislator Cahill** 1:04:57

And this is...

**Legislator Litts** 1:04:57

So moved.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:04:58

Okay. Is there a second?

**Legislator Archer** 1:05:01

Second.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:05:02

All those in favor?

**Committee Members** 1:05:04

Aye.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:05:05

Okay, great, thank you.

And then we have Resolution No. 56 which is: Approving The Execution Of A Contract Amendment For \$8,380.80, Causing The Aggregate Contract Plus Amendment Amount To Be In Excess Of \$50,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Accumedic Computer Systems Inc., for Information Services.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:05:31

Anyone want to move that? Anybody?

**Legislator Archer** 1:05:36

Move it.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:05:36

Did you say is that you, Legislator Archer?

**Legislator Archer** 1:05:39

Yes, I was on mute. I'll move it.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:05:41

Okay. So, is there a second?

**Legislator Uchitelle** 1:05:43

I'll second.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:05:44

Okay. Any discussion? Anybody from IS here tonight?

**Deputy Executive Marc Rider** 1:05:50

I'm here.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:05:50

Oh, Marc. So, what is this Accumedic Computer?

**Deputy Executive Rider** 1:05:55

This is an application that mental health uses to build clients for clinics.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:05:59

Okay, great. Thank you. Okay. All those in favor?

**Committee Members** 1:06:03

Aye.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:06:05

Opposed? Okay, thank you.

So, Resolution No, 57 is: Approving The Execution Of A Contract Amendment For \$2,356.00, Causing The Aggregate Contract Plus Amendment Amount To Be In Excess Of \$50,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Info Quick Solutions, Inc., for Information Services Department.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:06:27

Motion?

**Legislator Litts**

Move.

**Legislator Uchitelle**

Second.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:06:29

Okay. Any discussion? Marc?

**Deputy Executive Rider** 1:06:34

Yeah. Oh, this is for the Clerk. And the original price was for a certain number of documents to be archived. And we've reached past that, that we've exceeded that initial estimate.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:06:50

And is that for the 2020? Okay, great.



**Deputy Executive Rider** 1:06:55

Yeah. I mean, no. It goes forward for the next three years. So, it will increase the number of documents. This amendment, the original term of the agreement was through till 2023.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:07:08

Yeah.

**Deputy Executive Rider** 1:07:09

And this just adds the number of documents that are part of the software.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:07:13

So, then will we be seeing further increases further amendments to this contract? Do you think? Do you foresee that or will this amendment cover the excess for the original contract?

**Deputy Executive Rider** 1:07:25

We believe this amendment will cover the excess for the original?

**Legislator Cahill** 1:07:29

Thank you very much. Okay. All those in favor? Any questions? No? Okay.

**Committee Members** 1:07:34

Aye.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:07:34

All right. Thank you.

All right. So, this is Resolution No. 58 which is: Approving The Execution Of A Contract For \$178,793.00 Entered Into By The County – NTS Data Services LLC, for information services.

**Legislator Litts** 1:07:55

I'll move it.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:07:55

Second

**Legislator Corcoran** 1:07:57

Second.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:07:58

Okay. And Deputy Executive Rider, would you mind giving us a little background on that big number here?

**Deputy Executive Rider** 1:08:04

Yep. This is a software for the Board of Elections to update their voter registration suite, and some other software services, application's for [inaudible].

**Legislator Cahill** 1:08:22

All those in favor?

**Committee Members** 1:08:24

Aye.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:08:25

Opposed? Okay, great.

So, now that concludes our resolutions. And if there's—I don't think there's any new business on the agenda for this meeting. But yeah, go ahead, Legislator Archer.

**Legislator Archer** 1:08:41

Sorry, I didn't get a chance—this really just came up. There are two things. One, we had talked previously about the Advisory Committee for the Tech City. And, you know, what are we, as the Economic Development Committee, you know, participating in? Who's going to be part of that? Couple of things—a couple of other questions that came to mind now—if there's going to be an advisory committee, would all legislators have access? Is it an open meeting? So, just as we're starting to flush out some of the stuff with Tech City, I'm just curious as to where we're at in this process of putting the team together.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:09:26

And its Enterprise West, please. Thank you.

**Legislator Archer** 1:09:28

Oh, sorry. I'll make a note of it. So, that was one. And then the other one that I really felt it should be part of a conversation by us is what transpired this last month with the IDA. It's not so much the fact that they approved the Kingstonian but the way in which they went about doing it. It really raised a number of eyebrows.

I had a lot of phone calls from folks with regards to the fact that they changed the policy that they put in place in the midst of decisioning a major project. And in the end, it really—I don't think it did the IDA a service, I think if it raised more questions about the way in which they approach some of their decisioning. And it really disturbed me that they would make that change in the middle of a major decision like that. So, I don't know if anybody else had any concerns about it.

**Legislator Cahill 1:10:33**

So just to make you aware. My intent was to invite them in next month. We had this presentation, planned and scheduled, and I didn't want to keep people here for the entire night. But my intent is to ask the IDA to send in some representative so we can review the overall Kingstonian project. Because that was something that's been in the works for quite a while. And it ate up a lot of time in this committee. And we had a lot of, there's been a lot of people speaking out after the various entities voted. And, you know, the IDA, you know, did change some rules during their deliberation.

So we'd like to talk about that with them and see what their intent is. You know, because, you know, was it something that they didn't like that was left there by the previous board? Is it something they did just to accommodate this project? Is it something that they're going to be looking at doing, you know, as projects come along, and looking at the rules and see how they apply to each project? Or, you know, is this a one off thing? So, we basically want to have them explain themselves to us on how this transpired. And what does it mean for future projects that go there, and go to them, and how are they going to handle them?

**Legislator Archer 1:11:39**

I think that'd be great. Because I think they harmed their reputation. And if there's something that could easily be said that would clear it up. I think it could be beneficial. So, that's great.

**Legislator Cahill 1:11:49**

Right. So like I said, so, I'm going to invite them in next month is the chairman and the CEO, if they could come in, and maybe if they want to send other representatives with them, that'll be fine. I'll invite the whole board, actually, you know, to come in and talk to us about it. Okay? So, that that was my intent for next month. So, is there anything else?

**Legislator Archer 1:12:11**

Any update on the advisory thing, though? I that's the other thing.

**Legislator Cahill 1:12:16**

So, that was presented—I'm trying to remember where that was even presented, was that presented as an official resolution or anything? Or through the Chairman's office? Or, you know, I don't even remember that.

**Legislator Archer 1:12:29**

It was part of—there were so many discussions. I think it was probably part of a presentation somewhere down the line. I think even a conversation we may have had with Tim Wiedemann, and even Pat at leadership, about, you know, we're going to do this, let's, you know, explore this so that there's some folks in the room, you know, talking about it before any decisions get finalized.

**Legislator Cahill 1:12:54**

Right, so, then I think we'll do this. Go ahead, Dr. Wright. Yeah.

**Deputy Executive Wright** 1:13:01

I was muted. So, I'm sure Tim Wiedemann would be glad to come and talk with this committee about it. If you'd like to have that conversation earlier, we'd be glad to, you know, earlier than next month, we'd be glad to arrange that. I can tell you that he is still working through considerations on what that committee might look like. And where should best be located. So, you know, I know, he's been trying to figure out what the best forum, you know, to come and talk with you all about. We've had some conversations on the Legislative leadership call about this recently. But that's the, you know, that's only a subset of legislators that are coming to it. So, you know, I know he'd be glad to come to this committee and talk about it, if that's the way you'd like to do it.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:13:45

Yeah. So, the only thing that I'll add to that is that, you know, I would definitely like, you know, for him to come to the committee, or representative from the economic development department to come to this committee, prior to establishing, you know, the committee. So, we can just give it the list, because I think our last discussion was, there was we felt like, it may have been a little bit too big, there might have been a few too many people on the committee. And we wanted to maybe tone it down a little bit. And so, I know that we'll have further discussions with Tim.

But, again, we just would ask that, you know, prior to anything being official, right, that this committee, and again, however, we determined the Legislature as a whole through the Leadership Committee, or, or through caucuses, or however you want to do it—we address it that way, as well. Because it's pretty important. And, you know, that's like the Kingstonian of 2021 is going to be, you know, Enterprise West, right? So, we want to keep a good focus on that.

**Deputy Executive Rider** 1:14:47

Hopefully without the drama.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:14:48

Without the drama.

**Deputy Executive Rider** 1:14:49

Without the complications, right?

**Legislator Uchitelle** 1:14:52

Yeah. Hopefully no one needs to change the rules halfway through in order to make that happen.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:14:56

Yeah. Right.

All right. So, there were some folks from the public that hung around. And if you wouldn't mind, if you have any questions for Dr. Wright, or the planner, County Planner Dennis Doyle, on that presentation, I'll give you an opportunity to ask them now. And if not, that's fine, too, you know, or Deputy Exec. Ryder is also here. Okay, that's great. Okay, so with that, we have no further business on the agenda. And yeah, go ahead.

**Mary McNamara** 1:15:31

Hi, I'm Mary McNamara. And I was fascinated with the report that Dr. Wright and Dennis provided. But I was actually hoping to speak just very briefly about the development recently of a water trail on a local county creek, Esopus Creek, the Lower Esopus. And it was a development between the Town of Marbletown, Hurley, City of Kingston, Town of Ulster, all the way down to Saugerties. And so, it was the opening up of an open space, at the time of COVID, when open space is so precious. And it is reflection of a partnership between New York City DEP assisted us with the map making, different land trusts assisted, and different individuals and conservation groups. So, there's an opportunity to speak about the importance, the validity, the water quality of the Lower Esopus Creek at a public hearing coming up this Thursday evening. And I am trying to put a lot of information into just a few sentences. So...

**Legislator Cahill** 1:16:57

I think most people on this committee are aware of that public hearing already. Actually, I think it was distributed through the committee, I believe, and if not, we'll make sure that's the one that's being sponsored by the DEP for the turbidity.

**Mary McNamara** 1:17:10

That it's actually sponsored by the DEC, but yes.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:17:12

The DEC. Yeah, right. So, they had a meeting last week, and this is the public hearing aspect of that?

**Mary McNamara** 1:17:19

Correct. Last week was the presentation.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:17:21

Right.

**Mary McNamara** 1:17:22

It is a public hearing.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:17:23

Right.

And written comments are available for a much longer time. And our planner, Denis Doyle, has been very active—oh, he went offline—has been very active in helping out with this. I guess it just seems like it's fitting to present it to this group, because it's a reflection of the partnership between economic development, and tourism, and the stressful impacts of climate change on both water ways for recreation, waterways for source water, waterways for impacts to flooding. And we're all quickly in the midst of it.

**Mary McNamara** 1:18:07

And Dr. Wright has participated in many different meetings relating to water and the opportunity and Ulster County of doing more water solutions, and highlighting what wonderful resources we have in terms of water in our area.

I guess just in closing, it sounds like I'm being repetitive. So please forgive that. That what's happening at the Ashokan Reservoir. The solutions that have been presented are possibly a short Band-Aid solution instead of looking 50 years down the road.

Right, It's not an easy problem, but that's important. It's important

**Legislator Cahill** 1:18:47

There's no question, it's important. You know, I live I live a stone's throw from the circus Creek and I sat through that long presentation last week and then was dumbfounded that at the end of it they just could not bring themselves to link the hot chocolate colored Esopus Creek to the discharge. It was amazing to me that at no point they could connect the dots for those two, under every single thing that they presented.

I was just—and then the next day the daily paper put a picture of it coming out into the river that was just—how can they not think that that discharge is causing that when whenever they do it, that's what happens.

But anyway, you know, this Legislature has been very environmentally aware. And I think every committee no matter what their charges always takes into consideration the environment. And especially things like the Lower Esopus. I live in the town of Ulster, represent the Town of Ulster. And so, it's very important to me, as well.

**Mary McNamara** 1:19:46

To say that Kingston Land Trust was a partner in helping promote this removal of large wood in the streams, to open up 10-plus miles. So it's great community effort. So, thank you for letting us speak

**Legislator Cahill** 1:20:00

Thank you for giving us that information. Kathy Nolan put the link in for the folks in the committee who want to come to the public hearing. It looks like the links are right there for you to grab. Anybody on the call that wants to do that can do that.

Is there anything else?

**Kevin Smith** 1:20:18

Mr. Chairman, I just like to add, as chair of the Trails Advisory Committee that the water trail on the Lower Esopus is just such a great example of what could be, and what currently is not able to be, especially right now, because of these ongoing impacts, and they're tough challenges, but, but there's a great potential there as well. So, I think it's important to bear that in mind that that water trail is a great vision.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:20:49

Yep. Thank you agree. Yep. Thank you. Thank you, for you for your work, folks. It's greatly appreciated it. Thank you. Is there anything else?

**Legislator Cahill** 1:20:58

Okay, Legislator Litts.

**Legislator Litts** 1:21:00

I'll make a motion for adjournment.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:21:02

And is there a second?

**Legislator Uchitelle** 1:21:04

I'll second that.

**Legislator Cahill** 1:21:05

All right. Thank you very much, folks. This was a very good meeting. I felt I learned a lot tonight. And I think it went very well. And it was one of those meetings where you walk away and you feel like you're accomplishing something, you know, and that doesn't happen in every meeting. I'll tell you that. Right?

**Legislator Litts** 1:21:21

All those in favor?

**Committee Members** 1:21:23

Aye.

**Legislator Uchitelle** 1:21:26

There's a motion on the floor. We can't forget.

**Legislator Litts** 1:21:30

Everybody be safe. Stay healthy.