

**Health, Human Services & Housing Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes**

DATE & TIME: February 2, 2022 – 5:30 PM
LOCATION: Powered by Zoom Meetings, Meeting ID: 892 1908 3247
By Phone Dial (646) 558-8656
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chair Eve Walter
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk
PRESENT: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit & Uchitelle
ABSENT: None
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Legislator Megan Sperry, Clerk of the Legislature, Victoria Fabella, Commissioner Iapoce – UC DSS, Commissioner Smith – UC Health Department, Acting Director McDonald – UC Mental Health Department, Deputy ME Carr – UC Medical Examiner’s Office, Director Koppenhaver – UC Office for Aging, Director Cozzupoli – UC Veteran Services Agency, Director Doyle – UC Planning Department, Deputy Executives Contreras & Rider – UC Executive’s Office, Director Litwin – UC Recovery & Resilience, Barbara Hill, Chair – UC Community Services Board, S. Deacon Bill Mennenga – New Paltz Redeemer Lutheran Church

Chair Walter called the meeting to order at 5:31 PM.

She welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the 2022 Health, Human Services and Housing Committee and asked the members and Department heads present to briefly introduce themselves.

She recognized Deputy Medical Examiner Haley Carr to give a presentation on current staffing concerns in the Medical Examiner’s Office.

See attached transcript.

Motion No. 1: Moved to APPROVE the Minutes of the November 29, 2021 Meeting of the Public Health & Social Services Committee

Motion By: Legislator Lopez
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: None

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Uchitelle & Walter

Voting Against: None

Votes in Favor: 7

Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Minutes APPROVED

Resolutions for the February 15, 2022 Session of the Legislature

Resolution No. 13: Supporting The Medicare For All Act, H.R. 1976, And The New York Health Act, A.6058/S.5474

Resolution Summary: This resolution supports the federal Medicare for All Act and New York State Senate Bill S5474 and Assembly Bill A6058 enacting the New York Health Act and establishing the New York Health program.

Motion No. 2: Moved Resolution No. 13 FOR DISCUSSION
Motion By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Erner, Nolan, Petit, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: Legislators Corcoran & Lopez
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 2
Disposition: Resolution ADOPTED

Resolution No. 25: Confirming The Reappointment Of Michael A. Iapoce As Commissioner Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution confirms the reappointment of Michael Iapoce to the position of Commissioner of Social Services for the County of Ulster for a five year term.

Motion No. 3: Moved Resolution No. 25 FOR DISCUSSION
Motion By: Legislator Petit
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Nolan

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolution ADOPTED

Resolution No. 28: Dedicating Funding To Implement The Ulster County Respite House Policy

Resolution Summary: This resolution dedicates funding in the amount of \$1,500,000 the \$5,000,000.00 allocated for the purpose of addressing the need for enhanced Mental Health and Addiction Recovery services throughout Ulster County in order to implement the Respite House policy pursuant to Resolution No. 425 of October 2021.

Motion No. 4: Moved Resolution No. 28 FOR DISCUSSION
Motion By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Petit

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 65: Authorizing The Chair Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute Intermunicipal Agreements With The Town Of Saugerties And The Village Of Ellenville To Provide The Services Of Domestic Violence Investigators To The Ulster County Family And Child Advocacy Center – Department Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution authorizes the Chair to execute intermunicipal agreements with Town of Saugerties and Village to engage the activities of investigators assigned to the County’s Family and Child Advocacy Center to investigate all reports of allegations of child sexual abuse, serious physical abuse including any child fatalities, domestic violence as well as child trafficking and exploitation cases.

Motion No. 5: **Moved Resolution No. 65 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Erner
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Petit

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 66: Amending The 2022 Ulster County Budget To Accept An Allocation Of Adult Protective Services Funds From The New York State Office Of Children And Family Services – Department Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution accepts Federal funds through OCFS, Administration for Community Living – Adult Protective Services Grant for use from April 1, 2021 – May 31, 2022 in the amount of \$18,505 to enhance, improve, and expand the ability of APS to investigate allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation in the context of COVID-19.

Motion No. 6: **Moved Resolution No. 66 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Petit

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Resolution ADOPTED

Resolution No. 67: Amending The 2022 Ulster County Budget To Accept An Additional Allocation Of Funds From The New York State Office Of Children And Family Services To Continue Safe Harbour Programming – Department Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution accepts additional allocation of \$43,350 from NYS OCFS for the Safe Harbour Program.

Motion No. 7: Moved Resolution No. 67 FOR DISCUSSION
Motion By: Legislator Lopez
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Nolan

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolution ADOPTED

Resolution No. 68: Authorizing The Chair Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute An Inter-Municipal Agreement For The Preschool Special Education And Related Services Program With The Tri-Valley Central School District – Department Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution authorizes the Chair to execute an intermunicipal agreement with he Tri-Valley School District for pre-school services in the amount of \$6,000 for January 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023.

Motion No. 8: Moved Resolution No. 68 FOR DISCUSSION
Motion By: Legislator Uchitelle
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Nolan

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolution ADOPTED

Resolution No. 69: Approving The Execution Of A Contract Amendment For \$150,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Family Of Woodstock Inc. – Department Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution approves the execution of a contract amendment with Family of Woodstock in the amount of \$150,000 for operation of 3 emergency assistance walk in centers (Ellenville, Woodstock, and Kingston) and a 24 hr hotline from January 1 – December 21, 2022

Motion No. 9: **Moved Resolution No. 69 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Erner
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: See attached transcript

Motion No. 10: **Moved TO POSTPONE Resolution No. 69**
Motion By: Legislator Erner
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Walter

Discussion: See attached transcript

Motion withdrawn

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 70: Approving The Execution Of A Contract For \$67,500.00 Entered Into By The County – Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. – Department Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution approves the execution of a contract with Youth Advocate Programs Inc. in the amount of \$67,500 for preventative services and community-based alternatives to detention for Raise the Age eligible youth who are at risk, diverted, adjudicated or granted Adjournment in Contemplation of Dismissal (ACD) for January 1, 2021 – September 30, 2021

Resolution No. 71: Approving The Execution Of A Contract For \$67,500.00 Entered Into By The County – Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. – Department Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution approves the execution of a contract with Youth Advocate Programs Inc. in the amount of \$67,500 for preventative services and community-based alternatives to detention for youth who are at risk of becoming or adjudicated as Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS) or Juvenile Delinquents (JDs) as part of the Supervision and Treatment Services for Juveniles Program (STSJP) for January 1, 2021 – September 30, 2021

Resolution No. 72: Approving The Execution Of A Contract For \$90,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. – Department Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution approves the execution of a contract with Youth Advocate Programs Inc. in the amount of \$90,000 for preventative services and community-based alternatives to detention for Raise the Age eligible youth who are at risk, diverted, adjudicated or granted Adjournment in Contemplation of Dismissal (ACD) for October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022

Resolution No. 73: Approving The Execution Of A Contract For \$90,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. – Department Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution approves the execution of a contract with Youth Advocate Programs Inc. in the amount of \$90,000 for preventative services and community-based alternatives to detention for youth who are at risk of becoming or adjudicated as Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS) or Juvenile Delinquents (JDs) as part of the Supervision and Treatment Services for Juveniles Program (STSJP) for October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022

Motion No. 11: Moved TO BLOCK Resolution Nos. 70, 71, 72 & 73
Motion By: Legislator Petit
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolutions BLOCKED

Motion No. 12: Moved BLOCKED Resolutions FOR DISCUSSION
Motion By: Legislator Petit
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Lopez

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolutions ADOPTED

Resolution No. 74: Authorizing The Chair Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute A Contract With The New York State Department Of Health To Support COVID19 Vaccine Response And Amending The 2022 Ulster County Budget – Department Of Health

Resolution Summary: This resolution authorizes the Chair to execute a contract with the NYS Department of Health for \$313,220 in additional funding to support COVID-19 vaccine response, \$19,576 of which is to be used for vaccine confidence strategies, bringing new contract total to \$509,862

Motion No. 13: Moved Resolution No. 74 FOR DISCUSSION
Motion By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit & Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Abstention: Legislator Walter
Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Planning Department Director Doyle apologized to the members for having to leave to attend the monthly Ulster County Planning Board meeting. Chair Walter expressed her desire to schedule a special meeting with he Director and others to begin focused discussions on housing.

See attached transcript.

Resolution No. 75: Amending The 2022 Ulster County Budget To Reflect Public Health Emergency Preparedness Funding From New York State Department Of Health For The Epidemiology And Laboratory Capacity School Reopening Grant – Department Of Health

Resolution Summary: This resolution amends the budget to accept emergency preparedness funding from NYS DOH for Epidemiology & Laboratory Capacity School Reopening Grant to establish to establish COVID-19 screening testing programs to support and maintain in-person learning, for the period July 1, 2021 through July 31, 2022

Motion No. 14: **Moved Resolution No. 75 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Petit
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Nolan

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit & Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Abstention: Legislator Walter
Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 76: Approving The Execution Of A Contract Amendment For \$14,308.00, Causing The Aggregate Contract Plus Amendment Amount To Be In Excess Of \$50,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Zack Academy, Inc. – Department Of Health

Resolution Summary: This resolution approves the execution of a contract amendment in the amount of \$14,308 with Zack Academy to increase the not-to-exceed amount to prepare, promote and conduct the Certified Renovator Initial Course in Lead Safety Training for Renovation, Repair and Painting through March 2023

Motion No. 15: **Moved Resolution No. 76 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Corcoran

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 77: – Authorizing The Chair Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute A Contract With The New York State Office Of Addiction Services And Supports – Department Of Mental Health

Resolution Summary: This resolution approves the execution of a contract in the amount of \$955,640.00 with NYS OASAS for January 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022, to support chemical dependency and problem gambling treatment, prevention and recovery services in Ulster County

Motion No. 16: **Moved Resolution No. 77 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Corcoran
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Erner

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 78: – Approving The Execution Of A Contract Amendment For \$46,250.00, Causing The Aggregate Contract Plus Amendment Amount To Be In Excess Of \$50,000.00 Entered Into By The County – The Hudson Valley National Center for Veteran Reintegration, Inc. – Department Of Mental Health

Resolution Summary: This resolution approves the execution of a contract amendment in the amount of \$46,250 The Hudson Valley National Center for Veteran Reintegration, Inc. to extend the term of agreement through December 2022 and increase the not-to-exceed amount for veteran per to peer support services

Motion No. 17: **Moved Resolution No. 78 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Petit
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Nolan

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 79: – Amending The 2022 Ulster County Budget To Create One Full-Time Homemaker Aide Position - Office For The Aging

Resolution Summary: This resolution amends the budget to create a full-time homemaker aide position in the Office for the Aging at a rate of \$17.70/per for an annual salary of \$36,816 to provide various supports to senior citizens who require Personal Care Aides Level 1 to assist with shopping, laundry, cleaning, meal preparation and other appropriate tasks as needed

Motion No. 18: **Moved Resolution No. 79 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Petit

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 80: – Approving The Execution Of A Contract For \$150,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Kingston Worx, A Division Of HealthAlliance Hospital Broadway Campus – Office For The Aging

Resolution Summary: This resolution approves the execution of a contract with Kingston Worx in the amount of \$150,000 for NY Connect Wellness Technicians for April 1, 2021 – March 31, 2024

Motion No. 19: **Moved Resolution No. 80 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Corcoran
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Erner

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

LATE Resolution No. 95: – Amending The 2022 Ulster County Budget To Create One Full-Time Deputy Medical Examiner (Medicolegal Investigation) Position – Department Of Health

Resolution Summary: This resolution amends the budget to create a full-time Deputy Medical Examiner for an annual salary of \$71,053 to oversee the 24/7 independent investigations of death in Ulster County which occurred without medical attendance, or which resulted from accidental, suicidal, criminal, suspicious or undetermined causes

Motion No. 20: **Moved Resolution No. 95 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Nolan

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Corcoran
Discussion: See attached transcript
Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: Legislator Petit
Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 1
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED AS PRESENTED**

Chair Walter advised the members that she would be scheduling a special meeting in March dedicated to discussing and exploring housing policy in the county and moving forward to address the housing crisis.

She added that at each month's meeting, time permitting, she would like to have a department under the committee's purview provide details on the programs offered and any challenges they may be facing.

See attached transcript

Chair Walter asked the members if there was any other business. See attached transcript

Adjournment

Motion Made By: Legislator Corcoran
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Nolan
No. of Votes in Favor: 7
No. of Votes Against: 0

TIME: 8:04 PM

Respectfully submitted: Deputy Clerk Mahler
Approved: March 2, 2022

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Chair Walter

So welcome to the first Health Human Services and Housing Committee, which I've been calling, what've I been calling it? HHSO? I'm trying to find a really good name for it, of 2022. Very excited. I'm your Chair Eve Walter. For those of you who may not know me, um, so what I would like to do, calling the meeting to order, is use some time to introduce people to each other, because all the department heads, or many of them, you all were kind enough to show up this evening. So we'd love to know who you are, where you're at. And I'll just say that in future meetings, we'd love to hear a lot more from you about kind of program changes, things that you see going forward. But at this point, it would just be nice to get to know who you are, we also have a new deputy executive. So I think, you know, I think it'd be nice if everybody in the room kind of stated who they were, rather than us all assume that everybody knows. So um, I think I'll start with department heads and in no particular order, except for the one that's on my list. So we'll start with Dr. Smith.

Dr. Carol Smith

Hi, everyone. I'm Dr. Carol Smith, and I'm the Commissioner of health here for Ulster County.

Chair Walter

Thank you. And then we have Tara McDonald.

Tara McDonald

Good evening, everyone. My name is Tara McDonald. I'm the Interim Commissioner for the Department of Mental Health.

Chair Walter

Great. And Mike, is Mike? Oh, yes, you are there. Mike Iapoce.

Commissioner Iapoce

Good evening, everybody. I'm Mike Iapoce, Commissioner for Ulster County Department of Social Services and coming to you live from the DSS offices.

Chair Walter

Perfect. And Susan Koppenhaver.

Susan Koppenhaver Dir. OFA

Very good. Hi everyone to Copenhagen from the OFA also live from my office, ignore what you see behind you.

Chair Walter

And did Nina make it on? I don't see her.

Deputy Executive Contreras

No, she had sent an email. She had a prior programming. Yeah, event tonight.

Chair Walter

Okay, so that's Nina Dawson who's the head of the youth bureau.

Deputy Executive Contreras

Yes.

Chair Walter

And then Mark Cozzupoli. Can you unmute yourself?

Mark Cozzupoli

All right, yeah, Mark Cozzupoli. That was close. Thank you, Director of Veteran Services for about two years now.

Chair Walter

Great. I'll try. I'll only get it wrong one more time. Then I'll get it right every time. All right. And then we have some other people, some people from the executives office. We'll start with you Johanna?

Deputy Executive Contreras

Sure. Hi, everyone. Joanna Contreras. I'm a new deputy executive. I started in November.

Chair Walter

And Marc?

Deputy Executive Rider

Marc Rider, deputy county executive. I am mainly here in this meeting for the housing piece.

Chair Walter

So great. And speaking of housing. We have we have Dennis Doyle.

Dennis Doyle

Good evening, everyone. Thank you so much. Legislator Walter, appreciate the introduction. My name is Dennis Doyle, I'm the planning director for Ulster County, also the director of something called the Ulster County Transportation Council, which is a federal creation. I'm here tonight because they switched committees on me so you can get my love my lovely face with respect to housing. So we appreciate that and hopefully we'll have a lot of conversations with respect to that. So thank you and, and I've been here slightly more than two years.

Chair Walter

And Nathan Litwin.

Director Litwin

Thank you. Yeah. Nate Litwin, Director of recovery and resilience, and also started in November and happy to be here to listen and learn more about the committee.

Chair Walter

Thank you. And then we have the Legislators who are serving on the committee. So we'll start Laura.

Legislator Petit

Thank you. I'm Laura. Petit. I represent district eight in Esopus. I have been on the Health and Human Services now housing since I first became a Legislator in 2008. You know, had hiatus and then came back so I think this is pretty cool. And back in 2008, we actually had a mental health department. So it is just really great, especially now that we we have one and we'll be addressing housing so I'm excited to to be part of this group

Chair Walter

Legislator Lopez.

Legislator Lopez

Hey, um, I represent district 14, which includes the towns of Shawangunk and Wawarsing, and I've been on actually I Chaired the health committee for around seven years, six or seven years and yeah, I'm excited to be part of this. Yeah, playing a different role. So I look forward to working with everybody and getting things done.

Chair Walter

Thanks. Legislator, Nolan.

Legislator Nolan

Hello, everyone. I am Kathy Nolan. I represent district 22, which is the western most towns of Ulster County, Olive, Shandaken, Denning and Hardenburgh. I'm a physician by training a pediatrician and with some training in research design, and I have done environmental and public health advocacy in Ulster County in the Catskills for the past 30 years. In the past year and a half, almost two years now, I also took on a role to be part of the leadership team for Samadhi outreach Recovery Center. And that probably is enough for now.

Chair Walter

Okay. Legislator Corcoran.

Legislator Corcoran

Thank you. Tom Corcoran representing District 11 down in Marlborough current building inspector code enforcement officer and fire inspector in Marlborough done that over 20 years. Previously on the legislative programs, economic development committees. this year I am here also back with economic development and the ARP committee. So thank you,

Chair Walter

Legislator Erner.

Legislator Erner

Hello, I'm Legislator Erner. New Legislator representing District Six Kingston, City of Kingston Wards 3, 5 & 9.

Committee Members

Legislator, Utah.

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

I'm Legislator Abe Uchitelle. I am representing District five, which is Kingston, City of Kingston. And this is going to be the start of my third year on this on this wonderful committee, and I'm also the deputy majority leader.

Chair Walter

Great. Thank you. And so I'm Legislator Walter, um Chair of this committee. I'm really excited to be on it. I actually hold a PhD in epidemiology. So it's been sad for me in the last few years that I haven't been on this committee. So I'm really excited to be here I represent district 20, the village of New Paltz. There are several other people here, but for the sake of time, I'm going to move on and ask Haley Carr to introduce herself and she has a brief presentation, which Jay, she says she needs help the screen to be offered to her please.

Haley Carr

Hello, everyone. My name is Haley. I am with the medical examiner's office. And yes, I do have a very brief presentation. So as soon as I have the capability to do so. Okay. Can everyone see that?

Legislator Nolan

Yes.

Deputy Executive Contreras

And before Haley jumps in should we, should I Legislator Walter, should I just give a quick overview of the resolution and why we're sort of, you know, making this presentation?

Chair Walter

Very quick, because we'll have time when the resolution comes up. So

Deputy Executive Contreras

Okay. All right. So just to frame it up we're, we're the reason we have a resolution on the table is we're facing coverage issue for death scene investigations in the office of a medical of the medical examiner, we've had

increasing deaths, obviously, unfortunately, due to COVID and the overdose crisis and other reasons. And then additionally, we had our medical examiner retire in early January. So we're trying to backfill that position. But in addition to that, we think it's important to address sort of the coverage in the office as a whole and Haley is going to talk you through what the medical examiner's offices responsibilities are and sort of why we're making this request. Go ahead Haley.

Haley Carr

Thank you. Yeah, so as I said previously, my name is Haley car. I am the death investigator for the county. I work for the medical examiner's office, and I am here to propose the addition of a new position for our Office. We are a 24/7 365 day a year operation. We are mandated by both state and county law. We're a science based independent investigative agency and our primary job is to establish how and why someone has died. Our office is currently split between two agencies. The county contracts with Westchester Medical Center to provide our morgue staff an dour morgue operations.

But I'm here today to talk about the investigative and administrative side of things which falls under the Department of Health which is, of course, run by Dr. Smith our, our Commissioner. And up until last month, Dr. Heller was our medical examiner. He is now retired, hence the reason why I'm here today. He and his two part time deputies, Dr. Stutt and Dr. Grovenbergh worked on a rotating on call schedule that covered nights weekends and holidays. Dr. Heller covered approximately 90 hours per week of this coverage. And then myself, I'm the full time employee I handle nine to five, Monday through Friday business operations for the office. This includes all death notifications made during that time and all administrative tasks for the office. Every year, we bring in somewhere between 100-200 cases for autopsy. The number of cases that we can actually bring in though is quite limited based off of the amount of resources that we have. For example, we currently have 14 places where we can hold decedents right now. So that means 14 decedents can be held at any given time. But this number also includes all of the inpatient deaths over at Kingston hospital. And we are repeatedly receiving pressure from the hospital to be continually moving our cases through so that there is space for their in house deaths.

This is further limited by the fact that our morgue staff have obligations to other departments within the hospital. And we can only do autopsies at very specific times and days. So for that reason, last year, we brought in 199 cases for autopsy. But we actually received 582 total calls. When we receive a death notification, there is a series of steps that we do have to go through for each and every case, but especially those tasks that fall towards the tail end of that investigation. Oftentimes, because we don't have enough staff, those tasks typically get delegated over to the police agencies that are co handling a case with us. And this puts an undue burden on an already overburdened police system. And it can also create friction between our agencies.

And then following the scene investigation, usually the next day, these are all of the tasks that typically fall to me to handle for every single case that's brought into autopsy. The ones that are highlighted in red are the ones that typically take up the majority of my time. This is the report writing process. This is calling family's medical providers to learn medical history, requesting medical medical records, we do not have access to an electronic medical record system, which makes this process a lot longer than it needs to be. So when we don't have enough staff to handle the overnight coverage, what ends up happening is that not only am I dealing with all these tasks for the cases that I'm bringing in during the day, as well as the cases that the other guys are bringing in overnight.

But now I'm also responsible for handling overnight coverage and responding to scenes all night and then coming in the next day and dealing with all of the in house tasks. And on top of this, I also do a lot of administrative duties. This includes phone calls, data entry record keeping requests for autopsy reports, and anything else that can come up during the day, the phone calls and the requests probably take up a good chunk of my day, I'd say I spend several hours every day just on these two tasks. And on top of this, there are a lot of other projects that are beneficial to the county that our office is involved in, but probably not as many as we would typically like to do. For example, I'm speaking specifically on our inner office and interagency collaborations.

Over the last year, I've worked pretty extensively in reducing the number of overdose fatalities in our county, specifically working with the HEAL study the State Department of Health, and Ellenville regional and starting the opioid Fatality Review team project. This is just a small chunk of what I'd like to be able to contribute all these other things are projects that I see in the future that hopefully someday with enough staff, I'll be able to work on as well. Our office provides answers to families on what's usually the worst day of their lives. And we provide really important statistical data that allows for the proper allocation of resources. I'm specifically thinking of the lock boxes and Narcan kit distribution. And we also provide scientific evidence for every case in this county that goes to trial that involves the decedent. So as mentioned at the start of this, we are here to humbly propose the addition of one more investigator to our team.

This as I mentioned at the start, this is a 24/7 operation. We were working with four folks before January, and upon Dr. Heller's retirement, that on call coverage is now being split amongst three of us. So now on top of our normal coverage each of us have taken on additional hours every week. So this new position is really just filling a gap for a position that was already in existence. I hope you'll consider this proposal. And thank you so much for letting me come here and speak to you all tonight.

Committee Members

Thank you. If you could just stop the share. Thank you.

Chair Walter

Much appreciated. for just a follow of what Barbara Hill has already done if you weren't introduced in the first piece of it, if you might don't mind going into the chat and just stating who you are so that Jay can keep track of who else is here. I would, that would be much appreciated. And with that, we're gonna move to a motion to approve the November 29 2021, public health and social service committee meeting minutes and transcripts.

Legislator Lopez

So moved.

Chair Walter

Okay.

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

Second

Chair Walter

Who was that? I missed it. Oh, Legislator Lopez. Second by Uchitelle. Okay. All in favor?

Committee Members

Aye.

Chair Walter

Opposed? Okay, unanimous. We'll move on to resolutions. The first one is resolution number 13 supporting the Medicare for All Act, HR 1976 and the New York Health Act a 6058 And S 5474. Motion to discuss?

Legislator Nolan

Move it.

Chair Walter

Legislator Nolan. Second?

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

Second.

Chair Walter

Second Legislator Uchitelle. Any discussion? Legislator Nolan

Legislator Nolan

I'd like to have my name added to this resolution as a sponsor.

Committee Members

Excellent. Thank you. Legislator Lopez

Chairman Lopez

Yep, um, so, what's the objective of this resolution? Like I, I get what it is. But, um, but what's the objective?

Chair Walter

Thank you. So I'll just answer because it's, I'm the lead sponsor on this. But it this is a memorializing resolution to our our state representatives and federal representatives, encouraging them to pass the New York Health Act, which is currently moving along on the state level, and the Medicare for All Act on the federal level.

Legislator Lopez

Is it? Is it moving along? On the federal level?

Chair Walter

No. But the, the New York Health Act is moving along,

Chairman Lopez

Right

Chair Walter

But it's a lot more challenging on the federal level.

Chairman Lopez

No. Understood

Chair Walter

We'll probably get there in New York, before we get there in the US

Chairman Lopez

True. you know, I my questions are for the, for the sponsors, [inaudible] just, just for a little bit of clarity. You know, instead of just, you know, moving forward or me hopping on board here, I may, maybe somebody can answer some things that are important to me, and important to my constituency. I know that does anybody know how much this plan will cost? The Medicare plan

Chair Walter

There is details in there about what the expected costs and savings would be in the in the preamble.

Chairman Lopez

Okay, does anybody know if there's been a recent CBO study, you know, on the latest version of it, or the version that could potentially go to the floor, that discusses costs?

Chair Walter

I'm not going to just keep answering unless, if another Legislator wants to raise their hand.

Legislator Nolan

There have been previously I don't know how recently that has been redone. And maybe I could just say something here to address the general framework. I started attending medical school in 1977. And when I looked at this issue then I joined Physicians for a National Health Care Program, the amount of savings from a national program, and this would be reflected, proportionally, to a large extent at the state level, are approximately a third of the health care costs that currently go to the administration of the system. And I have looked at those numbers repeatedly over the intervening decades. There's no you know, there's marginal change in these figures, we're talking dollars or 10s of dollars or hundreds of dollars of change in what would be predicted for the savings. So it's not a direct answer to your questions, which I think we can look up and give you if you need that before you feel comfortable to support this. But my support for this direction of provision of care is very, very long standing and I suspect it is for the other sponsors as well.

Chairman Lopez

Right. No, I understand. I appreciate that if I if I could.

Chair Walter

Oh, go ahead Legislator Lopez

Chairman Lopez

Yeah, no, you know, in order for me to support this there's a number of questions that have to be answered I, you know, it's my understanding that this it will turn our current system into a single payer system, which would essentially eliminate private insurance. Right? And it does anybody have information on that? If that's

Chair Walter

That is the intent

Chairman Lopez

And and if so, you know, would you be able to keep the doctors that you currently have under that private insurance under the under the new Medicare for All plan?

Chair Walter

So Legislator Erner

Legislator Erner

My understanding, the versions that I had understood would would not eliminate all private insurance, it would eliminate for profit private insurance and retain nonprofit. So an example of a nonprofit insurance in our area is MVP health care. Just as an example, I don't have this document with me, but I'll look for it for you, Legislator Lopez, and anyone else interested there was a a breakdown that the campaign from York Health did of paying for it that was based on anyone who works for a wage, a payroll deduction, anyone who's self employed, there's a different deduction, and it goes progressively based on on income. And it I think, speaks to what Legislator Nolan said about about the overall savings like the amount that an individual would pay. It does a little bit of comparison with current normal rates of deductions for a typical health plan as well. So I'll try and find, I'll try to find that and send it along as soon as I can.

Chairman Lopez

I, I appreciate that, you know that there's a number of unanswered questions that I have, in order to feel comfortable moving forward with something like this. And overall it's a, it's a memorializing resolution. Look, I voted to get rid of memorializing resolutions, and I voted against bringing them back, because I think that, for the most part, they're political in nature, that they they get people to go on the record, oh, generally over issues that we have absolutely no control over. So and I get that. I get, I get the politics behind it.

I just, you know, in the overall picture, do you think that that this memorializing resolution is going to land on somebody's desk? On the federal level, you know, Senator Grassley for an example, who is adamantly against this, and it's going to change minds, because it's coming out of, you know, the Ulster, Ulster County Health Committee, you know, and I, and this isn't the only memorializing resolution that I will probably be against just about all of them moving forward. Like I said, I don't see the point of them. But yeah, no, overall. Yeah, I don't I don't feel comfortable, you know, moving forward with this personally, without having so many unanswered questions. You know, I think even the sponsors of this bill, you know, don't have great explanations as to where the, the monies are going to come from and what the costs are going to be over the next 10 years. So

Chair Walter

Thank you. Anyone else want to speak on this? Thanks. So I'll just say one point, I'm, obviously supportive of this. I do feel that it has a benefit to let the people, our representatives know, on a state and federal level. I think there's been a tremendous amount of research showing that not only does this reduce costs for individuals it will reduce cost for the county, it'll provide better health care overall, more affordable health care. There are many people even on private plans, who are under insured and have extensive costs in addition to being insured. And so I feel personally very confident in the importance of this at this time, and I will be voting in favor of this. So with that, I will take a vote All in favor.

Committee Members

Aye.

Chair Walter

So we have Walter, Nolan, Uchitelle, Petit, and Erner. all opposed?

Legislator Corcoran

Aye. Corcoran.

Chair Walter

Corcoran. Legislator Lopez, are you voting?

Legislator Lopez

I'm a no.

Chair Walter

You're a no. Okay. That's two noes, so it passes. Next we have resolution number 25 confirming the reappointment of Mike Iapoce as Commissioner of Social Services. motion to discuss.

Legislator Petit

I'll make that motion

Chair Walter

Legislator Petit. A second? Legislator Nolan any discussion?

Legislator Nolan

Bring him on.

Chair Walter

We've got the best person for the job. Legislator Uchitelle.

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

Yeah, I'll just take this opportunity to say it. I've enjoyed working with Mike very much over the last couple of years, and I encourage all of my colleagues to use the office, use Mike's office as a resource. I've had issues as simple as, hey, I, I'm hearing about a specific group of homeless people in my community in my district.

And I want to know what's going on with them. Can you help and and Mike has been there to, to, you know, sort through that and, and has made himself available. And I'm proud to support Commissioner Iapoce for another another term.

Committee Members

Legislator Nolan

Legislator Nolan

I'd like to just extend that. Mike's capabilities are really extraordinary for the position. And I know from the work that Samadhi does that, he takes calls 24/7. And he works on behalf of every citizen in this county. It's just really remarkable, to see the work that he puts in knowing what he does during the day, but always being able to count on him if we run into something that can't be handled through the system. He has been, he's been flawless. So, and really stabilizing to people who are calling him who are service professionals themselves, to help those people do their job and really feel good about it. So thank you.

Chair Walter

Great. Anyone else? Legislator Lopez.

Legislator Lopez

Yeah, no, I just want to echo all the all that sentiment. Yeah. The Commissioner Iapoce has been, he's been great. And he's been an asset to this county. And I enjoyed working with him, you know, over the past nine years, both on the Health Committee, you know, we've had personal conversations as well. And yeah, we're, we're lucky to have services. So I have 100% behind this. And thank you, Commissioner.

Chair Walter

Anyone else? Okay. I will say, oh, sorry, Legislator Erner.

Legislator Erner

Thank you, Chair Walter. So as as a newcomer, I'm just learning about how these appointment processes happen. And as the Commissioners here, I'm wondering if we can hear a bit from the Commissioner, and why, why the Commissioner would like to have another term, maybe some of what the Commissioner has been up to, and a vision for, for the next five years, if we, if we could,

Chair Walter

Sure, Mike.

Commissioner Iapoce

Sure. So with respect to your question about continuing to serve and my position, I was very fortunate to be initially appointed 10 years ago, by the Hein administration back in 2012. And that was after having spent 19 years here at DSS, as a staff attorney, supervising attorney and head attorney. So I had had the privilege and opportunity to be counsel to several of my predecessors in this job, and had the opportunity to really have a comprehensive understanding of all of the services and programs that we administer, and also to advocate on behalf of the department and the cases that we litigate, particularly those in family court, around children's services.

So back in 2012, when I had the opportunity to move into administration, I was very grateful that I would be able to work on behalf of supporting my co workers and colleagues to ensure that they have the support and training and encouragement and recognition that they needed to perform all of their jobs. And at the same time, make sure that we were administering our programs and services in accordance with a very comprehensive set of state and federal mandates. And the understanding that I had arrived at after being an attorney here for 19 years, really impressed upon me the importance of that, that, that balance between making sure you're both in compliance and providing mandated services.

And I know that's very common with regard to a lot of other departments and responsibilities the county has, because we are responsible for administering to our communities, programs that get state and federal support and that we're mandated to do. So I think I came into this position originally with that basic framework of knowledge. And then going forward the opportunity to be able to ensure that any changes or initiatives that were implemented in connection with many of these programs, were done with a real eye on making sure that we were still providing services to vulnerable members of our population, it's an ongoing responsibility. We need to wake up each and every day, and be very well aware of the fact that there may always be somebody in our county that's facing a desperate circumstance. The realities are that, you know, it can happen after a sequence of events, or it can happen unexpectedly. And what Legislator Nolan said about the fact that, you know, I share that responsibility with the entire staff here, in terms of being available every day, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. And that's something that I try to do by example. And I try to make sure that we are always available and ready and willing to be involved in any kind of conversations or solutions, dialogues with our collaborative partners, service providers, community based organizations, other departments, or partners at the state and federal level.

You know, this has evolved into a dream job for me to the degree that I sort of consider myself a recovering attorney. It's not everyone who gets the opportunity about halfway through their career to go into a different direction, but benefit from the prior experience that they had. So I never expected the opportunity to become available to me when I joined the department as a staff attorney in 1993. But when I was entrusted with this responsibility in 2012, I was definitely a little nervous, but very excited about the challenge. And I still feel that way every day. With regard to the last few years, it's been very meaningful to me to gain the confidence and trust of the new administration.

Now anybody who is the subject of an appointed position, is subject to a term knows that initially, when they arrive in that position, it's probably going to be a result of some of their accomplishments and their relationship with an existing administration. And when we had a change in administration, basically two and a half years ago, that required a new relationship be arrived at with Pat Ryan and his team. And we also have faced some unprecedented challenges during the last couple of years. So I've been, you know, very grateful to be a part of the response to those challenges I've been glad to participate in in forging our relationship with the new administration, I believe, in all the major initiatives that are underway, are very committed to again, working with all of the other departments and collaborating. So, you know, very happy with my job. When I stay still, the lights in my office turn off because they're, so when you see it get dark in here. That's why that's happened. I think it happens to some other people sometimes.

Yeah. So that's it Legislator Erner. I'm very, very grateful to be able to be doing this meaningful work. I'm very proud of the accomplishments of the staff, and the extraordinary work that we're all doing here in Ulster County.

Chair Walter

Thank you, Johanna.

Deputy Executive Contreras

Yeah, I just wanted to kind of chime in. And also, you know, I am new I started in November, but just in this very short time having to learn and I've learned a great deal from Mike Iapoce already, he's extremely knowledgeable in what he does. He's very, very responsive and dependable. He's a great leader. Um, he's always bringing his staff into the process, which is important, you know, both for their morale and you know, the quality of the work. He really cares about the residents and that shows, and he is tireless. As everybody else says, this is a 24/7 job, I can tell you that it never stops. And Mike is always there. So we are truly lucky to have him and we support him 100% That's why we are reappointing him here.

Chair Walter

I'll say that, uh, you know, looking forward to getting, hearing more about things you might want to see happening differently down the line from you and from the other department heads. In future meetings. I think we're going to try to schedule one of you at a time to really have a bit of the deeper dive. So we look forward to having more conversations with you. So all in favor of resolution number 25.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Any opposed? Any abstentions? Okay, I think that was unanimous. Okay, so next thing we have is resolution number 28 dedicating funding from ARP to implement the Ulster County respite House policy motion to discuss

Legislator Nolan

I'll move it

Chair Walter

Legislator Nolan second Legislator Petit. I'll just give a quick background since I'm the one of the lead sponsors on this. So this has been approved already, the respite houses, by the Legislature in the previous session. We hadn't allocated where the revenue would come from, it was a bit of a perhaps a miscommunication. Originally, my intent was to include this with the crisis stabilization center. And which did get approved through ARP money, the crisis stabilization center. And so, again, we have already approved having the respite house. This is just about connecting it to ARP funding. The reason why I believe ARP funding is so suitable for this is once these are built, they will be self sustainable.

This would be a partnership with a nonprofit who would deliver the service, and it would have to be a nonprofit who's fully licensed and can be reimbursed from the state. And so it so it has a sustainability, which I think is an important thing that we're not this is not a cost that we necessarily will have to keep paying for. We know that during COVID The mental health crisis and the opioid crisis and substance abuse crisis have all gotten worse, which is one of the important caveats with ARP is has COVID made this problem worse. And these are just desperately needed.

When, when inpatient mental health got deinstitutionalized many, many years ago, we didn't really have strong solutions for what to do. And just locally losing our emergency for a mental health beds in and Westchester Health Alliance has only exacerbated what's already a problem. And so and this desire to have these seven to 10 day respite houses, which may one day be 30 days, if the state changes its legislation, will provide a much needed opportunity for individuals who are in crisis to get the kinds of services they need, to continue to get case management after they leave, and really get themselves together. This is strongly supported by judges, by law enforcement, by community members as well. Any comments questions from the Legislature? Legislator Petit

Legislator Petit

Thank you. And thank you for doing this with I believe it was co sponsored with Legislator Criswell. We had some questions come up during the committee Chair meeting about locations and how many units. could you do a little bit more?

Chair Walter

Absolutely.

Legislator Petit

Thank you

Chair Walter

Um, I the resolution that we've already approved said a minimum of eight units. Ideally, it would be great to have more, it also specifies that it will be geographically spread, recognizing that there are, it needs to go beyond Kingston that we have a very large county and we need to make sure these beds are accessible. Um, I did not put the words not in Kingston. However the language that says that it needs to be geographically spread and identify locations that are not already met, by default in my mind says not in Kingston, because we do have these kinds of housing and Kingston. There is also a respite house right now in Milton, which is technically Orange County, but it is right on our border. So we do have that accessibility.

So I think it'd be really important that the team that looks, you know, whoever the RFP team really look at whether it's proposed, you know, proposed by the the nonprofit plus, it's also ideally that we're going to be utilizing a building that already the county already owns because of it, you know, them going into bankruptcy. So it potentially will be also a lot less money than it says now, but that will make a difference. I will just say now, that while the motivation and desire is to have this, you know, to me, I feel like the northern northern region and the region heading towards Ellenville are the two that are really missing it personally. In the end. It's also going to be up to the communities. A lot of communities don't like to have something like this in their homes. So if it is your community that we ended up putting this in, we're going to need your help in really getting this approved through the planning board. Because this this is prot, this becomes problematic, not just where we want it, but which community will be okay with us having, allowing us to have it there.

Any other questions? Okay, all in favor of resolution number 28?

Committee Members

Aye.

Chair Walter

Any opposed? Okay. I think that's unanimous as well. Resolution number 65, authorizing the Chair of the Ulster County Legislature to execute inter municipal agreements with the town of Saugerties and village of Ellenville to provide the services of domestic violence investigator to the Ulster County family and child advocacy center motion to discuss. Legislator Erner, Second Petit, thank you. Any discussion? I'll just say that we did just ask at the Chairs meeting if there was just some information about its location of that being specifically Saugerties and Ellenville? I don't know if Mike, you can answer that or, Johanna.

Commissioner Iapoce

Um, sure I'll respond to that Chair Walter. So at this particular point in time, those are the two municipalities that we have had arrangements for their law enforcement officers to be assigned to the Family and Children's Advocacy Center. So when this happens, basically, we continue to have that agreement with that municipality, as long as they're willing to have the law enforcement officer available, and it can depend on what their needs are in their municipality. Our normal experience is that they tend to make law enforcement officers available for two to three years. And the origins of doing this have been to give law enforcement departments and municipalities throughout the county the opportunity to have personnel assigned to the FCAC, so they can develop a specialty in investigating cases that involve domestic violence and severe child abuse and sexual abuse. And then they can return to their municipalities with that unique special knowledge to be able to contribute to investigations that take place.

So the origins behind this arrangement go back several decades. And over the years, we've had law enforcement officers from the town of Ulster, City of Kingston, town of New Paltz, town of Saugerties, town of Ellenville, and it's basically on a rotating basis. So that's what's behind it. We also normally have a law enforcement officer from the Ulster County Sheriff's Department and from the New York State Police. And what happens at the FCAC there's four teams of investigators that are comprised of a law enforcement officer and a child protective services caseworker. So that's basically what the organizational structure is. And in the event, they have to take back their officer, we reach out to other municipalities to check on what the availability is. So that's why it's arranged that way.

Chair Walter

That's helpful, thank you. Any other questions or comments? Legislator Erner.

Legislator Erner

Hi. Thank you, Chair Walter. And thank you, Commissioner, Iapoce for that explanation. I can you or another person walk me through a little bit more about how an investigation goes not that familiar with CPS investigations through DSS and the police collaboration, I'd just like to know a little bit more, maybe an example of something that might be investigated and how that collaboration works.

Commissioner Iapoce

Sure, and I'll try to be brief. So if you want me to limit my remarks, or you know, just give me a signal, it's a fairly complicated question Legislator Erner, but I'll try to give you the crib notes version. So New York State operates a state central registry. And the purpose of that registry is to receive telephone calls regarding child abuse and neglect. When the New York state central registry receives a telephone call reporting child abuse or neglect, they take a report and depending upon where that incident has taken place, and what county jurisdiction, the state

central registry contacts, the county department of social services, and we initiate an investigation into the report that has been received. depending upon the nature of the report in terms of the severity of the category of abuse or neglect, it may end up being a report that gets assigned to the Family and Children's Advocacy Center, because there could also be criminal consequences that could be arrived at. So that's where the team of investigators, including child protective services case worker, and a law enforcement officer was arrived at.

We were actually one of the first counties in New York State to create a Family and Children's Advocacy Center back in 1994. And it was a pilot program at that time, and it's remained in full force and effect and it's been duplicated elsewhere throughout the state. And what can also happen is if law enforcement in connection with a 911 call or other inquiry, arrive at a location and see that there might be some degree of child abuse or neglect, then they're mandated to contact the state central registry and make a report. And when that happens, again, the state central registry will take into consideration the nature and circumstances of the report and the allegations. And if there could potentially be criminal investigation that's required, it will get assigned to our FCAC. So that's kind of a basic summary. And the FCAC also has other essential staff, including crime victims counselors, physicians, therapists, who also treat and contribute to the investigation in terms of interviews and support and services for the families that might be affected by an incident of this nature.

Chair Walter

Thank you. Okay. So all in favor of resolution number 65.

Committee Members

Aye.

Chair Walter

Any opposed? Okay, unanimous. Next, we have resolution number 66 amending the 2022 Ulster County budget to accept an allocation for adult protective services from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. Motion to discuss.

Legislator Nolan

So moved.

Chair Walter

Legislator Nolan. A second, Legislator Petit, any discussion? So we did ask Deputy Executive Contreras for some detailed spend down and timeline. Were you able to get some more information on that?

Deputy Executive Contreras

Yes. So of the the total \$3,798 has been spent so far. Um, and so the rest of it will be spent in the future.

Chair Walter

Okay, and this started, started six months ago. Why do you did you find out like why we are getting it now in front of us?

Deputy Executive Contreras

I'm sorry, Commissioner Iapoce, did you have that piece?

Commissioner Iapoce

Sure. Basically, there were some procedural steps that have to be completed in order to make the funding available to us to be able to start to transact. And that is there was no particular delay. And we're still in a viable time frame and confident that we'll be able to expend the funds on the items that are permissible.

Chair Walter

Thank you. Any other questions? Okay, all in favor of resolution number 66.

Committee Members

Aye.

Chair Walter

Opposed? Great. It's moved, I think unanimous. resolution number 67 amending the 2022 Ulster County budget to accept an additional allocation of funds from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services to continue Safe Harbour programming department of social services again. motion to discuss.

Legislator Lopez

So moved

Chair Walter

Legislator Lopez, second Legislator Nolan. any discussion? All right. All in favor of resolution number. Sorry, 67.

Committee Members

Aye.

Chair Walter

Any opposed? Okay. Resolution number 68 authorizing the Chair of Ulster County Legislature to execute an inter municipal agreement for the preschool special education and related service program with tri Valley Central School Districts Department of Social Services. motion to discuss.

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

Move it

Chair Walter

Legislator Uchitelle, second

Legislator Nolan

Second

Chair Walter

Legislator Nolan. Questions. Legislator Petit,

Legislator Petit

Just just about the location. They do the IEP is it just for the City of Kingston, and this is a organization outside of Ulster County. So do they come into Ulster County? I mean, I Googled it. And it looks like it's actually a school system itself.

Chair Walter

Mike, do you want to take that one too?

Commissioner Iapoce

Sure. It's basically Legislator Petit on a case by case basis for students that are identified that might be attending other schools, and they transact the arrangements. So I'm not sure specifically that they're coming into the school, I think that they transact the information. And that's done remotely to connect the students with the service providers depending on the particular kind of service that's required.

Legislator Petit

And it also covers the service because I think it said an hour, not not not less than an hour a day per student, or not more than an hour per day. But so that also covers that you know, that particular task as well, or they just an intermediary kind of organization.

Commissioner Iapoce

Think they're just transacting the arrangements with regard to connecting the student with the service provider. And the service is actually paid to the provider who would be a professional therapist, speech therapists, audiologists, whatever that might be. So it's for transacting the arrangement for the service that doesn't pay for the service, though.

Legislator Petit

And this wouldn't be through the school system, given that they're their own taxing entity. This would be through referrals through social services then, because it because it all looks like it should be part of our school system.

Chair Walter

Oh, sorry, you put yourself on mute Mike

Commissioner Iapoce

Thanks, Jay. This is for preschool age children. So it's not necessarily on their radar. I think you're right Legislature that when it reaches the point that a child becomes a student in school district, then it's transitioned to being arranged for by the school district.

Chair Walter

We have Legislator Nolan. And then we have deputy executive Rider.

Legislator Nolan

I defer to Deputy Executive Rider first. And if he doesn't cover the point, then I would come in.

Chair Walter

Alright, go ahead Marc.

Deputy Executive Rider

We're gonna say the same thing. We have a very small portion in Ulster County in the tri Valley Central School Districts. So we have these agreements with basically all the districts and as the Commissioner said, because this is preschool education we ended up funding it but it is through its through the district and the reason we're doing this is that there's a sliver of Ulster County in the tri Valley, tri Valley Central School District.

Chair Walter

Does that cover it Legislator Nolan?

Legislator Nolan

Yes. And the detail I would add is that the town of Denning has two Hamlets Claryville and Sundown and they're on either side of a promontory of Sullivan County. That is part of that tri Valley school system. So the explanation of the students receiving their services in another county or in another area that makes sense for places like that. And I think this is particularly my district, although I haven't been able to follow up and confirm that.

Chair Walter

All right, anything else? All right. Okay. All in favor of resolution number 68.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Opposed? All right, unanimous. Next, we have resolution number 69 approving the execution of a contract amendment for \$150,000 entered into the county related to family of Woodstock motion to discuss? Legislator Erner, second Uchitelle any discussion? Legislator Petit

Legislator Petit

just to clear up the, this isn't an increase. We had brought this up at our committee Chair meeting too.

Chair Walter

No, no. This is different This is the hotline [inaudible]

Legislator Petit

Okay, perfect. Thank you.

Chair Walter

That that's coming. Right Jay. That's not this one. Yeah, this is the services of the different mergency assistant walking centers.

Legislator Petit

Okay.

Chair Walter

All right. Not our hotline. Other

Legislator Nolan

So just to be sure that I understand this. So it says prior term and amended term. Those are are identical, but that's because there are additional services being added not extension to the term.

Chair Walter

Oh, actually, you're right, this might be that one. Hold on, let me open the full one. Or maybe I don't know, if Marc, or Johanna, is this

Deputy Executive Contreras

This is the same, this isn't the same one that we were discussing.

Chair Walter

Okay. So this is an increase due to the salary changes.

Deputy Executive Contreras

Yes. And sorry, I've clapped. I don't know how [laughter] I was trying to raise my hand.

Chair Walter

Thank you. So thank you Laura for that. You're absolutely right. It was that one. So we had requested that you provided the detailed information about who was getting these increases of salary and a full breakdown of the budget? Were you able to get that?

Deputy Executive Contreras

Yes, well, I got sort of more of a broader overview and a framing that I'm hoping will be helpful. But basically, this is the this is tied to a budget amendment amendment that was put forth by I think, Legislator, Legislator, Uchitelle um, last year during the budget process, and there in the amendment was to allow them to pay all their employees a living wage, as well as to increase the county support towards their services in general. So the the part beyond the living wage was also contemplated during that conversation. So the way that it breaks down is this is an increase of 150,000. 60,000 of it is specifically due to the living wage, and the other 90,000 is for greater support from the county for those emergency walk in centers. So that totals the 150,000. But that tracks with the original request, and a budget amendment as it was discussed, which was that they needed 50,000 for each center. So that's 50,000 times three.

Chair Walter

Thank you, I appreciate that. I will say, though, you know, especially because we're going to have a few of these situations of having an increase of county share, because of the salary increase that we really, we do need to see a much greater breakdown, there is concern by some Legislators that it's, you know, that this is supposed to truly be to support create something closer to a cost of living increase for those people at the bottom, and not necessarily dealing with compression, but really those people who were not making a reasonable salary to get a reasonable salary.

And so I think that we're gonna really need to have the kind of details of how many people are getting these absolute increases, and you know, what their previous salaries were and what their future we don't need to know who they are. But we really need to have some more detail to sort of show how this is playing out. And it's probably useful that we track related to Legislator Uchitelle's amendment, because we need to know that it will all equal the amount that the amendment has to end up being. There's one in our committee, there's another one in law enforcement, public safety, that's just this month. But with so many contracts with family of Woodstock, we're going to have to know that the amendment that was made for 2022 covers the true expected increases related to the salary.

Deputy Executive Contreras

All right Marc. That makes sense, and we'll make sure

Chair Walter

Let me just, I'm sorry, go ahead. Go ahead, Johanna. And then I'll do Legislator Uchitelle

Deputy Executive Contreras

I was just going to say that makes sense. And we'll make sure that it aligns and only adds up to that budget amendment.

Chair Walter

Thanks, Legislator Uchitelle

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

Yeah. So I have the amendment from the budget that we passed in front of me, and I believe this lines up with the very first line item on that amendment, which is the exact price of \$150,000. I'm hoping it so I'm hoping number one, that I'm correct that that is, you know, those aren't it's not a coincidence that that's the same number, but it's actually fulfilling that specific aspect of the amendment, that first line. And then my second thought is, and my second hope, is that the, you know, the contract changes continue to reflect the line items in the amendment that we passed during the budget process.

Chair Walter

Yeah, so the problem I have with that is we were just told that only a portion of that of the 150 was for salaries. So it shouldn't be 150. It should be

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

well, I don't think so. It's in the line is the total contract amount. It doesn't break down salaries or professional services. In the in the I mean, I'm literally just looking at the one the one page amendment from the budget process. I'm not looking at any backup justification. I realized all of these can get broken down further because they literally they just have the, you know, like the item description doesn't go into salaries in any of them. Right. So you obviously would have to break it down.

Chair Walter

Yeah, let me just, my point being is that we were told that's a big chunk of this is expanded services, which is not what your amendment covers.

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

I believe it covered both, I could be mistaken. But I believe that it covered also the expanded services

Chair Walter

The budget amendment that you put forward

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

Correct. The budget amendment also covered their request to expand the services to meet the service level need.

Chair Walter

Okay, I understand. I'm gonna give Marc a minute and then go to Legislator Erner

Deputy Executive Rider

The only thing I want to say is, and it's not specifically on just this resolution, but it's something that you brought up Legislator Walter is, you are going to see every amendment that you see this year, for any contract amendment, regardless of whether it's human services, regardless of whether it's anything is going to have the one line that talks about living wage requirement. And that's because that law requires us to put in that requirement going forward on any contract and contract amendment, it doesn't mean when you see that line, that the contract is increased because of the living wage requirement. So the one that you're talking about in probation, the one all of these other contracts, and like we had one last night in public works, that was Pestmaster. Pestmaster had nothing to do with the living wage increase. But the purchasing department has to put in the paragraph requiring that they pay a living wage. And so you're going to see every amendment this year reference the living wage requirement. And so I just want to clarify, it doesn't mean we're increasing every contract because of the living wage.

Chair Walter

Right. I mean, that's, that speaks to the other point I made at the Chairs meeting is that whenever it's a budget amendment, it should have a lot of backup, it should have the details of what is being changed, what's being added, or what's being taken away. And so the concern was, is not having that detail going with this resolution. That way, if it's nothing to do with living, you know, increasing wages, it will show up in the details. So it's just a request for the details. Legislator Erner.

Legislator Erner

Yeah, I want to echo that. And I'd rather wait on this until we have those details. This is the one proposal that I've seen so far, for our committee tonight that I think is lacking in that. So how would others feel about waiting on this?

Chair Walter

Well, you could make a motion to postpone if you want, and we could vote on a postponement if that's what you would like to do.

Legislator Erner

Yes, it is. So moved.

Chair Walter

Okay. Is there a seconder for the postponement, and then we will discuss it after the second just so you know, just whether there's a second for the postponement. I'll second it for the sake of us having a discussion. And so now we'll open it up to discussion on the postponement. Legislator Nolan.

Legislator Nolan

I can understand this concern. But 35% of this funding is from the county and the rest is federal and state. And so I would prefer to move this along. And we have a pledge from the executive team that we'll get this information. I also have a little bit of concern, some of this information, salary and innerworkings of some of the programs that receive these contracts, that they you know, having the materials submitted to the committee as part of the committee package raises some confidentiality issues for some of the individuals involved yet, we need to have that information. So I'd like us to look at a process that would maybe achieve both ends of keeping material that for example, nonprofits are not always required to put some of this into their filings, federal filings in order not to have it all be public. So maybe following along what's required for those public filings. At any rate, it makes me reluctant to hold back on this um, although I agree with addressing the concerns as we move forward.

Chair Walter

Legislator Lopez

Chairman Lopez

Yeah, I agree with Legislator Nolan umI, I would ask, maybe Legislator Erner if you can have some clarification prior to this going to ways and means would you be willing to withdraw that motion to postpone and vote to move it forward?

Legislator Erner

Uh, yeah, I would Legislator Lopez, thank you.

Legislator Nolan

Except I don't see it on the resolution that this goes to Ways and Means

Chair Walter

Yeah, it must.

Legislator Nolan

Okay good.

Legislator Lopez

Yeah, I would imagine it does

Chair Walter

Yeah, I mean, I'll say, related, I appreciate that Legislator Lopez and Legislator Erner and Legislator Nolan. Um, you know, I think this is the first time we're dealing with this because we just passed this resolution to increase salaries for the social services. So we got to figure out a way to go forward, and it's new for us.

And so, you know, I think I would agree that, I feel, I completely agree that the concept of postponing it, but at the same time, would say, because this is our first time, if I will extend an olive branch and say to the executive's office, get us this information, get us the details by Ways and Means this time, but going forward, you know, recognize that we have a it is very important, and we've had this discussion among the Chairs, that committees really do the committee work, and don't lay everything on ways and means. and so in this case, I think I'm okay with with not postponing it and letting it go to ways and means because this is a new shift. But I think, you know, making it clear that going forward, we're going to want the information here in committee or things in the future will be postponed here. So, are you so you are you withdrawing your proposal? Legislator Erner?

Legislator Erner

Yes. I'll withdraw it.

Chair Walter

Okay. So any? Sorry, Johanna, do you still have your hand up? No. Okay.

Deputy Executive Contreras

Yes, yes,

Chair Walter

Oh, you do. Okay. Go ahead

Deputy Executive Contreras

yeah. I just wanted to clarify specifically. So we can make sure that we get you the information that you need. Before the Ways and Means Committee, are you and mindful of the, you know, confidentiality questions that Legislator Nolan raised? Like, are you just looking for a breakdown of what types of positions are getting increases?

Chair Walter

Yeah. And what were what they were and what they're going to, I mean, it would have to have happened in the budget process to calculate it anyway. But you know, there are Legislators who are concerned that this is going to be utilized not exactly for the work that it's supposed to be. So I'm not saying that's true. But I think having that detail, the position, the base salary, and what the change salary is, would be helpful.

Deputy Executive Contreras

Okay. Yeah, because just to reiterate, it matches the amount that was requested at the time, \$50,000 per clinic. But I appreciate you all, not postponing, I just want to, you know, this is an essential service that they're providing. It's the emergency this is these are the walking centers where people go when they have emergency housing, or other issues of that sort of after hours. So

Chair Walter

yeah, so

Deputy Executive Contreras

I just wanted to emphasize that

Chair Walter

understood

Deputy Executive Contreras

thank you

Chair Walter

I got Legislator Nolan, and then I'll go to you, Commissioner Iapoce.

Legislator Nolan

Yes, thank you, I think the idea of the job position, it goes a long way towards my concern, but in some of these organizations, which are quite small, those breakdowns would still identify individuals. And so we may also need a process of circulating that material as background information and not posting it with all the resolutions. I'm not sure of what is allowable on that and makes sense. Um, but that I think we should be careful not to identify individual salaries, unless, you know, there's an overriding public need to do so.

Chair Walter

Okay, good point. Legislator Uchitelle

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

we can go to Commissioner Iapoce.

Chair Walter

Okay, Commissioner Iapoce

Commissioner Iapoce

I just wanted to offer an observation about one of the dynamics that I think you'll be having to evaluate in connection with the living wage local law. And I think it was alluded to by someone that this shouldn't necessarily be utilized by vendors as a solution to compression that their organization may be experiencing. But what I want to point out is that the implementation of compliance with the local law might create compression, they may have members of their staff brought up to the living wage, who were then making more than the people in the organization who were supervising them. So in order for fairness and equity in terms of compensation for some of these organizations, it could trigger increases across the spectrum of their staff.

And I think that we have to just be mindful of that. So it might not necessarily be something that they're utilizing in order to be able to resolve compression issues that they might have been experiencing. But it could create some compression issues where you have people brought from 12 to 15, then people who were at 15, supervising people at 12 are brought to 18. And people there are brought to 22. So it can have a domino effect. And that might be some of the data that ends up being provided to you. So just making that observation and asking that there be some consideration given to that.

Chair Walter

Yeah, certainly. And I mean, I think that conversation came up, I would also say much of, you know, a lot of this gets state or federal funding, so they, you know, going forward could be requesting more funding. And I could also make the argument that in some countries, the teachers get paid more than the principals, because there's nothing saying that the supervisor is worth more money than the worker. And so, you know, I think it's, it'll be up to the organization to work itself out and figure out how it's going to organize around this. But the issue is that people need to be paid appropriately. And that's what we were trying to address. Legislator Uchitelle

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

yeah, I just want to zoom out for a second here. And I really appreciate the conversation around ensuring that the individual lines are being I think what we're asking for is that the individuals who have you know, a job title and the job title is probably mentioned in the contract as who's fulfilling the contract, that those job titles have salaries associated with them. And the change in salary is what we're looking for, for each of the job titles that are fulfilling the contract. So I think that that's totally appropriate. And I'm also comfortable with us passing that out of this committee, knowing it's not really a programmatic question. It's a question of finances. And we're really not trying to send programmatic questions to ways means.

I do want to zoom out, though, and say that, you know, the reason that we're having this conversation is the first in the first place is because of decades of disinvestment in social services in the public sector, where we rely on nonprofits. And the way the reason we do this is because they pay people less. when we talk about, you know, shrinking the size of government, and we talk about, you know, being able to provide services to our residents at a lower cost, what we're literally talking about is finding people who are willing to get paid less money than the civil servants that might have done this 40 years ago, and pay people minimum wage, to perform social services rather than pay people, you know, a union wage to perform social services like that is what's been going on for the last many, many decades. And we want good people to be able to have a career in social services, so that they have institutional knowledge and that it can they can hone the craft and they can better serve our our residents. And at a certain point, we have to pay them more, we have to pay the managers more, we have to pay the leadership more because it is it is a critical, it is not a choice whether or not we provide social services, it is a critical critical service.

And at the end of the day, it's going to be our our constituents that that lose out. And it's also going to be the you know, Family of Woodstock is also one of the largest employers like if you have a way that you could across the board, give a bunch of our constituents a raise, obviously, the first one is to increase the county's budget, because we have some of the most employees of anybody, and another is to increase the budget of the nonprofits that are doing the jobs that would have been county jobs, if you know, this was the you know, 40 years ago. So I'm not saying this directed at any specific person or any specific, you know, line of conversation, but this is why I submitted the budget amendment during the budget process. And and this is going to keep coming up when we talk about compression issues. You know, the reality is people need to be able to build a career in these fields serving our constituents, and we have to start becoming comfortable with doing that.

Chair Walter

[inaudible] oh, so all in favor of resolution number 69.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Any opposed? Okay, so moved. But again, by ways and means please provide us that detail or it will be held up. Next we have I'm gonna take a motion to block resolution 70, 71, 72 and 73.

Legislator Petit

I'll make the motion

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

I'll second the motion

Chair Walter

Moved by Petit, second by Uchitelle. All in favor of the block.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Okay, so, motion to discuss.

Legislator Petit

I'll make that motion.

Chair Walter

Legislator Petit. Second

Legislator Lopez

Second

Chair Walter

Legislator Lopez, okay. Any discussion on this? Legislator Petit.

Legislator Petit

I, I, this was brought up for committee Chair discussion too, with the same questions. You know, whether it's some of it is due to the living wage increase or mandate, and also it, this started last year, I think the contract started April or May of last year.

Chair Walter

So there's one, there's two of them that are covering time period that's already ended and two of them are going forward. So 70 is for 2021, while 72 is for 2022. Similarly, 71 is for 2021 and 73 is for 2022. And I don't know, Johanna, if you want to kind of explain a little bit, why. Or, Mike, on why these, why two of these are a year late.

Deputy Executive Contreras

Yes, I think, Commissioner Iapoce if you could speak to this, and he was able to get that information for you.

Commissioner Iapoce

Right, so with respect to the first two, we are still arriving at completing billing with the service provider, in terms of the services and the number of youth. And it also spans across two different programs, the STSJP program, which is supervision and treatment of services for juvenile programs. And that has a state and local share. Those are with specific regard to youth who are referred by probation who are the subject of PINS or JD diversion programs. And then the other program has raised the age which is 100% State reimbursed, those are for a youth category of 15 to 18, who are potentially eligible or vulnerable to being in the criminal juvenile process. So that's the separation of the two blocks.

Chair Walter

Can you explain why the 2021, the resolution 70, and 71 were not in front of us a year ago?

Commissioner Iapoce

Because we didn't have the number of persons that we were going to try to arrive at with YAP, what services they provide. We're waiting for them to still provide us with that information.

Chair Walter

But it's already done, isn't it?

Commissioner Iapoce

Well, the service hasn't been provided, we're still waiting for them to provide us with that information from last year. And we submitted in our STSJP plan and our raise the age plan these amounts in anticipation of what the services were that we would provide. So as soon as we have those, we would resolve this with the service provider. And the amounts have been approved in our plans, we have to send raise the age and STSJP plans to OCFS based on what we expect our services and expenditures to be in terms of the number of youth that we're going to be providing services to. So that's why these numbers have been arrived at and this is our expectation. And our plans were approved based on the information that we submitted. And the number of clients that we were seeing serviced through raise the age and STSJP.

Committee Members

Was last year, the first year?

Commissioner Iapoce

No, last year wasn't the first year, we're trying to arrive at billing and invoicing for how YAP is providing services on a per youth basis. So that's one of the issues that we're trying to get resolved.

Chair Walter

Legislator Petit, did you have your hand up?

Legislator Petit

I was trying to formulate a question. So so we can prove that the services were provided. And I believe the contract it said, a minimum of nine. Yeah, I mean, are we comfortable? If we don't have the numbers to move forward on this? Or should we should we wait? I mean, it's already a year behind if they're not if they're not billing us appropriately, or or in a timely fashion? Is that what the holdup is? Or is it just because it is a newer system? I mean, we've only been doing raise the age for what four years and then they they increased it. First it was 15 and 16 year olds or 16 to 17. So just if you could clarify that a little bit for me?

Commissioner Iapoce

Sure. Some clarification there is that when they were initially implementing raise the age in 18 and 19, the years, for the 16 and 17 years old, the state had allocated a significant amount of funding in anticipation of the volume of cases they would see. They subsequently did not see as many cases. So they grouped together STSJP and raise the age funding. So it did provide for counties to submit plans for both of those programs for youth in those categories. So that's one of the reasons why we have two categories of youth that gets served by this service provider YAP, that come to YAP as referrals for either raise the age or STSJP. So it also increased the opportunity to apply for and submit plans to OCFS, based again, on the number of youth, and they're only paid for the number of youth that are served. So we're confident that the parameters of our contract are going to be adequate to be able to cover that.

Chair Walter

And it's, so is this is it one set amount, that you just choose to divide between the two programs that it was just sort of interesting that it's the same amount for both, even though they're different populations that you're serving? You just take the 134 whatever divid it in half take the eight, 180 and divided in half.

Commissioner Iapoce

No, we actually based that on where the sources of the referrals were coming from Chair Walter. So and it ended up turning out that the number of youth we anticipated being served divided out that way.

Chair Walter

Okay

Commissioner Iapoce

So

Chair Walter

[inaudible] came out so evenly

Commissioner Iapoce

Yeah, I mean, and it's just also something that, just to keep in mind, you might see subsequent resolutions on your radar, because sometimes funding for these programs statewide is not spent elsewhere. So there's frequently opportunities for applying for supplemental funding, if we're seeing a volume of clients that would support it. So I just add that remark to keep it on your radar.

Chair Walter

Great, it helps if anything like that that's wonky that comes up that you provide us as much background and backup as possible so that our clerks don't have to hunt and try to understand what's going on. I feel comfortable with with moving these along myself. I with this, I'll put that out there. But if you want to make a motion to postpone you're welcome to legislative Petit. Okay. So all in favor of the block. I mean, the all the all four resolutions. Okay. Any opposed? Terrific. So that brings us down to number 74, authorizing the Chair of the Legislature to execute a contract with New York State Department of Health to support COVID vaccine response and amending the Ulster County budget, Department of Health. Motion to discuss

Legislator Nolan

Motion.

Chair Walter

Oh, wait, this is the one I have to recuse myself. Right. Sorry. I'm gonna um, I need to recuse myself for employment with Institute for Family Health. So I'm going to let a deputy Chair Legislator Lopez. Yes, Marc?

Deputy Executive Rider

I don't think, and Dr. Smith could clarify.

Chair Walter

Or is it the next one

Deputy Executive Rider

This one. I think it's the next one.

Chair Walter

Oh, 75. Okay, good. We'll give him the next one. Is that right Dr. Smith?

Chairman Lopez

So, just a point of clarification. Yeah. You can, you can move it. Right. You, you just can't vote on right.

Chair Walter

Yeah, it was suggested to me that I just let you handle the voting.

Chairman Lopez

Okay, that's fine

Chair Walter

And not be speaking on it. So but that's the next one. So I'll keep going. So 74 get a motion to discuss.

Legislator Nolan

I made a motion

Chair Walter

Legislator Nolan.

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

I'll second

Chair Walter

Second Legislator Uchitelle. Any discussion?

Dennis Doyle

So my apologies, Legislator Walter and to the committee. I have a county planning board meeting. It begins at seven. So I with some reluctance I leave you and

Chair Walter

Yeah, [inaudible] so thank you for coming. And I'll just give a heads up for everyone else. It was gonna be suggested at the end of this meeting, that we have a special meeting just on housing, and to talk about some policy directions. And so that they'll be we will of course, let you know and make sure it works within your schedule.

Dennis Doyle

We would, I would certainly and I know that the administration would certainly welcome the opportunity to talk to the committee about about our housing efforts and they've been

Chair Walter

We're going to make a special meeting just for that

Dennis Doyle

And I know there's members of the committee who have questions with respect to an easement that we're looking at for an affordable housing project in Kingston. I sent Legislator Uchitelle a brief message on that, which it's a need for a public hearing. I'm working with the clerk, hopefully to for late resolution on that public hearing. I was surprised not to see it on the agenda this evening. So my apologies for the interruption. And, and my apologies. [inaudible] And if I may, everything that was said about Commissioner Iapoce, it was well deserved, and he is an absolute amazing individual and an asset to this county. Thank you.

Chair Walter

Thank you. Um, so were there any discussion on on resolution 74? Let me see if there is a Questioni

Legislator Erner

Yes.

Chair Walter

Sorry, Legislator Erner.

Legislator Erner

Yeah. And pardon me, I, this is, uh, I don't want to speak out of order. Chair Walter, I, I had had actually some questions on the last part. And I just wasn't able to, to get through the system that we're using here. But I can raise them later. I know, this will go to the go to the full Legislature. So I'm okay with it this time, but I'll try and do better job of speaking up.

Chair Walter

Yeah, certainly. And you'll, you'll obviously have another chance. Or two. your you know, you're also for new Legislators, welcome to come to Ways and Means and express concerns or questions at that point, as well. So if you wanted to do it before it came to the floor. So on for resolution number 74. Any other discussion?

Legislator Erner

I did have. Yeah.

Chair Walter

Oh, you did? Okay. Legislator Erner

Legislator Erner

I see here. Thank you. Chair Walter. I see here this is coming from federal. But reading through it, it was almost everything talked about a state amount. So I'm just not clear on where this is coming. My first question is about clarity, clarity around the state versus federal source of the funds.

Deputy Executive Rider

[inaudible] clarify, but I believe this one in particular is state funds. And the next one is federal but is that correct? Dr. Smith?

Legislator Nolan

You're

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

You're on mute.

Chair Walter

Yes. I think 74 is State and 75 is federal

Legislator Nolan

Legislator Erner is correct. That's not indicated at the bottom of the page. It's indicated as federal aid and as federal revenue dollars.

Dr. Carol Smith

Maybe I'm not certain sure of what the question actually is. Could you rephrase the question?

Chair Walter

I think it's related to the wording in the resolution, because the wording of the resolution says federal aid. While the documentation that's included seems to suggest it's state funding, and it's just whether it was a typo to put federal aid or whether it's somehow flow through and it's just we're missing that.

Dr. Carol Smith

Oh, I see what you're talking about. Okay. Well, yeah. Because on 75, you have the federal aid designation there on 70. Oh, yes. 74. You do as well. I would have to, you know, unfortunately, my deputy for administration who managed a lot of this has retired. But, you know, some of this funding comes through originally from the federal and it passes through the state. So that probably speaks to the confusion there.

Chair Walter

Why don't just

Dr. Carol Smith

[inaudible] go back

Chair Walter

I think it's just worth checking on whether that's just an error, or whether that should say state aid. I mean, because obviously all state funding is flow through but I think it just should appropriately state state if its state. [inaudible] Sorry, Marc.

Deputy Executive Rider

I believe it's the case that we need to change it to say state aid, but we can follow up with you on this.

Chair Walter

Thank you. Legislator Petit,

Legislator Petit

I think the same issue had come up with with 75. It's the the numbers aren't matching up. We're approving one amount, but they're quite a bit more. And I'll go back to 75 Because I've had it noted is is we're approving 4.1 But there's only 3.5. So

Chair Walter

Can we just hold that let's get through 74 first

Legislator Petit

I think it was the same thing, was question had come up with 74. It just doesn't seem like the numbers are all matching up. We're approving one amount but that's not what's in the financial impact. Is that what you're seeing too Legislator Erner?

Legislator Erner

Yes, it is, Legislator Petit.

Chair Walter

Can you specify which numbers are causing concern?

Legislator Erner

I see here the whole amount, just federal revenue dollars. And then there there is a chart where everything specifies federal later after a discussion of state funds. So it's just a little confusing, but I think it might actually be in there. So I'm not as concerned as I thought I was.

Deputy Executive Rider

I was wrong. This is federal funds. It's 509,000. So both resolutions are federal funds, but they run through the state health department. So the resolutions Correct? Sorry, you're muted Chair Walter.

Chair Walter

Legislator Petit, did you see a specific number that you were?

Legislator Petit

Yeah, I can't pull it up. Again. I did with 75. And this one was a question too, but I I don't know specifically what it was. It just didn't seem like the numbers were all matching up. What we were actually proving was was different than what what was quoted within the document.

Chair Walter

Okay, well, if you, I mean, I don't know if you want to postpone it or find, find what

Legislator Nolan

I just ran a tab on these numbers and the numbers that are laid out, match 509,862.

Legislator Petit

Okay.

Chair Walter

Okay. So can we vote? Or is there any more discussion on this one? Yeah. Are you voting Legislator Erner? You have another question?

Legislator Erner

I'm sorry. Chair Walter, I have another question.

Chair Walter

Oh, sure.

Legislator Erner

Thank you. So here's a question for Commissioner Smith. Actually, no, this is a letter to you, Commissioner Smith, from our State Department of Health, about the reminder about how the we use the funding for vaccine confidence and then other vaccine uptake, increasing that in racial ethnic minority groups and increase

accessibility for people with disabilities. So I see on Attachment, C, the summary of some efforts into that I didn't see anything there that stuck out as disability. But can you say more about the the county's efforts?

Dr. Carol Smith

Oh yeah,

Legislator Erner

To reach these populations, please

Dr. Carol Smith

I certainly can. In terms of disability we've conducted home vaccination visits now for several months where individuals can request that a vaccine team actually goes to their home because either they're bedridden, or perhaps can't leave their home for whatever reason. And our team of the nurse vaccinator, and the individual who accompanies her goes to the actual host household. And I we could probably on another or later follow up on exactly the numbers of those home visits that we've conducted several times a week very often, in order to deliver these vaccines and they can be, and administer them, and it could be to someone who has some physical disability, mental disability, perhaps, you know, an age related issue, what have you. So we've been conducting that all along.

We've also very deliberately scheduled PODs, or point of distributions, throughout the county. We've gone to all of the jurisdictions throughout the county now we are currently doing a vacs back to school initiative going to various school districts. In addition to operating the vaccine distribution site at the best buy the old Best Buy center in Kingston. So we've literally been going every day of the week to either a locale or a school at the Best Buy to try to service as many people or at home, we can, and deliver these vaccines. So we've made every effort to be in compliance with that mandate.

Legislator Erner

Thank you Thank you very much.

Chair Walter

So, I guess this is actually the one I'm supposed to recuse myself but I do have questions. The bulk of this money goes to the accucare nurses, the it and I know that we've put in a lot of effort to hire our own public health nurses, especially having federal funding in order to hire them. Do we not have enough nurses of our own?

Dr. Carol Smith

Nowhere near nowhere near Legislator Walter. [inaudible] Far from it. um, we've had to basically contract with Accucare, which is, you know, they provide nurses with executive search, I believe [inaudible] to get these nurses. We have to use literally several a day either to support the vaccination initiatives throughout the county, and or the calls that we were have been obligated to make, to pursue the case investigations for the positive people who have tested positive for COVID in the County. And just up until recently, when the state acknowledged that because of all the positives, the contact tracing component um, you know, was basically we're sort of turning away from that because of just the sheer numbers involved. But the state itself has had to hire 6,000 Contact tracers that were being assigned throughout the state to different counties to assist counties in making those contact tracing calls. All during the course of this pandemic.

So the effort has involved a tremendous use of resources, and in form of staff to actually either make the calls to deliver the vaccines, ie administer the vaccines and whatnot, on the, to the extent that we have been doing now, literally on a marathon basis for two years, or since the vaccine became available. And there's no way any county could hire the number of staff that it would take to do this. And, you know, to make it a robust effort and all inclusive effort to get all of the, you know, adults and then children when it became available. It's just been a tremendous effort. Yeah, and we absolutely appreciate the effort made, you know, future conversations on really building up our public health nurses is one I would like to have with you, because I'm expecting us to only have more emergencies coming down the line. I certainly don't argue with you Legislator Walter, I appreciate that recognition. And, you know, certainly I'll look forward to discussions moving forward. Yes.

Chair Walter

And that just a little edit on attachment C on your work plan. You refer to Dr. Walter at the Institute as the medical director. I'm the only Dr. Walter at the institute. It's Dr. Woodley.

Dr. Carol Smith

Yeah.

Chair Walter

Otherwise it looks like it's me

Dr. Carol Smith

That's sorry, but it's it's Walter Woodley actually.

Chair Walter

Yes, it is

Dr. Carol Smith

So maybe that's they just deleted his last name

Chair Walter

Right now it's referring to me. So

Dr. Carol Smith

I can see why you were recusing yourself

Chair Walter

So at this point

Deputy Executive Rider

For 74 or 75? I didn't I'm sorry. 74 is not with IFH.

Chair Walter

It is it says it an attachment C will work with the Institute for Family Health, which has various facilities to discuss how we combine our outreach efforts. I mean, you may ultimately not but it suggests that you may, on your schedule C, or attachment C.

Deputy Executive Rider

Got it, okay

Chair Walter

So at this point, I'm just going to be quiet and let Legislator Lopez do the rest of this one.

Legislator Lopez

So I'll call the question. All in favor

Committee Members

Aye.

Legislator Petit

On Resolution 74? Aye

Legislator Lopez

Carries

Chair Walter

And now we'll move on to resolution number 75. Amending the 2022 Ulster County budget to reflect Public Health Emergency Preparedness funding for the New York State Department of Health for epidemiology and laboratory capacity school reopening grant. motion to discuss.

Legislator Petit

I'll make the motion

Chair Walter

Legislator Petit, second

Legislator Nolan

second

Chair Walter

Legislator Nolan. Discussion on this.

Legislator Petit

So um, this was the one I think it was the third whereas where it says it's 4.1 million and under the financial impacts. It was three. Okay, we have an answer already.

Chair Walter

Marc

Deputy Executive Rider

You have a new work plan that Jay posted in the backup but the 4.1 is the overall award that the letter funds. The 3.5 is what we need to add into the 22 budget. And there was about 600,000 already spent in 2021. So that's the difference in the numbers there.

Legislator Petit

Thank you.

Chair Walter

Any other discussion? All right, all in favor of resolution number 75.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Okay. unanimous. resolution number 76 approving the execution of a contract amendment for 14,308 causing the aggregate contract plus amendment to be in excess of 50,000 for Zach Academy. motion to discuss

Legislator Nolan

So moved

Chair Walter

Legislator Nolan, second.

Legislator Petit

I'll second

Chair Walter

Legislator Corcoran. Any discussion? I had the question just curious. And I don't know, Dr. Smith, if you know, but how, how many people so, it's two parts. One was to know how many people do we train with this, because I think it's pretty amazing. But two and if you can't share it now, maybe another time, like, how much remediation have we done of lead and how much is still left to do, because I know, there's been many efforts over the last 30 years for lead remediation, and I'm just sort of curious not to suggest this isn't relevant. But like where we're really at with that?

Dr. Carol Smith

Well, you know, one of the issues is the remediation is costly. And of course, it is borne by the homeowner, or the building owner, as the case might be, if it's an apartment, building, etc. And, you know, it could involve anything from replacing the windows or doors or, you know, whatnot within the structure, there really is not money set aside for that purpose anywhere. To be honest with you, what we do is it's stepwise, because we have two grants to help support the Preventing lead poisoning in children is what it comes down to.

So we get reports from primary care doctors and labs, etc, on children's blood lead levels. And what's happened within the past couple of years was that those blood acceptable, so to speak, that zero is really what you would aim for, obviously, but, um, you know, they've progressively decreased the, the state and the federal government they acceptable, minimal lead levels, which differentiates between having the lead versus poisoned by the lead, but in any event, so we get all those tests that are done on children, and then we follow through the nurses call the parents, etc, our environmental team is able to go to the house to actually do lead testing in dust samples, we also have what's called an XRF machine, which could actually be held up against the wall, and it'll pick up any lead in the paint, whether it's the, you know, a layer that's gone several layers back into the structure, but it's radio um radiologic, kind of pick up on lead, and our environmental staff is trained to do that.

But what we'll also do is have through Zach Academy, the training for a lead folks who are trained to do lead remediation properly, according to federal standards, and so that, that number I can get to you, unfortunately, I don't have that at my fingertips, but we can get that to you. But the, you know, the whole business, and we do enforce it. So if someone doesn't respond to us, whatever, we tried to bring them in for enforcement purposes, but when you have individuals in the community in the past, maybe that's changing now with some great influx of folks who are coming from the city and elsewhere, buying up all these properties.

But up until that surge in the housing market, we had, you know, mom and pops you know owning a building that they're renting to a family and then when the cost of, you know, remediation is within the 1000s they can't do it. So we became sort of stuck between a rock and a hard place and a hard place. And, you know, try to give them as much counseling etc. Try to train if they're, you know, have more lead remediation teams out there. But the cost of doing the remediation in these buildings was prohibitive. And that is been a problem right from the beginning of the whole business of the, you know, working within these lead grants and trying to get more and more people to do the remediation, but it's really bad because of issues regarding the cost. And there's no money out there to support these folks who want to do that remediation.

Chair Walter

You know, I know about maybe five, maybe 10 years ago in New York City they did remediation on all the HUD houses on many of the HUD Buildings, focusing on low income housing specifically and maybe going forward, we could talk about whether there's something we want to think about, you know, an initiative that specifically focuses on putting money towards low income housing remediation as needed.

Dr. Carol Smith

Yeah, well, you know, we had really worked with this tried to work with the City of Kingston to the best of our abilities, because the 12401 zip code was targeted by these grant funders as having the lion's share of the problem. Let's put it that way. And, you know, we've tried to work with the City of Kingston to come up with different sorts of approaches to go in with the building inspectors, etc, etc, to try to really do something more definitive. We've worked as, you know, a co, co, how can I say it? we, we, we signed on as being a partner with the city of Kingston when they tried to get a HUD grant to do some of this work. They've been turned down in the past, I don't really know when the last time was that we even went with them to, you know, apply for this HUD monies. But certainly, it's something to consider moving forward. And I agree with you as to how we could perhaps work creatively and strategically work with them to try to get these HUD grants. And, you know, hopefully, maybe in the future, we'll have some positive results on that. But in the past, they haven't got those grants. And we're just basically not moving forward as aggressively as we would like to.

Chair Walter

Yeah, I think we should, it's time we try it again.

Dr. Carol Smith

Yeah.

Chair Walter

All right. Any other for this one? Okay. So all in favor of resolution 76.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Opposed? Okay. Um, I was just informed by Deputy Executive Rider that 75 also includes a contract with the Institute for Family Health, so I'm going to change my vote to abstain. Alright, next we have resolution 77, authorizing the Chair of Ulster County Legislature to execute a contract with New York State Office of addiction services and support. A motion to discuss, Corcoran, second Erner. Any discussion on this? 100% state funding Yes, Legislator Erner.

Legislator Erner

Thank you for Chair Walter, I. I see some of the addictions that the state is dealing with is gambling. And I just want to note the state also sponsors gambling. Perhaps this is just an obvious point. But you know that the state takes in money from the New York lotto and other things and then is also paying out money afterward in case people get addicted to that or the casinos in the state. And I find it ironic. That's all

Chair Walter

It is. That's where the money is coming from actually. That's part of the deal for having gambling is that the money has to go towards helping but you're absolutely right. Any other discussion on resolution number 77. All in favor of resolution number 77.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Okay, any opposed? All right, unanimous. resolution number 78, approving the execution of a contract amendment for 46,250, causing the aggregate to be in excess of 50,000 entered into the county for Hudson Valley National Center for veteran reintegration peer to Peer motion to discuss.

Legislator Petit

I'll move it

Chair Walter

Petit, second

Legislator Nolan

second

Chair Walter

Nolan. Any discussion or questions? All right, all in favor of resolution number 78.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Any opposed? okay, unanimous. resolution 79

Legislator Petit

You have Mark here. I mean, just I know it's getting late, but he's got

Chair Walter

You want to give him a chance to share a little bit about it. Okay, Mark [inaudible] in five sentences or less.

Mark Cozzupoli

All right. Well, I appreciate you moving forward with the resolution. The peer to peer counseling is very important in the veteran community because a lot of times veterans are wary of government agencies, as you can imagine, and there's nothing better than connecting with someone who's been through the same experiences as they have. So having this peer to peer program within our county is just huge. They create great relationships and then they forge great bonds, and then they connect them to us where we're able to help them with other benefits, and help them find housing or job placement or other things that they necessarily might not have come to my office for in the past, so it is a great program, we're happy to have them. And we work in tandem with them to really take care of good, really take good care of our veterans.

Chair Walter

Do you know about how many veterans you serve through this particular program?

Mark Cozzupoli

Through this particular program, they're they're looking at about 500 interactions yearly at this point, there, they just started last year. So they're fledgling still, but the program itself is growing very quickly around the state, which is awesome, it just went from 26 counties to all 62 counties, while it's supposed to per the State of the State address. And as that happens, it makes sure that the money is secured for this program to continue. And that they can function knowing that they're going to be receiving this grant and start building their programs out even more to connect with veterans.

Chair Walter

I'll say that, uh, you know, similar to how we have a shift in our, our county law enforcement to respond to opioid, mental health addiction in a new way, without just criminalizing that group. You know, the research I had seen is high rates of arrests for veterans.

And I think that that's another important group to create a safety net that if they come to the attention of law enforcement that we find it more appropriate response to, to them based on that status, just like we would if they have a mental illness, specifically or an addiction, because I think that's a group that we might be missing, that's, you know, tends to be, again, a high rate of arrests for that group.

Mark Cozzupoli

Yes, veterans tend to have a higher addiction rate than most. And you're absolutely correct. We have an alternative justice program that we're working with, with local magistrates, and the DA and public defender's office, it's been successful. And we are working alongside the center with who was getting this grant, for the same as if a law enforcement individual comes across a veteran and it's a non violent crime, sometimes they will bring them to my office or bring them to the center to have a discussion and just see how we can better serve that veteran, get them on a path to be better and better, you know, more important part of our society than just going down a downward spiral that tends to happen sometimes with veterans, and as in case of their suicide rates. So anything we can do to just bring them out of their shells is huge. And this peer to peer is very important, because veterans feel like they can only speak to other veterans and share their experiences. And that opens the door for them.

Chair Walter

Perhaps Legislator Uchitelle who Chairs that committee now can talk to the sheriff about some way to codify this kind of response, because that's similar process of what we're doing with what they're doing with ORACLE.

Mark Cozzupoli

I, I'm glad you said that. I'll take another minute of your time. But we are working with the Chief's Council for the county and the sheriff and trying to have them at least at the very least build a roster of law enforcement personnel who were prior military. So if there is an issue happened and maybe in the town of Lloyd, and there's a marine that happens, to work a night shift in New Platz. The response have become better getting that marine over there to speak with another Marine who happens to be in a domestic violence or some sort of situation versus sending in the law enforcement. So trying to build up this roster to where we can share through the county and get get our veterans to be able to speak with other veterans because that tends to really calm them down and feel like they're with someone who knows what they're going through. So we are working on it, so I'm glad you brought that up.

Chair Walter

Great. All right. We already voted on that one so I can move on to Resolution number 79. Right. We took a vote Jay? Yes. Okay, I thought so. 79 amending the 2022 Ulster County budget to create one full time homemaker aide position for the Office of Aging. A motion to discuss

Legislator Nolan

Move it

Chair Walter

Nolan, Second.

Legislator Petit

I'll second

Chair Walter

Second, any discussion? Legislator Erner and then Petit

Legislator Erner

Oh please, Legislator Petit

Chair Walter

Okay Legislator Petit

Legislator Petit

I just had a comment. I mean, this is grant funded. But I mean, the waiting list is something I think we learned around 240 Seniors, we really need to in our 2023 budget, take a look at putting more homemakers out into the field through Office of the aging. It's, it's it's disingenuous to have, and it was from personal experience, you know, walking into to drop something off at a seniors house and having her burst into tears because her assistant didn't show up and she can't make her bed. I mean, those are just basic human needs that we really need to address.

Chair Walter

Yes, so, Sue that, I guess you've got some support for increasing your budget line for next year

Susan Koppenhaver Dir. OFA

I appreciate that one, one homemaker position will not change a lot of what's going on with the waitlist, but it's a start, we already have two full time. And I am at the mercy of the six licensed homecare agencies who do not have enough aides to support anything that we do. So the best thing I think, is to hire your own, and I realize it's a burden on the county, because of the Union and the benefits, I get that. But I don't, excuse me, I don't have control over what the licensed agencies can or cannot do as far as hiring their own aides. As a former homecare administrator for many, many years, this is a really huge problem everywhere. And nobody wants to end up in a nursing home, or an assisted living facility.

So everybody wants to stay home. And their only way to stay home is to have aide support, home delivered meals, and case managers to control their cases. And we don't even have professionals doing that. And that's a whole different discussion. And I look very much forward to presenting to all of you what we do here. Because we are we are very busy here trying to take care of the folks in this county. And there's, I don't know 25-26,000 seniors here we have hundreds on our on our waitlist, and we have hundreds on our on our rolls right now. And we need a lot more support to take care of them at home. But I appreciate your support.

Chair Walter

So is none of that Medicare or Medicaid reimbursable?

Susan Koppenhaver Dir. OFA

No, um the office for aging, thank you for allowing me that little intro, only cares for people who are not qualified for Medicaid. So we do not handle the Medicaid population, people have Medicare, but Medicare only pays for skilled services that that needs somebody with a license like a doctor or a nurse or a PT or an OT. Medicare does not pay for anything that we do. Federal funds pay for different programs.

And I can go into detail when I if I ever get to present to you. But this particular program that we're asking for this money for is through the EIHSEP program, which is funded by New York State Office for aging, and it's the expanded in home services for elderly persons. That's we have a lot of acronyms, and it's um, it's to try to keep people at home. It's simple, you know, and Medicare and Medicaid have nothing to do with it.

Chair Walter

Okay, any other questions or comments? Legislator Erner, sorry, I forgot.

Legislator Erner

No, it's fine. Thank you. Thank you, Director Koppenhaver. Can you just clarify the money set aside for contracts with home health aides, you're you're shifting that to this position. Can you just comment on that, please?

Susan Koppenhaver Dir. OFA

Sure. So I went through the last six months of what was going on with the contracts with the the licensed homecare agency, they're called Alexa and the six Alexas that we have contracts with. And what we were discovering, as we have discovered over the last two or three years is we use less and less of those aids because they don't have them. So we're setting aside money that we're not spending because they don't have the aides to provide us and I would and I would much rather hire my own person be able to cover farther reaches of the county be able to cover more challenging clients that no one will accept.

And the licensed agencies can pick and choose who they want to who they want to, who do they want to cover and the aides don't like to drive. We have company cars, we can send our aides anywhere. Each of our current aides have 12 to 14 clients that they see every week. And some of them are very challenging, and some of them need the aides but the they have been fired, they call them fired, fired from many agencies because they have mental health issues. They have a lot of behavioral health problems and we have wonderful aides and we hope to hire a few more, and this will be the next first. If you have any other questions call me. I'm happy to talk to you about this.

Chair Walter

I'd also like to commend your office on the work they did related to getting the vaccine out to homebound seniors.

Susan Koppenhaver Dir. OFA

Yeah, we, we sort of got pushy with everybody about that, because so many seniors were not able to go online and register. So we would register them. We finally got a link, and we were able to get them vaccines. And we were, we were the beginning of the home, the homebound lists that Dr. Smith was talking about a little bit earlier, because there were a lot of people who couldn't get out of their houses and their caregivers couldn't leave them alone. So it really was very boots on the ground here last year, was it last year, no 2020.

Chair Walter

It was a year ago, yeah.

Susan Koppenhaver Dir. OFA

Yeah. So it was it was pretty intense for a while.

Chair Walter

Yeah, for sure. I mean, I'll say that I put out a call in my community and got tons of people reaching out to me to get onto that list. That's [inaudible]

Susan Koppenhaver Dir. OFA

Great.

Chair Walter

I appreciate it. Okay. So all in favor resolution number 79.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Opposed, okay. Unanimous. Resolution number 80, approving an execution of a contract for 150 entered to the county for Kingston works a Division of Health Alliance hospital Broadway campus, a motion to discuss. Legislator Corcoran, second

Legislator Erner

second

Chair Walter

Legislator Erner, discussion. So I'll just start by saying that I, it has come up many times a lot of concern about passing revenue on to Health Alliance, because of the feeling that they are, don't always play well with the county, and that we are not priorities to them. And this, this includes the loss of the Mental Health inpatient beds, but I feel like it extends to more than that. I can say personally and professionally, there's been many situations of county wide types of efforts that the hospital was not interested in joining in.

So one thing I have asked our clerk's office to do is to provide us with a list of every contract that we have with Health Alliance, separate those that are direct county funds from those that are flow through money, and look at them, and identify and you know, this is important for you department heads there too, of, are there other agencies that can deliver this service. And if there are, it's there a process an RFP process we can do to open up these opportunities to those agencies as well. And so we'll take the example of because we don't want to stop services, right. And so the example that came up last time was methadone treatment.

And so the fact is, is maybe there are other agencies that could provide that. And if they, if there are, then maybe we can find a way to reopen the process, so that those agencies have a chance to be considered. I'm feeling like the only way to put any pressure on Health Alliance would possibly be financial pressure. And I know many Legislators are very uncomfortable supporting any legislation that provides money to that group. It's just, again, a challenge if we don't want people not getting the care, either. And so I you know, will as soon as I have this list, I'll be presenting it to the Legislators on this committee and [inaudible] heads, and we'll have a deep discussion over whether any of those services we could possibly find another vendor for or do in house. Legislator Nolan.

Legislator Nolan

Yes, I think that's a good initiative. Um, I think that should probably take place in very close coordination with the executive's office. Because it's, if, if we do want to keep services that others aren't providing, we may have to take into account you know, a package and I'm, would be more eager to have more services come back. Um, then, I think we have to be very careful when we leverage and try to motivate a big, bureaucratic corporation that is profit oriented. And many places in my district and even extending into Delaware County are losing health centers right now. So we're not in a strong position, I think we should have the information. And I certainly think if we can get better service for lesser price, that that's always a consideration. Um, but this is a very complicated arena for us to enter. And so we should do it with everybody working together and making it line up so that it has the best chance of success.

Chair Walter

Totally. Legislator Petit.

Legislator Petit

Thank you. Yeah, I, for me, the motivation isn't, you know, so much financial, as it is not dealing with an organization that's, that's bought into our community. I mean, they're looking at their bottom line. And I mean, this is \$150,000 contract for two employees. I mean, we could very well incorporate them into our county personnel and, you know, keep them under the wing of office of the aging. I just have the resolution in front of me now, I don't have all the backup documentation. This is just for one year, a one year extension of a contract.

Susan Koppenhaver Dir. OFA

It's for two

Legislator Petit

it's for two, could we could we make it one and take a, have a real good discussion on either putting two of these people permanently into Office of the aging or going out to bid?

Chair Walter

So I'm going to I'll let Marc, fully answer. But my guess is because this is already state funded, and that this idea of how to divert funding might have to go to subsequent contracts, it may not work for the ones right in front of us. But if we move quickly, we can, they'll always be more that Marc, you can speak further on that. On this particular contract.

Deputy Executive Rider

I'm not Yeah, Johanna, I don't know.

Chair Walter

Oh, Johanna, sorry.

Deputy Executive Contreras

Yeah, no problem. Um, this is part of the plan that we submitted up to NYSOFA, to the state to, of how we were going to use the New York Connects funding. So I believe this is already baked into the plan that we have with them. You're, you're nodding Sue?

Susan Koppenhaver Dir. OFA

It's, it's a pass through money. Yep. We get this all that we get this every two years for them, passes through, I understand your your concerns about this, I will put in a caveat that if the people who are currently in these positions do not choose to come we have to start all over with training. These people have been in these positions for six years, they've had all the training that they NYSOFA expects them requires them to have for six years. And we will start all over we have one staff member who is a county employee, the person who is in charge of this program, his name is Matt Osterhout, he's, he's in charge of Kingston WoRx, which does other things like drug testing, and employee physicals and stuff through through a lot of different ways. But um, we would have to start from ground zero if they don't choose to come on with us.

So you know, that also is a is a bit of a caution. New York Connects, treats anybody. It's not just for elderly people. It's for anybody who needs referral and resources in this in this office. And it's also for anybody at any age who is disabled. So it's not just for elderly folks. It's a wonderful program, every every county has one, and they're busy people. So I understand where you're coming from, I'd love to have, I'd love to have no contracts on all staff. But I know there's issues with that, too. So um, I, you know, I will tell you that the man Matt, again Matt, is, isn't, not, he's not a decision maker for WMC health, that's way too huge of an organization. And it's a way too small amount for them to be concerned about a whole lot of things. So I'm not sure that punishing them by this is going to make a bit of difference to them. In the grand scheme of things.

That's my opinion, I will say one more thing, that if, to RFP this and expect other agencies that we have dealt with in the past and contracted for positions like this in the past, they would have to hire someone because I know all of the organizations, I've been working in this county for a number of years. And there's nobody else who has staff who can do this right now. So they would have to hire somebody, that being gateway and Jewish Family Services. Maybe there's another organization out there that exists that has somebody like this maybe United Way, but we've sent out RFPs with other positions in the past and they do not respond. So something might change, but the way that the hiring is going now and the way that staff recruitment is going, which is pretty bad in pretty much all sectors. I don't know how successful it's going to be to find somebody who is as well trained as these two women are.

Chair Walter

I mean, because this is already a done deal, that gives us two years to find a solution to this one. And, and, you know, we'll explore each one as it comes and see what the best what the most reasonable route is without ever removing services from the county, because that's never going to be that's not the goal at all.

Susan Koppenhaver Dir. OFA

Okay.

Chair Walter

But I think that, that we do need to have a deep look at what we can do to make a difference and trying to move Health Alliance towards either working better with us or leaving to be quite honest. So with that, all in favor of resolution 80. As it stands.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Opposed?

Legislator Petit

I don't know. I guess I'll go Yes on this. I may change my mind on the floor.

Chair Walter

Absolutely. You can do a

Legislator Petit

Thank you.

Chair Walter

Okay, so it passes. And last but not least, we have resolution number 95 amending the 2022 Ulster County budget to create one full time deputy medical examiner position. Motion to discuss.

Legislator Nolan

Move it

Chair Walter

Nolan, Second.

Legislator Corcoran

Second

Chair Walter

Legislator Corcoran. Okay, any discussion? Legislator Petit

Legislator Petit

I mean, I haven't really had time to digest all of this information. I realize that we had a medical examiner, Dr. Heller retire, I'm just kind of surprised that it was even a late resolution because like nobody knew he was going to retire? And we didn't have time to speak about it. We've already added a position in this meeting as a homemaker even though it's grant funded. And now we're adding another position in and we're only in our first session. So I, it's a crisis. It really is. I just I don't know how I feel about voting on this right now. I'm certainly not creating another permanent position. And then after hearing the presentation, it's my understanding that the medical examiner's office is also working with COVID related data and HEAL?

Chair Walter

because they're collecting information on deaths

Legislator Petit

Okay.

Chair Walter

Opioid related deaths. Um, I'm sorry, were you, did you want to, I think Legislator Lopez, and then we have Legislator Nolan. And then we'll go to you, Johanna.

Legislator Lopez

Thank you. Now this is, this position is in addition to the current contract that we have, right. So medical, medical,

Dr. Carol Smith

no, no

Legislator Lopez

it's not

Dr. Carol Smith

No, they remember, are you referring to the morgue and the forensic pathologists through Westchester Medical Center?

Legislator Lopez

right, that's the one I mean.

Dr. Carol Smith

That's totally different. Okay. The forensic pathologist is not an employee of Ulster County. We get his services through the contract with Westchester Medical Center. We also through a contract with Westchester Health Alliance lease the morgue to store the decedents. It is the only morgue or refrigerated space in the whole county to hold the corpses. None of the funeral directors have that capability. So again, talking about are there other possibilities out there rather than working with Westchester?

Unfortunately, the answer's no because that is the only morgue in the Kingston facility and on Broadway and Mary's Avenue campus. That's totally separate. The the staff under county charter we also have to have a medical examiner which is written into the county's charter. The medical, and it's all 24/7 365 days a week. Okay, so we're talking about an enormous amount of time to cover. So the medical examiner is a county employee, and as is the medical legal death scene investigator, those folks are county employees. There is no funding out there to support medical examiner service, state, federal or otherwise, but it is under the New York State County Law an obligation for the county to provide for 24/7 Medical Examiner services.

It's an obligation, we don't have a choice, right. And what happened with Heller, who had been our chief ME for a number of years pre actually predated my tenure was that he gave his official notice in November, that he was going to retire January 1st. did not give us a lot of lead time in this. It was late in the year, not a lot of lead time and whatnot. So what wound up happening was that the deputy part time medical examiner's were, who have to and and Haley had to take his ships right now, to provide for this 24/7 365 year coverage.

It has gotten to the point where it's just the amount of work is just well beyond her capability um and and these two physicians who are serving as deputy MEs, who have a fraction of the time for coverage of night weekends, and none of the office responsibilities. In addition, both of them have threatened to resign if they had to do one extra day coverage. It's not a good situation. So you know, the medical examiner's division is a complicated one. we went through this four or five years ago, when you know, we also had to basically figure out what we were doing because everybody, you know, resigned at five years ago, including the forensic pathologist who we contracted with from Albany. So we basically had to build the whole structure again.

And here we are, again, with the retirement so whatnot, so and increasing in numbers. Every year, those numbers are going up, the calls are going up, numbers of homicides, suicides, overdoses going up. So the workload has been exponentially increasing over the years. And we have not increased the staffing at all, really. So this is a crisis situation. And unfortunately was, you know, his notification late in the year certainly was not an easy one to deal with. But we came up with a solution that we think is the most cost effective and gives us the chance to really start looking at the the workload, the responsibilities and making it more of an equitable, you know, division of labor as it were at right now. It's not.

Chairman Lopez

So this is something that can't be provided through our current contract with Westchester, right? Per the charter, we have to have a county employee

Dr. Carol Smith

Yes, well the charter basically says that the it defines the medical examiner has to be a physician. It's a four year appointment by the county executive. And there was an add on to the charter at some point that said it had to be a county resident. So you know, what we did four or five years ago was to add on the death scene investigator to support the physician medical examiner, but the medical examiner does not have to be a forensic pathologist. So, you know, at this point, the forensic pathologist, as I said, is a is an employee of Westchester provides the autopsy services to the county through that contract, in addition to his assistant, in addition to coverage for him, when he's not available. It's all written into that contract with Westchester for that piece of it. The other piece of it that we own is the ME and then the death seat investigator, as county employees.

Chairman Lopez

And the additional workload is not directly related to COVID? It's a number of other factors as well?

Dr. Carol Smith

Yeah, COVID I mean, is one factor, but all the others opioid overdoses, you know, homicides suicides. When I took this position back in 2012, we, it was rare for us to have a homicide. Now, this is a regular event, unfortunately. So, you know, the tide has definitely changed in terms of that issue in in this county. And, you know, the medical examiner division really needs to be able to do the work that we're obligated to do. And you know, so [inaudible]

Chair Walter

thanks, Legislator Nolan, did you want to add anything?

Legislator Nolan

Yeah, I think Dr. Smith has covered most of what I was gonna say this is a state mandate, and I think we are getting very good service from the current group. Um, and if we don't provide this person, we're going to lose those people.

Dr. Carol Smith

Yeah, exactly

Legislator Nolan

So I think that it makes it an urgent situation. You know, I'm, taking call more than you are able to take overnight call will cause somebody to leave quicker than anything I know about. Cause people just reach a point where they can't sustain it. And that's what I heard here. I also think the presentation was excellent. And the proposal takes from a unassigned fund balance to cover for this one year. So I think we should do this. And then if there's other aspects that we can open up to look at and add them, you know, without this pressure, then I think we should do that as well.

Chair Walter

Deputy executive Contreras, did you want to add anything? Or was it covered by Dr. Smith?

Deputy Executive Contreras

Oh, yes, I just wanted to add an echo. Also, speaking to the late resolution, I think, you know, we don't take it lightly putting forth the a late resolution and adding a full time position. And that was sort of why it was late was because we were going through all the internal processes to make sure this is really the best solution that we could come up with. Um, and it just getting, it just got to the point where it is an urgent situation. And this is the most cost effective, and fastest way that we think we can address this issue. And just to speak to the issue of the medical examiner, and why there's a broader conversation that we do need to have, we need to backfill for that position for the chief medical examiner.

And just to note that that position is paid, I think about 80,000 a year. And I think Haley mentioned earlier, Dr. Heller was on call for between 60 hours and 90 hours a week. And we have had the position posted and we haven't had any applicants. And so that's why we're pivoting to this adding a non MD position who can take on some of that death scene investigation coverage, but we're going to need to come back and have that bigger conversation about how the office should be structured, in order to make, meet the coverage that we're mandated to have.

Chair Walter

And you know that our comptroller did do an audit a while ago, and I know it's overdue, we might need a new one. But I would say Dr. Smith that definitely speaking to Legislator Petit's point a little bit is that before our next budget, you know, we let's really take a deep look at the demands and duties to see what the right size is. I know this is a temporary or not a temporary fix, but a not a perfect fix, but a better than it is. So we should really explore what's really needed for the next budget round in advance of that.

Dr. Carol Smith

Thank you. Thank you,

Chair Walter

Legislator Lopez.

Chairman Lopez

Yeah, you know, I'm just a little bit surprised, because, yeah considering the urgency of this. Now, to the point where it's a late resolution. I haven't heard a lot about this in the past. You know, it hasn't been brought to the committee before. You know, and if this is something that's been, you know, just increasingly, um getting worse over the years. I you know, I'm, I'm just a little little surprised that I haven't heard anything about it. So. And I get it, like I do. Yeah, there's a number of factors that would, you know, call for additional help. But, um, you know, I'm just a little bit surprised by the urgency all of a sudden, again, to the point where it's a late resolution.

Dr. Carol Smith

Well, unfortunately, the urgency is prompted by retirements that we did not

Legislator Lopez

Understood

Dr. Carol Smith

Know about, and that's, I think, a significant issue because the other two who are splitting some of that time, Dr. Stutt, Dr. Grovenburgh, are both saying this is it. Either they are considering ending their tenure with us or their, you know, time with us. And you know, it, we can't be left. You know, without this service. Just imagine, you know, law enforcement calling at three o'clock in the morning, and there's no medical examiner to respond. What would that look like? It's bad enough now. But if you don't have somebody doing the work, it's catastrophic.

Chair Walter

Legislator Petit.

Legislator Petit

Thank you. So my my question about well, why not just fill the medical examiner position was answered, but I'm revisiting the resolution. And I mean, you know, again, you're only paying what 59,000 a year for a very specialized full time position. And this is permanent, I think at this point, without doing you know, having comptroller Gallagher take a real good look at it and seeing if we can increase salaries if they're putting in 60-70 hours a week. I just feel a lot better if this was a temporary position. I mean, I would buy into, you know, January 1 to December 31. And then we can review it at the budget process and put it in permanently. But again, my concern is, you know why now, I'm sure this didn't just happen in two months.

Dr. Carol Smith

Well, I don't know if any of you were around when, four or five years ago when the crisis hit at that point. When our Forensic pathologist Dr. [inaudible] resigned gave me it was again late the fall gave me literally maybe a month or two notice, Dr. Heller resigned, and Dr. Grovenbergh threatened to resign, we did not have Dr. Stutt that time, we did not have a medical legal death scene investigator at that time. And the, you know, the forensic pathologist piece, they're very few and far between these physicians about 500 throughout the the entire country.

In fact, they if you, you know, right now, I mean the the current forensic pathologist is also talking about retiring from Westchester, which will present another challenge because that contract, technically we asked for an extension, but it's up in the end of April. So we'll have to deal with Westchester again. And again, it's, you know, I know what the situation is with Westchester, for sure, from the mental health standpoint or the health standpoint, going back all the way to the days of [inaudible], I'm very familiar with how they operate as a corporation. But you know, the the matter and the fact of the matter is, is the physicians in the community do not want to do overnight weekend call. They really don't. When that was added to the charter back whenever, at the time, things were a little different.

I mean, doctors had their own practices, they had their own schedules, they could adjust their time they could run out to go to a scene midday reschedule patients now they're almost entirely they are employees of corporations like caremount, Nuvance, whatever, they don't have that time flexibility, they don't want to do overnight call, they don't want to do weekend call. That's why you have hospital as covering calls for the hospitals at this point. That is something of a bygone era, doctors don't want to go to a house to see a living patient, let alone a dead one. So, you know, there's zero interest out there for being Medical Examiner. So that's its own challenge. But at least with respect to the medical, legal or death scene investigators who are not physicians, who are coming.

In fact, Haley is a graduate of the Forensic Institute at Syracuse University. She's very well trained academically, we're happy to have her. But she's also told me she just the volume of work is too much at this point. And again, you know, with her training, whatever, she could she go to Dutchess or orange, and yeah, in a heartbeat. So just making it a temporary position, if we want to bring on somebody who could train with Haley who could stabilize the the office is unfair to her and is unfair to the office, and in fact, very risky for the county, because of its obligation to have this service.

Chair Walter

I would say that I'm I completely in favor of this resolution and that I can envision what would happen if it doesn't pass. And I think that could be very detrimental. When I think of the situation we're currently in and how bad it is that they cannot possibly see all of the cases that they need to see they're already backlogged that this, similar to the home aide, is not even addressing fully the problem. It's just making it a little less horrible. And the idea that we may even lose more staff as a result of failure to pass this resolution makes it feel like it is extremely, extremely important that we do. So I just wanted to put that forward. So any other comments or statements? So all in, oh both, sorry. We're getting on to two and a half hours for this meeting. So I think unless it's new information,

Deputy Executive Contreras

Well, I just wanted to make a clarification. I think Legislator Petit cited \$58,000 A year and that's just for the rest of the year, the full salary would be 71,000. And that matches the salary of our current investigator.

Chair Walter

Okay,

Deputy Executive Contreras

Just a correction.

Chair Walter

Thank you. I appreciate that. Okay, so all in favor of resolution number 95

Deputy Clerk Mahler

Can I, can I,

Chair Walter

What

Deputy Clerk Mahler

Just a friendly reminder of an

Chair Walter

Oh, right with an amendment, sorry. There was just a little typo where something that was on the insurance line was supposed to be on the fringe and vice versa, and it's so a [inaudible] to I mean, on favorite resolution number 95. With the amendment. The total exactly the same everything else? Yes. Sorry. So all in favor?

Committee Members

Aye.

Chair Walter

So I have Nolan, Uchitelle, Corcoran, Walter, Erner, Lopez. Okay, opposed? Petit, 1 opposed, Okay, motion passes. Alright, um, so again, it's been two and a half hours, I want to just say we do have room for old business, new business. But But I want to, once again, state what I said, before Dennis left, I will work with the clerk on a special meeting on housing, specifically just on policy, and what kinds of things we want to do going forward. And we'll figure out the right people from the executives office that should come to that.

I would like to also have a special meeting, somehow, whether it's a special meeting or attach it to our very next meeting, we'll have to see what the how many resolutions with for mental health, because this is the year that we're going to, you know, really do mental health right in Ulster County, and there's a lot we have to talk about with that. I want to hear back from as soon as possible from either Tara, Johanna, about the behavioral health taskforce and whether it's still in place, and because those were good people to be talking to about what kinds of initiatives we need to go forward.

So that's the housing and the mental health, I think they're going to need their own special time. In addition, really taking time to highlight many of you department heads to really find out what kind of things you really want me to see going forward. So covering knowing that we're going to have that time set aside, is there any other, there's no old business, so any new business? Again, keep in mind, it's been two and a half hours. All right.

Legislator Corcoran

Motion to adjourn.

Chair Walter

Second

Legislator Nolan

Second.

Chair Walter

All in favor

Committee Members

Aye.

Chair Walter

All right.

Legislator Nolan

Thank you, everybody.

Chair Walter

Thank you all. That was a lot of work. You did great, I appreciate you

Legislator Corcoran

Have a good night