

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

DATE & TIME: August 1, 2023 – 5:00 PM
LOCATION: KL Binder Library, 6th Floor, County Office Building
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chair Uchitelle
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk
PRESENT: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit and Stewart
ABSENT: None
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Legislators Cahill, Litts & Maloney; Deputy County Executive Contreras; Commissioner Iapoce – UC Department of Social Services; Commissioner McDonald – UC Department of Mental Health; Director Doyle & Senior Planner Lord-Farmer – UC Planning Department; Will DiBella, Jonah Ricconati & Dylan Salmons – Penrose; Patricia Doxsey – Daily Freeman; Craig Kelly & Val Blackmon – Town of Ulster; Anezka Sebek – City of Kingston

Chair Uchitelle called the meeting to order at 5:15 PM

Motion No. 1: **MOTION to APPROVE the Minutes of July 5th Meeting**

Motion Made By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Corcoran

Discussion: None

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Nolan, Lopez, Petit, Stewart and Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Minutes APPROVED**

The members briefly discussed the process for discussion and action on Resolutions in committee and asked that counsel review the Rules.

Resolutions for the August 15, 2023 Legislative Session:

Resolution No. 381 – Authorizing The Chair Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute An Agreement With The New York State Department Of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) To Accept Grant Funds For The Golden Hill Renewable Energy Project - Amending The 2023 Ulster County Budget – Department Of Planning

Resolution Summary: This Resolution authorizes the Chair to execute an agreement with the NYS DEC to accepting a grant in the amount of \$1,684,980 from the Climate Smart Communities Program and amends the 2023 county Budget to accept the funds.

Motion No. 2: **Moved Resolution No. 381 FOR DISCUSSION**

Motion Made By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Stewart

Discussion:

Chair Uchitelle recognized Planning Director Doyle to update the members and thanked him for introducing the Resolution early to give the members time to discuss. Director Doyle stated that the members have before them a boiler plate of the contract because a final partnership agreement is needed before the final contract can be drafted. He added that they would like to get the contract approved by the state, as well as the agreements in the next Resolution, then DEC would review and offer any comments which would then be incorporated into the final contract. Chair Uchitelle asked what stage the county was at. Director Doyle responded that the county was ready to submit to the state.

Legislator Petit stated that the county still owns the property and is investing a lot of time and would like to see the property transferred to the LDC or the developer. Director Doyle responded that neither the LDC or the developer are eligible for the Solar grant. He compared the arrangement with that of the composting facilities at the UC RRA which are owned by the county with an environmental easement across the RRA.

Legislator Erner questioned whether the electrical generating system could circumvent the Central Hudson grid, and whether there could be an additional benefit to the residents such as a discounted rate. Representatives from Penrose explained the rent credit mechanism and explained the complications and additional infrastructure that would be required to generate, store and distribute the electricity at the facility.

Legislator Nolan added that the tenants will see both health and safety benefits by living in a non-combustion building. They agreed that the battery storage system required to circumvent the grid would be a huge expense and likely not be able to be sited on the property. Legislator Litts stated that in his experience projects like this are always connected to the grid to mitigate times when solar generation is insufficient for the needs or is malfunctioning, as well as affording the property the ability to sell electricity back to the utility during peak generation periods. The members continued discussing pros and cons of connecting to the Central Hudson grid. Legislator Petit questioned the number of kilowatts included in the grant versus the project developers estimate of 700. Director Doyle responded that the system will be designed to fit the needs of the project and that Penrose’s match responsibility in the agreement would cover any gaps.

Chair Uchitelle asked if there were further questions or discussion and hearing none called for a vote in favor of the Resolution.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Nolan, Lopez, Petit, Stewart and Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **RESOLUTION ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 382 – Authorizing The Chair Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute Various Agreements To Fulfill Requirements For Grant Funding Through The New York State Climate Smart Communities Program For Renewable Energy Equipment At The Golden Hill Housing Site – Department Of Planning

Resolution Summary: This Resolution authorizes the Chair to execute the following agreements with Golden Hill Owner LLC to satisfy requirements for funding in Resolution No. 381: (i) Development Services Agreement, (ii) Maintenance and Operation Agreement, (iii) a Solar Power Purchase Agreement, and (iv) a Climate Change Mitigation Easement.

Motion No. 3: **Moved Resolution No. 382 FOR DISCUSSION**

Motion Made By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Stewart

Discussion:

Chair Uchitelle asked Director Doyle if he had anything to add. Director Doyle state that the agreements addressed by the Resolution still need to go through the review process and may be changed. He added that they have not heard back from the DEC yet. Legislator Petit stated there was a blank in the agreement for developer fees and asked if they would be receiving a fee. Director Doyle responded that any fee would come out of the grant and would not be a cost to the county. Legislator Petit stated that she would like to see that in writing. The members discussed whether the backup documentation can and should be amended. Legislator Nolan suggested the point be addressed at Ways & Means and suggested the contract be updated prior to that meeting. Chair Uchitelle asked Director Doyle if he could work through updating the contract prior to Ways & Means.

Chair Uchitelle asked if there were any further questions or discussion and hearing none called for a vote in favor of the Resolution.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Nolan, Lopez, Stewart and Uchitelle
Voting Against: Legislator Petit
Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 1
Disposition: **RESOLUTION ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 444 – Amending The 2023 Ulster County Budget To Accept An Additional 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 amends the 2023 Budget to accept an additional \$15,000 in federal funds through the state’s allocation of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021: Grants to Enhance Adult Protective Services administered by the Administration for Community Living (ACL) to enhance, improve, and expand the ability of APS to investigate allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults

Motion No. 4: **Moved Resolution No. 444 FOR DISCUSSION**

Motion Made By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Stewart

Discussion:

Commissioner Iapoce gave the members a brief explanation of the funding and its use. Legislator Erner asked if there were changes to the implementation now that COVID is less severe. Commissioner Iapoce responded there were no major changes and that the program provided a lot of flexibility. The members briefly discussed the time frame the funding needed to be expended.

Chair Uchitelle asked if there were any further questions or discussion and hearing none called for a vote in favor of the Resolution.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Stewart and Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **RESOLUTION ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 445 – Authorizing The Chair Of The Legislature To Execute An Intermunicipal Agreement With The Dutchess County Department Of Behavioral & Community Health - Department Of Mental Health

Resolution Summary: This Resolution authorizes the Chair to execute an intermunicipal agreement between the Ulster County Department of Mental Health and the Dutchess County Department of Behavioral and Community Health to support the availability of the Dutchess County Helpline 9-8-8 suicide prevention call center to Ulster County residents at no cost

Motion No. 5: **Moved Resolution No. 445 FOR DISCUSSION**

Motion Made By: Legislator Corcoran
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Erner

Discussion:

Commissioner McDonald briefly explained the services provided by the 9-8-8 suicide prevention call center and the arrangement between Ulster and Dutchess counties. She added that there is no cost to Ulster County and that Dutchess is compensated by the NYS OMH as the regional 9-8-8 provider as part of the National Suicide Hotline call center.

Chair Uchitelle asked if there were any questions or discussion and hearing none called for a vote in favor of the Resolution.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Stewart and Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **RESOLUTION ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 446 – Authorizing The Chair Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute A Lease Agreement With SAMADHI For Office Space At 368 Broadway – Department Of Public Works

Resolution Summary: This Resolution authorizes the Chair to execute a lease agreement with SAMADHI for 2,224 square feet of office space at 368 Broadway for the term beginning September 1, 2023, and ending August 31, 2028 at a cost of \$14.00/square foot for the first year.

Motion No. 6: **Moved Resolution No. 446 FOR DISCUSSION**

Motion Made By: Legislator Corcoran
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Erner

Discussion:

Commissioner McDonald advised the members that the lease would allow SAMADHI to expand their footprint in the building in order to better provide outpatient substance use disorder treatment, expand their STD clinic, and offer the only regional outpatient medical detox. Legislator Petit asked if these services will help with the SUD detox beds that WMC removed from Kingston Hospital. Commissioner McDonald responded that those beds will not be returning to the hospital and that SAMADHI's services will help fill that void. She added that Health Alliance does do detox, but only alcohol. Legislator Maloney asked for clarification on the detox services and whether MAT was part of the treatment. Commissioner McDonald briefly explained the assessment and treatment process.

Chair Uchitelle asked if there were any questions or discussion and hearing none called for a vote in favor of the Resolution.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Stewart and Uchitelle
Abstention: Legislator Nolan
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 5 (Legislator Petit absent for vote)
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **RESOLUTION ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 468 – Amending The 2023 - 2028 Capital Improvement Program - Amending Capital Project No. 645 – Renovation Of 21 Elizabeth Street – Elizabeth Manor Emergency Housing

Resolution Summary: This Resolution amends Capital Project No. 645 to defund the project expect for \$200,000 already expended for architect and engineering renovation planning services

Motion No. 7: **Moved Resolution No. 468 FOR DISCUSSION**

Motion Made By: Legislator Stewart
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Petit

Discussion:

Chair Uchitelle stated that Resolution Sponsor Gavaris was not present and explained the intent of the legislation. He asked Deputy County Executive Contreras if she would like to comment on the Resolution. Deputy County Executive Contreras stated that he comments apply to this Resolution as well as the next one. She advised the members that the Executive's Office is not closed to the idea, but that they are still engaging with firm to evaluate the renovation costs. She added that DSS has ben in communication with OTDA to determine whether renovation costs can be covered over time. She stated that it appears that is a possibility.

She also advised the members that they are close to awarding the RFP for a Realtor. Legislator Nolan stated that they still believed the site was important for the project and while they appreciated some Legislator’s apprehension, they did not want to abandon the project without another available and viable solution.

Legislator Maloney asked for clarification on depreciation. Deputy County executive Contreras responded explained the calculation and process. Legislator Maloney expressed his concern with the cost to renovate versus building a new facility. He added that the county has s number of extension and expensive projects in the works at the moment.

Legislator Petit stated that she agreed with both of the resolutions commenting that the costs just keep going up. She added that she would rather use the funds to purchase something turnkey. Chair Uchitelle commented that he agreed with Legislator Nolan that the Legislature has asked the Executive’s Office to look into other options and that he hesitated to take the project off the table without another viable solution. Adding that he would like to see the Resolution postponed for a month.

Motion No. 8: Motion to POSTPONE Resolution No. 468

Motion Made By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Erner

Discussion:

Legislator Stewart sated he was comfortable with postponement and expressed his disappointment with the rising costs and his support for giving the Executive’s office time to act on the Legislature’s requests. Legislator Erner stated that he shares all of the concerns raised and expressed his support for purchasing the Kingston Hospital. Legislator Maloney stated that the Executive’s Office will not put their time into finding another options if the Legislature does not act more decisively. Legislator Nolan objected to Legislator Maloney specking to someone else’s motivations.

Chair Uchitelle asked if there were any questions or discussion and hearing none called for a vote in favor of postponing the Resolution.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Stewart and Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **RESOLUTION POSTPONED**

Resolution No. 469 – Authorizing Commencement Of The Process Of Direct Sale Of The Property Located At 21 Elizabeth Street, City Of Kingston

Resolution Summary: This Resolution authorizes and directs the commencement of the direct sales process for the property located at 21 Elizabeth Street, Kingston

Motion No. 9: Moved Resolution No. 469 FOR DISCUSSION

Motion Made By: Legislator Stewart
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Erner

Discussion:

Chair Uchitelle recognized Resolution Sponsor Maloney. Legislator Maloney stated that the Resolution commences the direct sale process for the 21 Elizabeth Street property.

Motion No. 10: **Motion to Postpone Resolution No. 469**

Motion Made By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Erner

Discussion:

Chair Uchitelle asked if there were any questions or discussion and hearing none called for a vote in favor of postponing the Resolution.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Stewart and Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **RESOLUTION POSTPONED**

Resolution No. 421 – Requiring Dedicated Space Within The Workplace For Nursing Mothers Employed By Ulster County

Resolution Summary: This Resolution requires the county provide a designated private room close to any nursing mothers’ work area containing a chair, small table or flat service where breast milk can be pumped, and a refrigerator to store pumped milk.

Motion No. 11: **Moved Resolution No. 421 FOR DISCUSSION**

Motion Made By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Corcoran

Discussion:

Chair Uchitelle stated that they were waiting for the County Executive’s Office to get back to them on a survey of the departments. He recognized Deputy County Executive Contreras for an update. Deputy County Executive Contreras stated that the Departments had no issues with it. She added that she would suggest amending the language requiring a refrigerator in the room to providing access to a refrigerator. She added that the resolution is already existing state policy.

Legislator Petit acknowledged that there was existing state policy and commented that she wanted to retain the refrigerator requirement. A discussion on the refrigerator access and electrical requirements ensued. Chair Uchitelle stated that there was broad agreement on the policy generally and suggested a tightening of the language prior to Session as opposed to postponing the Resolution. Legislator Maloney stated that the intention was to have a dedicated space, not potential spaces as needed. The members continued to discuss the requirements of the Resolution.

Commissioner Iapoce commented that his department has addressed the situation many times, adding that once a conversation is had with the employee the most appropriate accommodation is made. A discussion on issues and concerns from accommodations made for individuals and that some accommodations were less than ideal.

Chair Uchitelle asked if there was and further discussion and hearing none called for a vote in favor of the Resolution.

Voting In Favor:	Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Stewart and Uchitelle
Voting Against:	None
Votes in Favor:	7
Votes Against:	0
Disposition:	RESOLUTION ADOPTED

Resolution No. 423 – Establishing A Policy To Reform Social Services – Temporary Assistance – Housing

Resolution Summary: This Resolution makes numerous requirements for the Department of Social Services including: methods for communication with clients, 24/7/365 hours of operation, improved waiting areas, transportation plan for TA recipients, compensation for clients for time in application interviews, establishing additional TA shelters, penalties for refusing to house TA clients, monthly reporting, assured TA for all applicants.

Chair Uchitelle asked legislation sponsor Erner if he has made any progress with his conversations with the Executive’s Office. Legislator Erner responded that they had a very productive conversation earlier in the day and felt they were moving in the right direction. He added that it looked like they were moving in the direction of some operating procedures that the administration handles rather than a legislative policy. He advised the members that he has another meeting scheduled to continue the discussion.

Motion No. 12: **Moved to Postpone Resolution No. 423**

Motion Made By:	Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By:	Legislator Stewart

Discussion:

Chair Uchitelle asked if there was and further discussion and hearing none called for a vote in favor of postponing the Resolution.

Voting In Favor:	Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Stewart and Uchitelle
Voting Against:	None
Votes in Favor:	7
Votes Against:	0
Disposition:	RESOLUTION POSTPONED

Resolution No. 424 – Establishing A Policy To Track All Temporary Housing Facilities On A Daily Basis

Resolution Summary: This Resolution requires DSS to conduct daily surveys of conditions of facilities that house or may house TA clients.

Chair Uchitelle asked legislation sponsor Erner for and update on any progress he has made since the last meeting. Legislator Erner responded that he has asked Clerk Fabella to withdraw the Resolution as it is being implemented by the administration.

Disposition: WITHDRAWN BY SPONSOR

Resolution No. 425 – Establishing A Policy To Liberalize Access To Public Spaces For Survival

Resolution Summary: This Resolution opens for public use all county property suitable for unhoused people to use as temporary homes or shelters.

Chair Uchitelle asked legislation sponsor Erner for and update on any progress he has made since the last meeting. Legislator Erner responded that there are a number of differences on the topic; whether county personnel trained to assist people in crisis would be provided, questions surrounding county liability, staffing concerns. He stated that there was a move to have the warming center continuously open from November through March which would help, as well as the addition of a center in Ellenville. He stated that he would like to have another conversation with the administration before asking the committee to act.

Motion No. 13: Moved to Postpone Resolution No. 425

Motion Made By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Stewart

Discussion:

Chair Uchitelle asked if there was and further discussion and hearing none called for a vote in favor of postponing the Resolution.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Stewart and Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: RESOLUTION POSTPONED

Chair Uchitelle moved on to Resolution Nos. 126 and 127 under Old Business on the Agenda. He stated that as the sponsor he has requested no action be taken.

Resolution No. 126 – Dedicating Funding To Housing Justice

Resolution Summary: Dedicates \$20 million to the Housing Justice Assigned Fund from 2022 unassigned fund balance.

Disposition: NO ACTION TAKEN

Resolution No. 127 – Establishing A Policy To Prioritize Meals For Ulster County Residents Living In Emergency Housing

Resolution Summary: Establishes a policy requiring the issuance of a Request For Proposal (RFP) on behalf of Ulster County to seek a vendor who shall assess need and prepare and deliver meals daily to all residents placed in Emergency Housing hotels and motels within Ulster County.

Disposition: **NO ACTION TAKEN**

Chair Uchitelle advised the members that there were a couple of requests for discussion under new business if time permitted. He stated that there is not time this month and that the meeting was already cutting into another meeting time and therefore asked for a motion to adjourn.

Adjournment

Motion Made By: Legislator Corcoran
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Stewart

No. of Votes in Favor: 7
No. of Votes Against: 0

TIME: 6:26 PM

Respectfully submitted by: Deputy Clerk Mahler
Minutes Approved: September 6, 2023