

**Ways & Means Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes**

DATE & TIME: April 19, 2022 – 5:00 PM
LOCATION: KL Binder Library, 6th Floor, COB
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chairman Gavaris
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Natalie Kelder, Legislative Financial Analyst
PRESENT: Legislators Cahill (via teleconference), Fabiano, Ronk, & Walter (via teleconference)
ABSENT: None
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Legislators Erner, Heppner, Maloney, Nolan, Greene, & Uchitelle, Deputy County Executives Contreras & Kelly, Comptroller Gallagher & Alicia DeMarco – UC Comptroller’s Office, Hugh Reynolds and Patricia Doxsey - Press

Chairman Gavaris called the meeting to order at 5:04 PM

Resolutions for the April 19, 2022 Session of the Legislature

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

Resolution Summary: This Resolution requests the enactment of a Senate and Assembly Bill in the New York State Legislature to increase the Hotel & Motel Occupancy Tax to 4% and the Short-Term Rental Tax to 8%.

Motion No. 1: **Motion to DISCUSS Resolution No. 11**
Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Fabiano

Discussion: Legislator Maloney requested a postponement as the Occupancy Tax Working Group has just begun to meet.

Motion No. 2: **Motion to POSTPONE Resolution No. 11**
Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Fabiano

Discussion: Legislator Walter noted that there were a few typos in the current legislation and was interested to know if the software was able to distinguish a permanent resident at an Airbnb property.

Legislator Maloney stated that the typos were irrelevant as it will be rewritten based upon the results of the working group.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk, & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 5

Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolution POSTPONED

Resolution No. 168: Authorizing A One-Time Reimbursement To Ulster County 2021 Real Property Taxpayers

Resolution Summary: This Resolution authorizes a one-time reimbursement to the Ulster County 2021 Real Property Taxpayers in a total amount of \$34,312,169.

Motion No. 3: Motion to DISCUSS Resolution No. 18
Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Fabiano

Discussion: Legislator Maloney requested a postponement on this resolution to allow for more time for discussion, noting that this is a good way to get money directly back into the hands of the people.

Legislator Erner added that he wanted to ensure that those who were able to pay the most based upon their total wealth are doing so and expressed wanting to look at this issue more broadly.

Legislator Maloney agreed and thought perhaps anyone with a home value of a specific amount or greater could be excluded and suggested completely excluding rental properties.

Motion No. 4: Motion to POSTPONE Resolution No. 18
Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Fabiano

Discussion: None

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk, & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolution POSTPONED

Resolution No. 169: Electing A Cents Per Gallon Rate Of Sales And Compensating Use Taxes On Motor Fuel And Diesel Motor Fuel, In Lieu Of The Percentage Rate Of Such Taxes, Pursuant To The Authority Of Article 29 Of The Tax Law Of The State Of New York, By Amending Resolution No. 286 Of 1969 Adopted February 13, 1969, As Amended On Various Occasions

Resolution Summary: This Resolution, effective June 1, 2022, amends Resolution No. 286 of 1969 to change the calculation from a percentage-based formula to a cents-based formula.

Motion No. 5: Motion to APPROVE Resolution No. 169
Motion By: Legislator Ronk

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Fabiano

Discussion: Legislator Ronk stated that he thinks this is more about giving people a break at the pump instead of the county making a profit off the high cost of motor fuel.

Legislator Walter stated that she does not support this resolution, noting that a lot of things have gotten more expensive during covid, including the price of food and farmers are not being subsidized to fight that price increase.

Legislator Walter went on to state that she would prefer to help individuals obtain healthy fruits and vegetables and discourage single drivers, noting that 75% of people drive alone to work and only 2% of people take public transportation and the higher prices could be motivation to think of alternatives such as carpooling or public transportation.

Legislator Maloney stated that his biggest issue is that there is no evidence that the savings will be passed along to the consumer, and it is unlikely that the price at the pump will change immediately due to timing. Legislator Maloney went on to say that this was not the best way to get savings on to the constituents and more work needed to be done.

Legislator Ronk agreed with Legislator Maloney stating that he wished there was more that could be done to ensure the savings gets to the people. However, Legislator Ronk said they need to do what they can do, and this is something they can do. Legislator Ronk noted that public transportation is not convenient from his district and there may only be one bus to ride each day and doesn't necessarily correlate with traditional working hours. Legislator Ronk stated that fuel is the one thing that raises the price of everything and is why inflation rises so rapidly when gas and fuel prices are high.

Legislator Nolan agreed that at this point they should be looking for any way to provide relief and supports the notion that an increase in fossil fuel also increases the cost of other goods. Legislator Nolan added that perhaps there should be more "No Sales Tax Weekends" on the sale of clothing and continue to find ways to protect the environment.

Legislator Walter stated that high fuel costs will impact individuals' choices in how to utilize that fuel and get to where they need to be and will inspire more ecofriendly approaches. Legislator Walter added that for \$3 million more buses could be added and increase the public transportation access.

Legislator Cahill stated that gas prices are one of the topics he is hearing about from his constituents. In addition, there are a lot of Ulster County residents that travel to Dutchess County to work at the hospitals, IBM or other entities. Legislator Cahill also agreed that they should be discouraging people from driving and encouraging the use of public transportation, noting that Ulster County is a leader in public transportation and green initiatives and the intent of this is not to detract from that and it will not be a result of it.

Legislator Erner noted that the savings per tank is small in proportion to the total amount that will still be paid and would like to see some added pressure on the state levels. Legislator Erner also added that less gas needs to be consumed and that there should be some sort of public transportation on all roads that the county maintains.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, & Ronk
Voting Against: Legislator Gavaris & Walter
Votes in Favor: 3
Votes Against: 2
Disposition: **Resolution APPROVED**

Resolution No. 180: Authorizing The Cost Of The Design Phase For The Construction Of The Galeville Bridge Replacement In The Town Of Shawangunk, In And For The County Of Ulster, New York, At A Maximum Estimated Cost Of \$110,000.00, And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$110,000.00 Bonds Of Said County To Pay The Cost Thereof

Resolution Summary: This Resolution authorizes \$110,000 in bonds for the design phase for the construction of the Galeville Bridge replacement in the Town of Shawangunk.

Motion No. 6: **Motion to APPROVE Resolution No. 180**
Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Fabiano

Discussion: None

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution APPROVED**

Resolution No. 201: Increasing The Employee Contribution Towards The Cost Of Health Insurance Benefits For New Hire Management Non Union Employees

Resolution Summary: This Resolution increases the employee contribution towards the cost of health insurance benefits from 10% to 20% for new hire management non-union employees effective October 1, 2022.

Motion No. 7: **Motion to DISCUSS Resolution No. 201**
Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Fabiano

Discussion: Legislator Maloney requested a postponement for this Resolution but stated that all the new hire unionized employees pay 20% towards their health care and stated that all Ulster County Employees should be equal and pay 20%.

Motion No. 8: **Motion to POSTPONE Resolution No. 201**

Motion By: Legislator Ronk

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Fabiano

Discussion: None

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk, & Walter

Voting Against: None

Votes in Favor: 5

Votes Against: 0

Disposition: **Resolution POSTPONED**

Commissioner of Finance Gulnick provided a presentation on the tax foreclosure process. Discussion ensued on the tax foreclosure process. Presentation is attached.

Comptroller Gallagher stated that she would be providing draft policy updates regarding the Ulster County Investment Policy as well as a gas tax calculator. Comptroller Gallagher also provided an update regarding the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency. Discussion ensued with Comptroller Gallagher and the various topics.

Chairman Gavaris moved on to the Forthcoming Local Laws portion of the agenda.

Resolution No. 14 – Authorizing The Termination Of A Lease Agreement With CPR Kingston, LLC Ban For Space Used By The Board Of Elections (Postponed in Laws, Rules, and Government Services)

Resolution No. 167 – Adopting A Negative Declaration For The Demolition Of The Former Ulster County Jail Located On Golden Hill, And Establishing And Funding Capital Project No. 630 - Demolition Of Jail Golden Hill- ARPA – Department Of Planning (No Action taken in Energy, Environment and Sustainability Committee)

Resolution No. 189 – Establishing A Policy Prohibiting The Housing Of Incarcerated Individuals Transferred From Facilities Outside Of Ulster County, The “No More Incarceration For Profit Policy” (No Action taken in Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee)

Resolution No. 209 – Setting A Public Hearing On The Sale And/Or Transfer Of Five Parcels Of Land Owned By Ulster County In The Towns Of Esopus, Kingston, Lloyd, Plattekill, And Ulster To A Local Development Corporation (Postponed in Health, Human Services, & Housing Committee)

Chairman Gavaris asked if there was any old or new business.

Adjournment

Motion Made By: Legislator Fabiano

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Cahill

No. of Votes in Favor: 5
No. of Votes Against: 0

TIME: 6:19 PM

Respectfully submitted: Natalie Kelder
Minutes Approved: April 12, 2022

Department of Finance

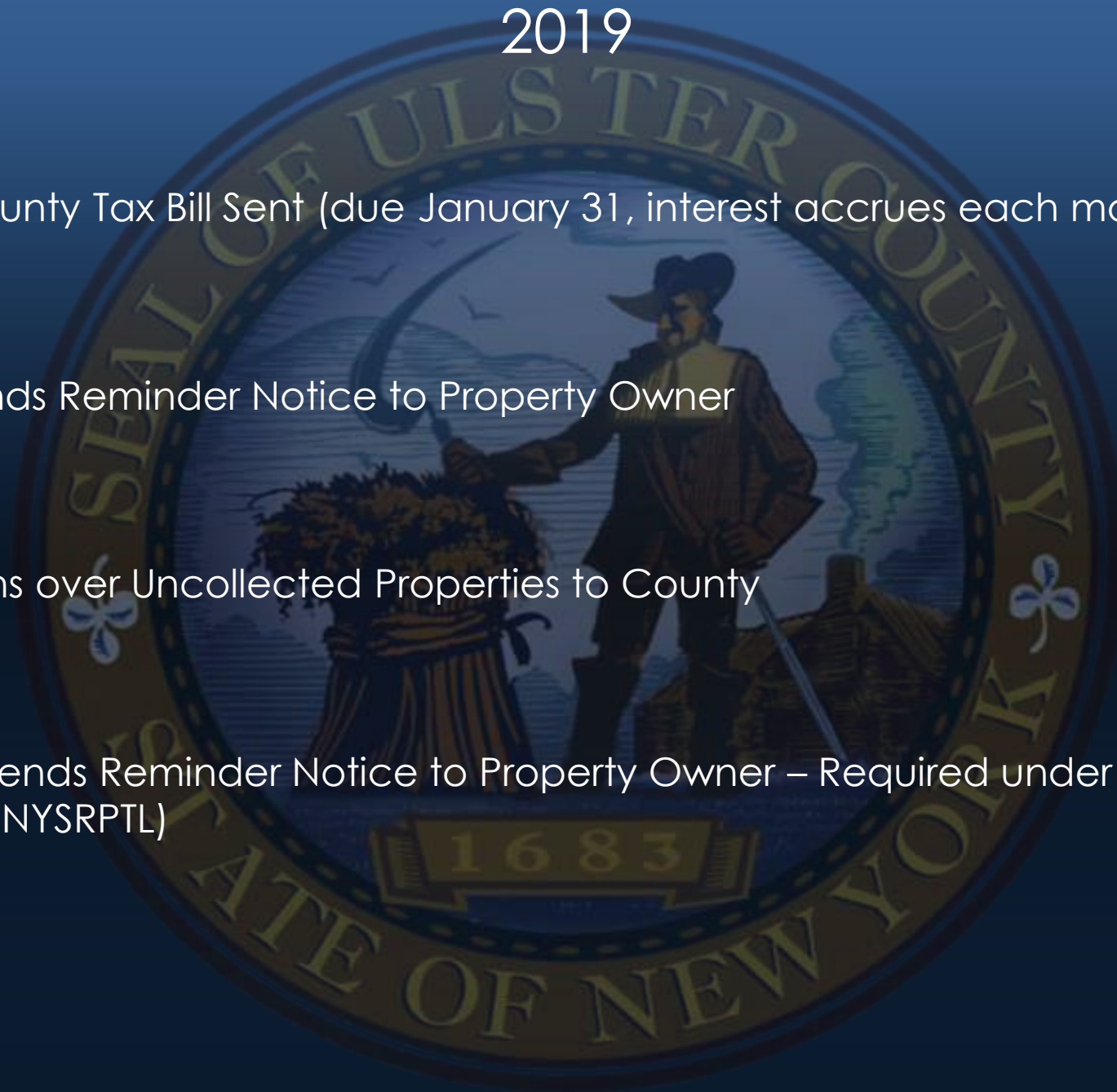
Tax Foreclosure Process

Burt Gulnick Jr.

Commissioner of Finance/Budget Director

2019

- January
 - Town/County Tax Bill Sent (due January 31, interest accrues each month thereafter)
- May
 - Town Sends Reminder Notice to Property Owner
- June
 - Town turns over Uncollected Properties to County
- July
 - County Sends Reminder Notice to Property Owner – Required under NYS Real Property Tax Law (NYSRPTL)



2019 (continued)

- September
 - County Sends Notice of Delinquent Tax to Property Owner – Required under NYSRPTL
- November
 - File Delinquent Tax List with UC County Clerk – Required under NYSRPTL
 - Initial Title Search of Property

2020

- April
 - Delinquent Tax Notice to Property Owner for all Tax Years (Includes 2019)



The background of the slide features a large, semi-transparent seal of Ulster County, New York. The seal is circular and contains the text "SEAL OF ULSTER COUNTY" at the top and "STATE OF NEW YORK" at the bottom. In the center, there is a figure of a man in a hat and coat, holding a staff, standing on a pedestal. The year "1683" is inscribed at the bottom of the seal.

2021

- April
 - Delinquent Tax Notice to Property Owner for all Tax Years (Includes 2019)
- June
 - Updated Title Search Completed
- October
 - Petition Notice of Foreclosure – Required under NYS Real Property Tax Law (NYSRPTL)
 - Certified and Regular Mail Foreclosure NOtices –
 - 2,142 Certified Letters in 2021 – 657 Properties
 - Sent to Owners and those with Publicly Recorded Interest
 - 120 Days to Redeem Property
 - Foreclosure Eligible Properties Advertised per NYSRPTL
 - Foreclosure List sent to Department of Environment
- November
 - Current Foreclosure List sent to Town Building Inspectors with Questionnaire for each Property

2022

- January
 - Current List of Foreclosure Eligible Properties sent to:
 - Chair of Ways and Means Committee
 - County Executive
 - County Attorney
 - Planning Department
 - Receive Building Inspector Questionnaires Back
 - Properties that Certified Letters are Returned Not Deliverable,
 - Notice of Foreclosure Physically Posted on Property – NYSRPTL
- February
 - Mid-February – Last Day to Redeem Property
 - Answers are Served to the County Attorney from Oct '21- Mid-February '22
 - Civil action delaying the County to Foreclose on Property
 - Bankruptcies are Removed from Eligible Foreclosure List

2022 (continued)

- March
 - County Attorney Prepares Judgement to Court
 - Installment Agreements that are Eligible for Foreclosure – those that are current on agreement are removed
 - After Review of Building Inspector Questionnaire, Physical Inspection by DPW (for some), Information from Planning Department and Department of Environment – Hazardous Properties are Removed from Notice of Foreclosure
 - Mid-March – County Judge Signs Judgement
- April
 - Mid-March to Friday before Auction – Former Owner can Buyback Property from UC
 - Order to Show Cause or Bankruptcy Filings are Received by the County Attorney – Properties are Removed from Auction
 - Mid-April – Online Auction Held

2022 (continued)

- May-June
 - County Legislature Approves Buyback Resolution to Former Property Owner
- June-July
 - County Legislature Approves Properties Sold at Auction
- August-September
 - Approved Property Deeds prepared by Finance/County Attorney are Filed

