

**Ways and Means Committee &
Legislative Programs, Education and Community Services
Committee
Special Meeting Minutes**

DATE & TIME: May 11, 2020 – 5:00
LOCATION: Powered by Zoom Meeting by dialing 1-646-558-8656,
Meeting ID 942 4218 4626
PRESIDING OFFICER: Lynn Archer, Chairwoman
James Delaune, Chairman
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Natalie Kelder, Jay Mahler, Nettie Tomshaw, Laurie
Lichtenstein
PRESENT: Legislators Kenneth J. Ronk, Jr., Thomas Corcoran, Tracey
Bartels, Peter Criswell, John Gavaris, Heidi Haynes; Mary
Beth Maio (5:07 PM), John Parete (5:30 PM), Eve Walter,
Mary Wawro, Legislative Chair David B. Donaldson
ABSENT: None
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes
OTHER ATTENDEES: Legislators Al Bruno, Manna Jo Greene, Johnathan
Heppner, Laura Petit; Kingston Library; Mid-Hudson
News, Stuart Auchinlaus, Woodstock Resident

- **Chairwoman Archer called the meeting to order at 5:04 PM**
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Chairwoman Archer opened the meeting by acknowledging that due to the Covid-19 Pandemic there is an expected \$30-\$40 Million budget gap. The various contract agencies bring much benefit to the Ulster County Community but must be reviewed due to the current circumstances. In addition, Chairwoman Archer recognized that the Legislature has received many letters from community members expressing their support of the agencies.

Chairman Delaune added that this is a difficult time and a difficult job that needs to be done. Recognizing that some organizations may not be funded, he and Legislator Walter have reached out to various philanthropists, community organizations and foundations to see if additional assistance can be provided. Chairman Delaune added that these organizations have been doing a wonderful job and this does not reflect their performance, only the current economic environment.

Chairwoman Archer and Chairman Delaune offered the following criteria to help assess the various organizations:

Given the current health crisis, it's impact on our community and budget, does the funding support the most vulnerable of our population through a program no one else is delivering? If

yes, discuss and consider funding as originally proposed or less and all others are deferred until the 4th quarter when we have a better sense of whether we have the budget to fund or not.

Legislative Chairman Donaldson thought it was important to have other criteria as well and pointed out that some agencies may leverage the money received from Ulster County to obtain money from the State or Federal Government.

Legislator Walter shared that her and Chairman Delaune created a list of potential questions to ask of the various organizations relating to the Covid-19 environment.

Discussion ensued on the criteria that should be used to made decisions regarding funding for each of the organizations.

The Committees decided to review the metrics and decide what will be asked of the agencies. A deadline was set for the end of the week.

Chairwoman Archer asked the members if there was any other business, and hearing none;

Adjournment

Motion Made By:	Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By:	Legislator Donaldson
No. of Votes in Favor:	13
No. of Votes Against:	0

Time:	5:55 PM
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Respectfully submitted:	Natalie Kelder
Minutes Approved:	June 9, 2020

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Auchinlaus, Woodstock Resident;

Chairwoman Archer: I'd like to call the Joint Special Meeting together. This May 11, 2020, Ways and Means Committee and the Legislative Programs, Education and Community Services Committee members. We also have an Environment represented here, as well as I believe Public Health, because two or three of the resolutions came out of those committees, as well. But we just have the Chair, Deputy Chair of those committees. So, with that, could you take attendance, please, Natalie?

Natalie Kelder: Yes, Ways and Means Committee members. Archer.

Chairwoman Archer: Here.

Natalie Kelder: Ronk.

Legislator Ronk: Present.

Natalie Kelder: Bartels.

Legislator Bartels: Here.

Natalie Kelder: Gavaris.

Legislator Gavaris: Present.

Natalie Kelder: Haynes

Legislator Haynes: Here.

Natalie Kelder: Maio (Joined meeting after roll call).

Natalie Kelder: Walter.

Legislator Walter: Here

Natalie Kelder: And Donaldson.

Legislative Chairman Donaldson: Aye.

Natalie Kelder: And Legislative Programs members. Delaune.

Legislator Delaune: Here.

Natalie Kelder: Corcoran.

Legislator Corcoran: Here.

Natalie Kelder: Criswell.

Legislator Criswell: Here.

Natalie Kelder: Parete (Joined meeting after roll call)

Natalie Kelder: Wawro.

Legislator Wawro: Here.

Chairwoman Archer: Great, thank you. Thank you, everyone, for joining us today. This is a difficult meeting it's easy to grant monies to these organizations that provide a lot to our communities but when we have a \$30 to \$40 million budget gap, and we're not even sure if that truly reflects, you know, what the condition will be down the road here. We really feel that it's critical that we step back and take a look at these programs. And what we can afford to do and what other options do we have.

We received a significant number of letters from the community supporting all of these different programs, and we so appreciate it. It's in your package, under each organization. Some of the letters came in today, those may not, but I think they went to all Legislators any way. But this is a difficult conversation to have. And we've come up what we think is an option. We want to discuss some criteria. And Jim, is there anything you wanted to add before we go into the criteria?

Legislator Delaune: Only that we recognize that, yes, it is a difficult time. This is a difficult job, and there will be those organizations that aren't funded. And so, what Legislator Walter and I have done is to reach out to philanthropists and community organizations, foundations, to see if there might be any assistance moving forward as we go through this process. So, they want to stay tuned. They want to continue with dialogue. So, we aren't saying we don't want to fund these because they're not, they haven't been doing a good job. They've been doing a great job. And that's why we funded them in the past. But these are difficult times.

Legislator Archer: Okay, with that everybody got an email that talked about their criteria. So, I'd like to put forth what we came up with for discussion. As we go through and look at each of the, I think 14 or 15, organizations. 15.

And the criteria is that given the current health crisis, its impact on our community and budget, does the funding support the most vulnerable of our population through program no one else is delivering? If yes, discuss, consider funding as originally proposed, or if we have to make an adjustment. And then all others, we would recommend deferring until the fourth quarter when we have a better sense of whether or not we have the budget to fund or not, and we'll have a better sense of where the County sits with, in that regard.

I put that on the table for discussion.

Legislator Ronk: Legislator Archer?

Legislator Archer: Legislator Ronk

Legislator Ronk: Would it behoove us to just go through one by one, and you know, one through 15? I feel like, rather than having, you know, sort of a stream of consciousness about all of them together, it might just be better to go, you know, we have the list of them. You know I've sort of got my screen split-screened between the two. I don't know what everyone else's thoughts are but if we just start going through one through 15, and perhaps we could have consensus on five or six, at least to start with.

Chairwoman Archer: Yes, I'm sorry if I wasn't clear. I really wanted us to zero in, does the criteria make sense? And then go into each of them, applying that criteria.

Legislator Ronk: Okay, then, you know, just on whether the criteria makes sense. I think the criteria does make sense, that you've laid out. I just want to confirm, it's not necessarily if we think it benefits the most vulnerable in the community is a worthy thing to continue. That's not to say that we would continue all of those fundings at the maximum level that we've already budgeted, right? We could also talk about possibly carrying some of that down?

Chairwoman Archer: Yes, that's what the criteria says. We can we can consider funding as originally proposed, or less or, different. Others would be deferred.

Legislator Bartels. Oh.

Legislative Chairman Donaldson: I would suggest that there may be other criteria that may be significant that we may want to fund, also. Just be... I understand what you're pointing out. But I don't think that could be the only criteria. So, I think we need to take a look at each one of them individually. I mean, I agree with Legislator Ronk on that one.

Chairwoman Archer: Legislator Bartels then Walter.

Legislator Bartels: But in terms... I just have a question, through the Chairs, to Chair Donaldson. In terms of establishing a criterion, where we're trying to look at each one, from the same criteria. I mean, I think we're going to have individual discussions. But when you're saying there's other criteria that might be important, I think now is the time to talk about the other criteria that might be important. And then, we can apply that criteria to each of the organizations.

Legislative Chairman Donaldson: Well there may be some type of sustainability dealing with the criteria. Like dealing with... let's say an arts organization. You know, if you're cutting it, you know taking all the money out of there. What happens to that? Does that lose any of, you know, does it lose everything to the point where there's no really return. I mean, I don't know.

I mean, I think... I mean you have one criteria, and I think it's an important criteria. We also have to look at the long-term effects that, you know, may come about by us cutting, you know, totally cutting an organization to zero. No, I mean, we have to consider that also. So, that's why I think there are other criteria. This other one that you have may be one of the most important, but I think there is other criteria.

Legislator Bartels: Then to just respond. Why don't we add that to the criteria? The effects of defunding. Are you saying to the sustainability of the organization? Or...

Legislative Chairman Donaldson: Not only the sustainability of the organization but it could be even other things dealing with it. In other words, some organizations are funded by the Federal government and State government, and us. So, does that affect them leveraging money from others? Now, that could be another aspect. I mean, you know, if you cut an organization that uses that to leverage other money. Does that mean they're not going to be able to get other money?

Chairwoman Archer: Okay, so we have Legislator Walter, Legislator Criswell, and then Legislator Delaune.

Legislator Walter: So, Legislator Delaune, and I as he mentioned, we met with the Dyson Foundation and the Community Foundation today. And had these conversations, which not surprisingly, they're having these conversations, all of these noble foundations, they're all having these conversations. There's actually been reports done by nonprofit organizations on what these organizations should be thinking about.

And one of the biggest things that we all came up with was this idea of needing metrics to identify these, how, these programs, you know, how to support these programs going forward, or whether to support them.

So, working with them, we did come up with a list of questions that I could just... briefly just cover it just so that you know, I can email it to everybody.

The first one asked about how much of an operating reserve they had, as of March 1. To distinguish between those who have stronger previous operation funds operating funds. Again, with the suggestion that if they had more than 100 percent of their monthly operating funds that that meant they had more strength and stability, and might be better to fund, not necessarily worse.

How they reduced expenditures in the last couple of months?

How their revenue expectations have changed? Which speaks to what Chair Donaldson spoke to, how they sought to reduce revenue shortfall. And it gives us a variety of different options.

If their mission has changed as a result of this, and if so, how?

And also, any thoughts of potential collaboration or mergers with other organizations?

And so, I think that the idea from Community Foundation, Dyson, and others, is to present some of these questions to these organizations, and then use the answers to then evaluate funding.

Chairwoman Archer: Legislator Criswell.

Legislator Criswell: Yes. I just wonder if you could define for us, most vulnerable. It's one of the criteria, but I don't know if I fully understand what the definition means.

Chairwoman Archer: I think it's dependent on the program that we're discussing. Does it help people, individuals in our community who are at risk, as a result of the health crisis?

Legislator Criswell: Are you are you basing that on socioeconomic? Or what is most vulnerable mean?

Chairwoman Archer: Jim, do you want to add?

Legislator Delaune: Well, I mean, to me, children was the first thing that came to mind. And that seems to me to be most pressing.

But I did want to speak to the fact that I really don't see this as absolutely saying no to an organization. Steve said, we want to work them. And it's really a matter of postponing a decision until we're in a situation where we're better prepared to make these tougher decisions. But everything's an unknown right now. So, if we were to postpone our decision making by one, two, three months, we might be in a better position to look at some of these organizations that don't make it the first round.

Chairwoman Archer: We have a pretty diverse group of organizations here all having an impact on our community. And I think that when we talk about most vulnerable. We talk about children. We talk about food. We talk about, you know, all different elements of that. And I think we've got

to look at each program, and the impact it has on the community, and with the health crisis, is this something we need today? Or, can we defer till we have a better sense of where we are from a budgetary perspective? I'm sorry, it comes down to the dollars and cents. But that's exactly what it comes down to. Until we have more information, we're flying blind.

We have a Governor that says, I'm going to look at, you know, what we've gotten in the way of State revenue, what we're getting in the way of Federal funding. How aspects... if COVID will be covered, Federally or not. There are so many unknowns. And it's unfortunate that we're in this situation, but I think it's responsible for us too, it's our responsibility to really kind of put this on the table go through the process. And as Jim said, we're not saying no, and we're not saying these are not worthy organizations. We're saying that we have a huge challenge in front of us and we have to be thoughtful about how we move forward. And that's what I hope we can get done tonight.

Okay, so if we apply that why don't we go then into the first group? Everybody should have this on their OneDrive. The first program I have on the list here is Awareness.

Legislative Chairman Donaldson: I don't have that list ready. I know don't want to try to grab it. I'll probably get knocked off the Zoom here. What is the amount of that again?

Legislator Ronk: \$10,000.

Legislative Chairman Donaldson: And that's a hands-on thing. Is it not?

Legislator Ronk: I mean it... define hands on.

Legislative Chairman Donaldson: I mean it's something that people get together, and you know, it's a program that is...

Legislator Ronk: Not occurring currently?

Legislative Chairman Donaldson: Not occurring currently, correct.

Legislator Wawro: Excuse me, they are doing they are doing some online meetings. They have continued,

Legislator Ronk: But she's not ordering pizza for them. I'm assuming, unless she's ordering it to other people's houses. I don't know.

Chairwoman Archer: Sorry, I'm having some technical difficulty here. Yes. Dave.

Legislative Chairman Donaldson: Ken wanted to talk.

Legislator Archer: I'm sorry. I didn't see him, Ken,

Legislator Ronk: That's fine. I mean, you know, to me, you know, I almost think that this would fall into the category of, you know, the most vulnerable in our community under the under the

criterion. But I also think that, you know, one concern that many Legislators, myself included, have had about this program over the years is that there's no evidence that the person in charge of the program has made serious attempts to obtain other types of funding, fundraise on her own. You know, she relies almost entirely on County funds every year to do this program. It's one of the reasons that the last several years I've voted against it. You know, I just think that... I just think that we shouldn't continue to be the sole funding source, especially at a time when our funds are so limited.

Chairwoman Archer: Yes, Legislator Bartels.

Legislator Bartels: Thank you. So, I think what Legislator Ronk is bringing up, while it's true, I mean, to my knowledge, we're the pretty much the sole source funder for Awareness. It's also, we're back to square one evaluating all these things, not in light, of COVID, but in light of the merit of the program. And the debates we had during the budget cycle. So, because that's the same argument you made at that time, Legislator Ronk. And why you articulated voting no.

I mean, I don't know if that's what we're going to do on each one, maybe we should, and maybe we have to. But whether or not she's expanded the program to get outside funding is a different argument than who she is or is not reaching, and who the program is, or is not reaching, in this moment, and in this crisis.

Chairwoman Archer: And if we look at the scope of services for this group, it's peer-to-peer, educational services to youth, ages 16 to 25. To encourage youth to recognize positive behavioral changes and to provide positive consequences to help change the youth's behavior with the end-goal of positively affecting the youth's future.

Yes. Legislator Ronk.

Legislator Ronk: Thanks. Just to respond, respectfully, to Legislator Bartels' comments. While they may be the same comments as I made at the budget time, I think that due to the budget restraints we're going to have from COVID. I think that it relates to both. I think that it's not just from what I said during budget time, you know, I think that a lot of these decisions are going to be budgetary decisions. And, you know, one of the questions we have to ask ourselves is... You know, are we going to give, you know, some of these other organizations... Like, honestly, like Dave said, you know, some of these organizations use our funding to, you know, parlay it into Federal funding, State funding, other philanthropic funding. You know, so any funding that we give would have almost a double benefit to the organization. Whereas this organization has time and time, and time again, not done that. And instead, come and use the County as almost sole funding for the program.

Chairwoman Archer: All right, Legislator Walter, Wawro, then Criswell.

Legislator Walter: So, this could end up being a very long meeting which is fine, if it is. But I guess I would suggest, perhaps that along with the criteria of just vulnerable, no one else is doing it is, is the concept of is it being... is there a service that's being provided right now. That needs to be provided right now.

I would make the argument that this particular program probably is happening at a lower level now. It probably does not need the money that is allotted here as described. They're not doing necessarily the pizza party, and that if it's not something that's providing a service at this moment. Actively. You know, that we should, as was discussed earlier, maybe send them a set of other criteria. Like the metrics that I proposed. Hear from them about how they're handling those things. But that our priority, today, might be those people who are serving people right now, that we need to make sure they can keep doing what they're doing.

Chairwoman Archer: So, what I'm hearing is, and I think that's a good point to add, are they impacting the audience today? And if not, and it can be deferred, to follow up with those questions for further information and assessment down the road.

Legislator Walter: But to specify, because I'm sure they are still reaching out to these kids, so the answer, would technically be, yes. But do they need the funding that's in this resolution to still have that impact? I'm sure the coordinator of this still reaches out. But they may not need this funding, or this level of funding, right now to do that.

Chairwoman Archer: Okay. All right. I think we had Legislator Wawro, then, Criswell and then Heppner.

Legislator Wawro: I just wanted to clarify that the Hudson Valley Youth Foundation has supported them with \$2,500. Stewart's funded them \$1,500 dollars. And they had private donors, and they won \$676 in a video voting challenge. So, they are getting, not to our level, but they are doing some other outside funding.

Chairwoman Archer: Legislator Criswell.

Legislator Criswell: I was going to say the same thing. Just looking at their P&L (Profit and Loss) there. It's half. What we're funding them is half of their income.

Chairwoman Archer: Okay. Legislator Heppner.

Legislator Heppner: Yeah, I totally agree with what Legislator Walter said. I think this might be the case with a few of these, but especially, you know, a service like this. I don't think we can really make, establish a position either way without, you know, more understanding of how they're operating in real time, during COVID. Because I think, you know, that's, I think there has to be, I know it's a little bit more time consuming. I don't know what the best strategy is to reach out to organizations like this to get a plan from them. I think it's, you know, pretty important in making these tough decisions.

Chairwoman Archer: Okay, Legislator Ronk.

Legislator Ronk: All right. Thanks. With Legislator Walter's comments, and Legislator Heppner's comments following up, perhaps, this may be a shorter meeting than any of us anticipated. Because if, you know, if we're going to reach out to a couple of the organizations and have them come in, I think that we should reach out to representatives of each organization.

Schedule several of these meetings. And have, you know, one meeting to discuss one through five. One being discussed six through 10.

You know, rather than, because again, you know, not to sound, I don't know if this is going to sound bad or not, but I don't know if we, I don't know if we should waste several hours of our time here, and our staff's time, if then we're going to go back and talk about all of them again, with the organization's. Perhaps this meeting should be used to develop a plan on, you know, a couple of meetings to discuss these.

I just assumed we were going to go through them and make decisions as, you know, as law makers, knowing the programs, and knowing what they do, and who they serve. But, again, you know, if we're planning on inviting a couple of them to come in, I don't think that we should pick and choose. I think we should have all representatives invited from all of the organizations. You know, a few at a time, and go through them like that, rather than just chase our tails here this evening.

Chairwoman Archer: Legislator Bartels then Walters.

Legislator Bartels: So, I didn't hear anyone talk about them coming in. I heard about reaching out to them with a metric and a series of questions that we gather more information. And delay decision for those that could be delayed. That's what Legislator Delaune and Walter both said, and Heppner, in terms of getting a couple extra months to get a better sense of where we're at. I think it is important. You know, there are probably some in here that are, that actually need the funds, and are operating. And, you know, hit all the marks on the list of our, our suggestions. I also just want to ask for clarification. Because someone said that it was \$10,000. The Schedule B says \$12,500. Does anyone have the number in front of them?

Chairwoman Archer: It's \$12,500.

Legislator Ronk: I must have misspoke. It's fine.

Legislator Bartels: That's okay. I just wasn't sure.

Chairwoman Archer: That was a prior year amount, Ken.

Legislator Ronk: We've funded it several different amounts for numerous amount of years.

Chairwoman Archer: Okay. Legislator Walter.

Legislator Walter: Yeah, I just wanted to say that I agree with Legislator Bartels, that was my intent. I have the feeling there's probably just a small group on this, that are actively, right now, need to know that they're still having funding, to do the work they're doing, right now. Maybe there's none. But I think it's small. And that, for the remainder of them, a metric. Although, I'm open for metric to all, not necessarily having them here, but reviewing how they answer these questions. But I just, I wouldn't want to, if there are some organizations on here, that really, right now, are delivering really important care, that cannot stop, right now. I think we should just make sure to recognize those.

Chairwoman Archer: Okay. And Legislator Wawro

Legislator Wawro: Never mind, thank you.

Chairwoman Archer: I apologize. I should just let you know, I'm up and down. I have a sick puppy dog. So, when she needs to out, I have to let her out. So, I apologize for the distraction.

Legislator Ronk.

Legislator Ronk: Thank you, just to Legislator Walter's point about the organizations that might need the money now, or are currently operating. Natalie, do you happen to know offhand how many of the organizations get upfront funding? Or bill quarterly, because most of them are reimbursement, aren't they?

Natalie Kelder: A lot of them are. Hang on, let me pull up the list so I can look at it. I know Awareness is supposed to get several thousand dollars upfront. However, it didn't, not upfront. That is all reimbursed. But she's supposed to get several thousand pretty much right away once it's executed. And the remainder later in the year.

Walker Valley is reimbursement. I believe Soil and Water is a quarterly. RCAL is reimbursement. D&H is reimbursement. Maritime is reimbursement. People's Place is reimbursement.

Legislator Walter: Just to clarify, why you're doing that, Natalie... I was referring to peace of mind, as opposed to actual dollars. That these organizations are very anxious right now. And so, I was not referring to handing them a check.

Legislator Ronk: Okay. Then I was, my confusion. We can stop this. I just, you know, I think all the organizations would like the peace of mind that they're going to get County funding. That's why I think that, you know, saying things like, you know, we need to give some of these organizations' peace of mind. You know, making that arbitrary decision. You know, if we're going to be I, you know, I thought that we were going to be bringing them in for them to talk about it.

But if they're just going to be answering a bunch of questions for us, I think that it would behoove us to have all of them asked the same questions. All of them answer the same, or given the opportunity to answer the same questions. Because I would be willing to bet that there's one Legislator on this body that thinks that every one of these organizations is worthy of getting the funding. At least one, for every organization, is what I'm saying. So, I think that being arbitrary about which ones we want to try and, you know, figure out right away, and then which ones we want to put off, you know, I just think that that's a poor way to do business.

Heidi's got her hand up, Lynn, if you can't see it.

Chairwoman Archer: I didn't see it, Heidi. Sorry.

Legislator Haynes: That's okay. I think it's an important question that we asked when we say, when we're asking when do they normally get their first payment? You know, we're looking to be in the strongest financial position that we can so we can weather this financial crisis, and I'd hate to take a program off of the table if two, three months from now, we could possibly fund them.

So, when is it that they technically would get their first payment? You know, I would hate to, like I said, remove someone knowing that, you know, we'd have to see what it looks like two, three months down the road from now even. And I don't know why we're not looking at doing a straight across the board percentage of a reduction in some of these funding requests, either. I just think that that's a logical thing to do as well.

Chairwoman Archer: Well, for every Legislator, clearly, we have a different set of opinions. I think it's, I mean, that was the whole point of putting criteria out there. I've heard several different takes on what the criteria should be. At this juncture, I mean, some of these folks don't get payments until third, fourth quarter anyway, is that not correct? Natalie? With a few exceptions?

Natalie Kelder: That's correct. I can tell you I've already received invoices from Family of Woodstock and Community Action. However, even if we weren't in the crisis that we're in right now, they wouldn't be paid yet because their contracts still wouldn't be executed. However, they would be receiving money, you know, shortly, if we weren't in this mess that we're in right now. A lot of them would be the end of the year though, once they've spent their money, sent in all their receipts, and we've gone through everything.

Chairwoman Archer: I mean... I again, they're all worthy organizations, but at this juncture, even a reduction is something I don't know that we can afford to do right now till we have a sense.... I mean, we could make the decision that nobody gets any, and we review everyone at the end of the year.

And so, if we're going to talk about, you know, treating all of them fairly, and I just put that out there. That until we have a better sense of the condition of the County, given the crisis, that we don't fund any of these programs. And we take the time to use the questions that were put forth to follow up and then down the road, take a look at all of them.

Chairwoman Archer: Legislator Ronk.

Legislator Ronk: Thanks, Legislator Archer, I actually agree wholeheartedly with your suggestion just now. As a talking point, I think that, you know, maybe not to the end of the year, but I would think maybe to the third quarter where we'll be having a more accurate understanding of where our, you know, our finances are.

I do think that all the organizations, however we decide to handle it, whether it be as Legislator Haynes said, an across the board cut to some of them. Or, you know, I just think that, you know, the more arbitrary and capricious we get with how we treat these organizations, I think that the worst product we get for the taxpayers.

I think that they, they should all be treated equally at least in the criterion that we look at to determine funding and the manner by which we fund them. I don't think that we should fund some now, some in three months, and some in six months. I think that if we determined that we have funding that it should be done at the same time.

Chairwoman Archer: Chair Donaldson.

Legislative Chairman Donaldson: I am never someone that supports across the board cuts because I don't think that they're effective. You need to, you know, you need to look at each individual. I mean, I can say that you can try to get a 10 percent, but you know, there's got to be exceptions to the rule.

And we can't actually consider them all equally. I mean, if somebody is making sure people are getting fed and clothes on their backs, or they're being able to see their children because of the program that's being there, I believe that they should not be looked at the same as other programs.

I mean, there's some of these groups that are, you know, they're out, you know, handing food out and handing clothing out. Doing things of that nature. I mean, do you turn around and tell them, well, you know, we're not sure we're going to fund you, and come back in December? I mean, we'll just run out of the money. That's all I mean, that's my concern.

And I really think we need to look at things individually. I mean, if we know exactly what ones are not getting the money yet, or have not collected yet, that may help. But I mean, I'm still thinking you need to look at things individually.

Legislator Archer: Legislator Wawro.

Legislator Wawro: Hi. I don't believe it's in the packet, but Cornell Cooperative is asking to be taken off there. They found other ways to fund it and they wanted to contribute to being helpful.

Legislative Chairman Donaldson: They're just taking off the added money that we gave them.

Legislator Wawro: Yes. Just the added money the \$12,500.

Legislative Chairman Donaldson: They said they would take that out.

Legislator Wawro: Yeah.

Legislative Chairman Donaldson: But then again, they are also a group that leverages money from the money that we give them.

Legislator Wawro: Correct, but this particular money that he said that they're, they're totally okay and wanted to do their share.

Chairwoman Archer: Okay. And Legislator Criswell.

Legislative Chairman Donaldson: Yeah, I'm just concerned that if we decide to not fund any of these organizations right now, and really just push the ball way down the line, that it's going to have different effects for different organizations. So, I'm sort of mirroring what Legislator Bartels said. I really think we need to look at them individually and find out what this funding is in their budget and how critical it is at this moment.

Chairwoman Archer: And do we feel, and Natalie, do we feel we have that information? That what portion of their budget is our funding?

Natalie Kelder: I'd have to look. I know that last September-ish. We did ask for their upcoming budget. I don't recall exactly who had it and who didn't.

Chairwoman Archer: Legislator Walter.

Legislator Walter: Just back on the list of questions that we came up with. I mean, I think that if we wanted to pause and provide these questions, or an adapted version, it will allow us to understand. Because I think there's a lot of changes. Like, there are programs that might be reconsidering the services they're going to be doing. They may be changing their mission. They may be merging with others. They may have found other funding. There's a lot of things that are going on with these organizations that we have no idea about.

And, you know, the whole idea of these questions is really to get at this. And also, to find out what they're really doing for themselves. Are they reaching out to their own donors? Are they doing other things to ensure their own stability beyond the County, or beyond whatever else?

And so, the idea is to really, you know, the intent of these questions is to try and get a better sense of where these organizations are at. We may find that some of them have completely changed their mission and it might be more of something we want to support, or less of something we want to support.

So again, I advocate for applying these metrics. Getting the answers from them. And then regrouping and reviewing it. I don't know if we necessarily have to meet with each of them but at least have the answers to these questions.

Chairwoman Archer: Legislator Parete.

Legislator Parete: Yes, good evening. I'm working. That's why I wasn't here, and I won't be long. I always wonder when we talk about these things, what's the matrix for who we should fund and who we shouldn't fund. On one to 10, if the 'ones' are organizations that help in a humanitarian way--people's health, people's nourishment, people's mental situation, their housing--versus at the other end, number 10, maybe that are very important, but make us feel good.

Now, how can we get this, you know, I have to vent for a minute because last week, I spoke a little bit about UPAC. And next thing you know, there was a letter from this guy, Silva, who's running it.

And I'll tell you where I got my information. For instance, he says we do not have 100 employees. We have 21 employees. I said they had 200 to 300. Well, there's a form 990, 9-9-0 that I go to for years when I want to find out something. And lo and behold, online, it talks about the number of employees reported: 252. All the information you need on these not for profits are in these folders. The same guy Silva... I don't make \$130,000 or \$120,000 a year, I make well under \$100,000. Well, lo and behold, he makes \$69,154, you can write it down, \$29,591 from another outfit involved in UPAC and the arts, and \$19,176. Comes nearly to \$120 grand. The guy lies. But what's the matrix? Is he important?

Chairwoman Archer: Well, you know, excuse me.

Legislator Parete: Is it important for... So, I'm saying, we have 20 funded agencies, what's the matrix? Where do you get the information from them? How do you know how stable they are? And can they raise the money on their own? Most of us don't know that.

So, I, in this day and age when you're looking, the Sheriff is worried about losing people, the Comptroller's wanting to lay people off, I got an obligation to the people that work for the County, and the people that are constituents, and make these outfits justify why we're spending their money.

Chairwoman Archer: Okay. Legislator Bartels.

Legislator Bartels: Thank you. Yeah, I think I think what we're trying to do is to figure out what the metric is. I just want to say, and be on the record saying, I have concerns about attacking a member of the public without that person here being able to defend themselves, I mean, some of those words were fairly harsh. I know there's a lot of emotion here. But I think we just have to be careful about how we speak about people who aren't here to defend themselves.

Legislator Parete: I got him saying, I lied. He lied.

Chairwoman Archer: Let's not go there, please.

Legislator Bartels: Again, I'm just going to...

Chairwoman Archer: I mean, everything we're going to do is to get to the bottom of how we're going to decision funding. And I don't think it's beneficial to attack. If there's some concerns, I'd love to have the conversation with you offline. But this isn't the forum to attack anyone.

Legislator Parete: Let's get the metric then.

Chairwoman Archer: No, that's exactly the metric that Legislator Walter put forth. I think it was part of a conversation with Dyson and some of the other, with Community Foundation, and I think it's worthwhile.

Legislator Bartels: Can I, I'm sorry, can I just add one more thought? And that's, I had another thought to add to the metric that Legislator Walter read earlier. And that would be to ask what percent of each organization's total annual revenue does our contribution represent?

It kind of goes back to what Legislator Ronk was talking about earlier, with one organization. But I'd like to know, on each one, what percent of their annual revenue our contribution represents.

I think you hit on a really important one, in terms of the reserve. And it was an interesting point, that it might be one that would make us more likely to fund a robust one, rather than what you might think is less likely. But I would want to add that question, please.

Legislator Parete: And I will say again, that's what is on that not for profit IRS Form, everything you just asked for.

Chairwoman Archer: Okay, so we have a we have a couple of things out here. Is there agreement by this group that we want to reach out to the 15 organizations with the questions, some of which were suggested tonight? We can put it together. Get it out to everyone for a review. And then, do a follow up, maybe breakdown, maybe meet with some of the groups. But let's do it in a timely fashion because we've held this up for some time now.

Chairwoman Archer: Yes, Legislator Gavaris.

Legislator Gavaris: So, in hearing what Legislator Parete was saying, I think what he's referring to when he said the matrix, and I just stepped away, unfortunately, otherwise I would have asked him. Is he referring to a decision matrix? Where you list your questions. You give them a scoring. If it's one to 10, one to five, whatever it is, and then you tally it up. And then, you base your weights, based on weighted score. And we would individually, because some of these questions are going to be subjective, some of them are objective. But you have at least a direction to go in. Because we're going to go round and round on this. We're all going to disagree. We're going to, the validity of some of these organizations. So, if you have something that is number driven, where you have a score, you can bicker back and forth a little bit on the score, but the score is tallied. And it's a collective score, from all of us.

Chairwoman Archer: Legislator Ronk, did I see your hand up? You're on mute.

Legislator Ronk: That's good enough. Because I put my hand back down. Everything's fine.

Chairwoman Archer: Okay. All right. So, I here's what I would say. Let's take... I believe the metric, what Eve referring to, was very specific information. Financial information, as it relates to the organization. How well funded? You know, what programs are they doing? And, you know, we can add the criteria. Are they addressing any COVID related issues today? Some of these programs aren't even active now given the Pause New York. And will they be?

So, it gives everybody a chance to step back, regroup, look at what the impact of COVID has had on their organizations. And how they're going to, maybe tackle it differently.

And so, why don't we do this? What let's put the questions, get them out to everyone, get feedback from everyone, and then come back with next steps. So, that at least we're making informed decisions, with information, similar information across the organizations. And so that we can do this in a timely, timely fashion.

Does that make sense to everyone?

Okay, Chair Donaldson.

Legislative Chairman Donaldson: Yeah, I don't have a problem with that. But I do, in other words, when we're looking at things, we have to understand that each and every one of these organizations are different in the way that they, not only get outside funding, it's different about their reserves. It's different, like some, Family of Woodstock, shall we say. I mean, how much funding that they get from us is a great deal, but it's all different programs. So, each one of the programs are what you're kind of looking at.

And then you have Community Action, that gets funding from the Federal and State government, and does all kinds of programs in different areas. And then they use our money for specific things to enhance, in our area. Like for instance, they do Head Start and things of that nature, that are not running, but we are not funding that. We're funding other, we're finding more of the food pantry type of stuff. So, it could be confusing sometimes when you get the information. So, I want to make sure that people understand that. When you're getting it, nothing catches all. Matrixes are wonderful but they often have cracks.

Chairwoman Archer: Okay, anyone else? Legislator Ronk.

Legislator Ronk: Should we set a deadline of some sort for legislators from either of these committees? Or I'm sure that some of us are going to go back and talk to our caucus. I'm sure Jonathan's going to, I plan to. You know, should we set a deadline for, you know, questions or information that we would like to look for, you know, be submitted to Natalie?

Chairwoman Archer: Yeah, I think... what I think, we'll start with the questions. Tracy had a question or two. Eve brought some forth. Let's put the strawman out, send it out, use, and we can do that immediately.

You can talk to your caucuses this week. Give us any other feedback or any other questions that we may want to add. And then from there, we can schedule the next meeting and where we go from this. Does that make sense?

Legislator Ronk: Works for me. Our caucus isn't until Thursday, just so you know.

Chairwoman Archer: Right. So, at some point this week. We'll get everybody's feedback by the end of the week, if that's reasonable. And then from there, we can figure out next steps and how we move forward. I see heads nodding. So, I'm assuming everybody's in agreement there.

Chairwoman Archer: Legislator Delaune.

Chairman Delaune: I guess, just my overall concern is that this is only the beginning of what is going to be a very difficult budget process for us. And that we are going to have to make some tough decisions. And yes, we're going to put this off, and we're going to do a matrix, and we're going to look at these organizations. But ultimately, like I say, there's some very tough decisions that we're going to have to make very soon.

Chairwoman Archer: I concur. Okay. Anybody else have anything else they'd like to add? Chair Donaldson.

Legislative Chairman Donaldson: Just so you know, this is also a very small piece of the budget.

Chairwoman Archer: But it sets the tone for what is happening as we move forward. If we're going to be questioning every transaction, we have to start with our own. And I think that's really important, as tough as this is.

Legislative Chairman Donaldson: But I mean, I think we could easily, if we wanted to, fit the Executive's agenda, we could easily get 10 percent out of all this. From them. From that setup. I mean, if that's the goal. And if the goal is more than that, the goal is, you know, to get is 40 percent or more, or even more, or whatever. And that's fine too. But I mean, I think we could easily get the 10 percent out of this. But like I said, it's not a very large part of the budget. But yet, it is a very large amount of the budget of some of these organizations.

Chairwoman Archer: Legislator Ronk.

Legislator Ronk: Thanks. Just to follow up on Legislator Donaldson's point. I understand that the County Executive has put out, you know, a request to the departments to come up with 10 percent savings. I don't think that 10 percent is going to do it. I think 10 percent is the beginning. You know, I think that we're facing well more than a 10 percent budget gap, as the County Comptroller, as well as the County's Budget Director and Finance Commissioner has pointed out.

So, I don't think our goal should be 10 percent. I think that our goal should be to look at each one of these organizations and decide what we think we should fund this year and what we don't think that we should fund this year. Even if that comes to 50 or 60 percent of this.

Because a. this is not our entire budget. And b. you know, I think that, you know, when I go back to, you know, when I go back to my constituents who may end up losing their house to tax foreclosure, I have to be able to look them in the eye and say that the funding that we use their tax dollars for was important enough that I can that I can justify that.

You know, there are several organizations on here that I could not look somebody in the eye and say we needed to make that funding. I'm sorry, you're losing your house. So that's where I'm coming from on this, regardless of what anybody else does. I think that our you know, getting our house in order is the most important thing, primarily right now.

Chairwoman Archer: Okay, Any other comments?

All right, I think we have a plan forward. I'll take a motion to adjourn.

Legislator Ronk: So moved.

Legislator Archer: Second. Chair Donaldson.

Chairwoman Archer: Thank you, everyone. I appreciate all your feedback. This is a difficult process. Thank you very much.

Legislator Ronk: Thanks.