

**Ways & Means Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes**

DATE & TIME: October 18, 2022 – 5:00 PM
LOCATION: KL Binder Library, 6th Floor, County Office Building
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chairman Gavaris
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Natalie Kelder, Legislative Financial Analyst
PRESENT: Legislators Bartels, Cahill, Fabiano, Ronk, & Walter
ABSENT: None
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Legislators Erner, Hansut, Heppner, Litts, Nolan, Petit, & Uchitelle, Legislative Counsel Pascale, Deputy County Executives Kelly & Rider, Comptroller Gallagher & Deputy Comptroller DeMarco – UC Comptroller’s Office, Director Litwin – UC Recovery and Resilience, Director Doyle – UC Planning, Director Erichsen – Emergency Services, Director Weidemann – UC Economic Development, Matt Eyler – Commercial Real Estate Broker

Chairman Gavaris called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM

Resolutions for the October 18, 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 Walter
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Cahill

Discussion: None

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

Discussion: None

Voting In Favor: Legislators Bartels, Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution POSTPONED**

Resolution No. 308: Declaring Ulster County’s Intent To Act As Lead Agency Under New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) For The Purpose Of Constructing A Government Operations Center And Appurtenances To Be Located At Paradies Lane In New Paltz – Department Of Emergency Services

Resolution Summary: This Resolution declares Ulster County’s intent to act as lead agency under New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) for the construction of a governmental operations center to be located at Paradies Lane in New Paltz.

Resolution No. 309: Amending Capital Project 607- Government Operations Center And Authorizing The Acquisition Of Real Property Located At Paradies Lane In The Town Of New Paltz For Purpose Of Siting A Government Operations Center And Authorizing The Chair Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute Any And All Documents Required For Said Acquisition – Department Of Public Works (Buildings And Grounds)

Resolution Summary: This Resolution amends Capital Project No. 607, Government Operations Center and authorizes the acquisition of real property at Paradies Lane and authorizes the Chair of the Ulster County Legislature to execute any documents related to the acquisition.

Resolution No. 310: Authorizing The Acquisition Of Parcels Of Land For A New Multi-Use Government Operations Center, In And For The County Of Ulster, New York, At A Maximum Estimated Cost Of \$3,750,000, And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$3,750,000 Bonds Of Said County To Pay The Cost Thereof

Resolution Summary: This Resolution authorizes the issuances of \$3,750,000 bonds for the acquisition of parcels of land for a government operations center to be located at Paradies Lane in New Paltz.

Motion No. 3: MOTION TO BLOCK Resolution Nos. 308, 309, 310
Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Bartels

Discussion: None

Voting In Favor: Legislators Bartels, Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolution BLOCKED

Motion No. 4: MOTION TO POSTPONE Resolution Nos. 308, 309, 310
Motion By: Legislator Cahill
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Walter

Discussion: Deputy County Executive Kelly explained that the County Executive’s Office requested a postponement as site visits are being scheduled for the Legislators and negotiations are ongoing with the property owners.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Bartels, Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris & Walter
Voting Against: Legislator Ronk
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 1

Disposition: Resolution POSTPONED

Resolution No. 400: Amending The 2022 Budget To Establish And Fund The Ulster County Agricultural Crisis Relief Program - Department Of Finance, Division Of Recovery And Resilience

Resolution Summary: This Resolution establishes and funds the Ulster County Agricultural Crisis Relief program, in the amount of \$2,000,000, to provide assistance to income eligible farmers while protecting farmlands and promoting improved soil health and climate resiliency.

Motion No. 5: MOTION TO DISCUSS Resolution No. 400

Motion By: Legislator Walter

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Bartels

Discussion: Legislative Chair Bartels explained that after speaking to sponsors Legislator Litts and Legislator Nolan, the request is to postpone the resolution and the expectation is that the position will be amended out of the resolution and part of the budget discussion, using American Rescue Plan Funds.

Motion No. 6: MOTION TO POSTPONE Resolution No. 400

Motion By: Legislator Ronk

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Cahill

Discussion: None

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

Voting Against: None

Votes in Favor: 6

Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Resolution POSTPONED

Resolution No. 435: Dedicating Funding To Implement The Boost For Main Streets Program – ARPA - Economic Recovery – Department Of Economic Development

Resolution Summary: This Resolution dedicates \$2,000,000 in American Rescue Plan funds for the “Boost for Main Streets” program to provide capital investments and rehabilitation of commercial properties to increase economic vitality and boost community quality of life.

Resolution No. 436: Approving The Execution Of A Contract For \$2,000,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Ulster County Economic Development Alliance – Department Of Finance

Resolution Summary: This Resolution approves the execution of a contract with the Ulster County Economic Development Alliance in the amount of \$2,000,000 to administer the “Boost for Main Streets”

Motion No. 7: MOTION TO BLOCK Resolution Nos. 435 & 436

Motion By: Legislator Ronk

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Walter

Discussion: None

Voting In Favor: Legislators Bartels, Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolutions BLOCKED**

Motion No. 8: **MOTION TO APPROVE Resolution Nos. 435 & 436**
Motion By: Legislator Walter
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Ronk

Discussion: Legislator Walter explained that she had discussions with Director Weidemann and the verbal changes are reflective of the committees' interests but expressed concerns that the changes are not documented in any way.

Director Weidemann explained that the idea was for a municipal indorsement to be mandatory for a project to even be considered.

Legislative Chair Bartels expressed concern that \$2 Million of American Rescue Plan Funds could be given to eight anchor businesses throughout Ulster County but pledged to remain open minded and looked forward to seeing the changes.

Legislator Walter explained that the funding would only be used for an anchor business if that is how the municipality decides they most want to use it and there are no possible ways for the municipality to spend the money themselves.

Deputy County Executive Kelly suggested adding language where the municipal endorsement requires a vote of the board.

Legislator Fabiano confirmed that a municipality does not have to have an anchor business to apply.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk & Walter
Voting Against: Legislator Bartels
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 1
Disposition: **Resolutions APPROVED**

Resolution No. 461: Adopting Revised Ulster County Fund Balance Policy To Dedicate Funding To Housing Justice

Resolution Summary: This Resolution revises the Ulster County Fund Balance Policy to assign 25% of the monies over the maximum allowable fund balance to affordable housing and moves \$10 Million of the Fiscal Year ended 2021 excess fund balance to a newly established assigned fund balance for the purposes of affordable housing.

Motion No. 9: **MOTION TO DISCUSS Resolution No. 461**
Motion By: Legislator Walter

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Ronk

Discussion: Legislator Uchitelle explained that this resolution is first finding the right mechanism to allocate fund balance in excess of the policy threshold and second finding the correct allocation for funding housing projects.

Legislative Chair Bartels noted that the conversation should be part of the budget process and stressed the importance of having these discussions with the Commissioner of Finance present at Ways & Means Committee meetings.

Legislator Ronk stated appreciation for the intent behind this resolution but felt strongly this should happen in the budget. In addition, expressed concern regarding the automatic process.

Legislator Walter stated that until everyone in Ulster County is housed well, money should regularly be allocated as part of the budget.

Legislator Uchitelle stated that the money is going to be most useful invested back into our community and not sitting in a bank account and would be open to changing the resolve so that the main point of the legislation is to compel a proposal from the Executive Branch every summer, after the books are closed.

Legislator Cahill questioned how this money would be spent, considering that the county cannot build housing. Legislator Uchitelle stated that the County would be managing the public-private partnership and managing the program.

Chair Gavaris also questioned what the plan is to use the money and not just the overarching goal and also stated that many of the bonding projects that have been approved this year have not actually been bonded for yet, allowing for the county to use the excess fund balance instead of taking on additional debt.

Deputy County Executive Kelly stated that the debt service for the county is at about \$12 Million and the ability to bond allows the county to complete capital construction, infrastructure, and provide everyday services.

Legislator Fabiano stated support for a priority list to be created and used when there are excess fund balance monies to be used.

Legislator Uchitelle stressed that the county has the opportunity to be creative and come through for the residents because the private sector has not been able create additional housing units and change the situation in a meaningful way.

Legislator Ronk noted that a lot of the local planning boards are not interested in allowing additional housing.

Motion No. 10: **MOTION TO POSTPONE Resolution No. 461**

Motion By: Legislator Bartels

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Walter

Discussion: None
Voting In Favor: Legislators Bartels, Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution POSTPONED FOR 1 WEEK**

Resolution No. 497: Amending The 2022-2027 Capital Improvement Program – Increasing Funding For Capital Project No. 642 – ARPA Homeowner Energy Improvements And Job Training Project – Amending The 2022 Capital Fund Budget – Department Of Finance

Resolution Summary: This Resolution amends the 2022 – 2027 Capital Improvement Program to increase the funding for Capital Project No. 642, ARPA Homeowner Energy Improvements and Job Training Project, in the amount of \$400,000.

Motion No. 11: **MOTION TO APPROVE Resolution No. 497**
Motion By: Legislator Ronk
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Walter

Discussion: None
Voting In Favor: Legislators Bartels, Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, Ronk & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution Approved**

Resolution No. 498: Approving The Execution Of A Contract For **\$221,430.60** Entered Into By The County – **Legal Services Of The Hudson Valley** – Department Of **Social Services**

Resolution Summary: This Resolution approves the execution of a contract in the amount of \$221,430.60 with Legal Services of the Hudson Valley for Eviction Legal Services.

Motion No. 12: **MOTION TO APPROVE Resolution No. 498**
Motion By: Legislator Walter
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Bartels

Discussion: None
Voting In Favor: Legislators Bartels, Cahill, Fabiano, Gavaris, & Walter
Voting Against: Legislator Ronk
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 1
Disposition: **Resolution APPROVED**

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

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”~~
The Ulster County Board-In Policy
(No Action in Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee on 10/6/22)

Resolution No. 432 – Establishing A Policy To Dedicate The Surplus Revenue Received From Ulster County Real Property Public Auctions
(Postponed in Health, Human Services and Housing Committee on 10/7/22)

Resolution No. 486 - Adopting The Ulster County Information Services/ Information Technology Security Policy – Department Of Information Services
(Postponed for a month in Special Ways & Means Committee on 10/4/22)

Resolution No. 507 - Establishing Capital Project No. 564 – Purchase And Implementation Of A Real Property Tax Collection & Delinquency Enforcement System - Amending The 2022 Capital Fund Budget – Department Of Finance
(Postponed for a month in Ways & Means Committee on 10/11/22)

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

Comptroller Gallagher provided a brief update on sales tax, occupancy tax, the audit on fraudulent unemployment claims, real property tax audit, and a historical sales tax report. Comptroller Gallagher also noted that the new positions in the proposed 2023 budget will create ongoing liabilities for years.

Adjournment

Motion Made By: Legislator Cahill

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Ronk

No. of Votes in Favor: 6

No. of Votes Against: 0

TIME: 5:40 PM

Respectfully submitted: Natalie Kelder

Minutes Approved: November 9, 2022