



ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATIVE NEWS

ULSTER COUNTY NEWS INFORMATION
OFFICE OF ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE
244 FAIR STREET
KINGSTON, NEW YORK, 12401

PHONE: 845.340-3900
FAX: 845.340.3651
www.co.ulster.ny.us
www.ulstercountyny.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Legislator Walter G. Frey, Jr.
(917) 544-3797

Ulster County Legislators Make Headway on Golden Hill Decision *Options narrowed by Health and Human Services Committee*

Kingston, NY- Under the leadership of Chairman, Walter G. Frey, Jr., the Health & Human Services Committee made major headway in deciding the future of the Golden Hill Health Care Facility. Two of the nine potential options for the facility submitted by the Golden Hill Task Force were removed from the table during a Special Meeting of the Health & Human Services Committee on Tuesday evening. The Committee unanimously voted to remove from consideration the option of closing the center and the option to create a public benefit corporation.

Creating an open, honest process has been important to Chairman Frey who stated, "It was clear from the beginning that closing Golden Hill and decommissioning the beds was not a viable option for the residents of Ulster County."

In reference to the second option no longer under consideration, Legislator Frey commented, "After careful research, we found that a Public Benefit Corporation has potential to leave the County with unnecessary debt and subsidies, with lack of oversight. Since this option does not protect the best interest of the taxpayers, it is unacceptable."

After eliminating the two choices, the Committee made further progress by setting up a process to further narrow the remaining options for eventual consideration and action by the Legislative Body. The remaining options will be divvied up and closely evaluated by two newly created subgroups.

Group One Leader Legislator Ken Ronk (R- Walkkill) is pleased with the advancement made in relation to Golden Hill. "The Legislature has delayed action on this issue for many years," he said. "Our recent progress shows that the status quo is no longer acceptable."

Legislator T.J. Briggs (D- Ellenville), Group Two Leader, noted the difficulty associated with making this decision and believes a more in-depth look at the possibilities is essential. "We are a step closer to getting an answer," he said.

Chairman Frey believes the Legislature is faced with a complex and trying issue in determining the fate of Golden Hill. "We are dealing with the reality of New York State's fiscal problems and the effects that may have on our County." Recognizing that the Legislature will face criticism no matter which action is taken, Legislator Frey said, "It is our duty and obligation as elected officials to make the hard decisions. We must do what is best for the residents of Ulster County, and try to create a better and brighter future."

Group One will meet on Wednesday, June 8, 2011 at 6:00PM in Legislative Chambers, and Group Two will meet on Tuesday, June 7, 2011 at 5:45 in Legislative Chambers, 6th Floor, County Office Building, 244 Fair Street, Kingston.