

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE ON ARTS,
EDUCATION, TOURISM AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS, HELD AT CORNELL COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION OF ULSTER COUNTY, 10 WESTBROOK LANE, KINGSTON, NEW YORK ON
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20, 2008**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

SUSAN ZIMET, Chairwoman
WAYNE HARRIS, Deputy Chairman
THOMAS "T.J." BRIGGS
SUSAN CUMMINGS
CATHERINE TERRIZZI
DONALD J. GREGORIUS
MARY F. SHEELEY

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

CLAIRE BURLINGHAM, Dean of Administration, SUNY Ulster County Community College

ANNE CARDINALE, Director, Ulster County Office for the Aging
MARY JO DE FOREST, Office for the Aging
BARBARA SWIFT, Office for the Aging
SHARON MURRAY COHEN, Office for the Aging
BENJAMIN KREVOLIN, Dutchess County Arts Council
LYDIA REIDY, Executive Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension
RICK REMSNYDER, Director, Ulster County Tourism
LISA BERGER, Ulster County Tourism
TERRY BREITENSTEIN, Director,
JANET SALANITRI, Recorder

A quorum being present, Chairwoman Zimet called the meeting to order at 5:05pm and recognized Anne Cardinale, Executive Director of Ulster County Office for the Aging.

Ulster County Office for the Aging

Ms. Cardinale advised that since the last meeting there have been a lot of questions regarding the meal program which is OFA's highest budget item. She said meal prices are going up as well as delivery costs.

She distributed a written presentation on "Potential Options for Frozen Meal Delivery to Home Bound Clients".

With regard to the option of converting to frozen meals, she said it would mean going from delivering hot meals every day to delivering them once or twice a week with frozen meals as supplements. She introduced Barbara Swift, a Registered Dietician in her office, who reviewed the handout. She said that part of the advantages of daily deliveries was the clients got some socialization; however, they can get that socialization by telephone calls from Office for the Aging. The advantages of frozen

meals are that clients do not have to wait for the driver, convenience, flexibility, nutrition and economics. There is, however, somewhat of a waiting list. The cost in the Missouri study was \$5.00 for the meal and clients are asked to make a contribution of about \$2.50. Leg. Cummings asked if the clients were able to choose their own menu and Ms. Swift said they were not.

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She discussed the sample lists received from Missouri, NilMar Food Group based in Goshen, NY and from Sun Meadow farm products in St. Petersburg, FL. Ms. Swift also said she had discussed with Gateway Industries the possibility of them putting together the "side bag" of bread, fruit, milk, salad, etc. and they are looking into that. She also said almost all of the costs were estimated.

Leg. Harris said he was very much in favor of frozen meals, so much so that he thinks the county should provide microwaves to those seniors who did not have them or could not afford them. Leg. Terrizzi asked what the surrounding counties are doing about their meals programs. Ms. Cardinale said Greene and Columbia Counties make their own meals; however, they too are talking about going frozen due to delivery costs.

Chairwoman Zimet asked Ms. Cardinale how she wished this committee to proceed and Ms. Cardinale said we are under obligation to Prestige for two more years, but that we can back out of the contract with sufficient notice. She said Prestige was already looking to purchase frozen meals themselves. Ms. Swift said she believed more seniors were going to be using the program and the congregate centers now that food and heat and gas had gotten so expensive. Leg. Gregorio said he was concerned with the delivery system and how to bring the seniors the food. He said the transportation issue is of prime importance.

At this time Ms. Cardinale introduced her deputy, MaryJo DeForest and Sharon Murray-Cohen who is the Coordinator of the NYConnects Program, which is a joint project of the Department of Social Services, the Health Department and Office for the Aging, which is the lead agency. NYConnects was formed to do research on the advantages of long-term care; for information assistance and referrals; and for looking at the full spectrum of long-term care. Ms. Murray-Cohen said it is the project's intention to hopefully cut down on nursing home care. They are currently in the first phase.

Returning to her report, Ms. Cardinale said the Senior Farmers Market Coupons are now available and can be picked up at the Office for the Aging in Kingston. She also distributed copies of her newsletter, "LOOP" and advised that the annual Senior Summer Picnic would be held on September 26th at 12:00noon at the Town of Ulster Robert E. Post Park Pavilion.

The report of Office for the Aging being concluded, Chairwoman Zimet recognized Benjamin Krevolin of the Dutchess County Arts Council.

Dutchess County Arts Council

Mr. Krevolin discussed the Dutchess County Art's council recent status report on the 2008 Ulster County Cultural Services and Promotion Fund. He said he believes the funds for the Arts are going to be tight

for the next two years. He was pleased with some of the top scoring applications, such as High Meadow Arts, Shadowland Theatre and the Woodstock Chamber Orchestra. He said he would be giving an updated report at the November meeting. He believes the county will get a very good return on its investment. He said he did not know how much funding the county was going to provide for next year, given the state of the economy. He said he believes the easiest thing to do is to keep the program as it

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is; however, he said the Dutchess County Arts Council has to increase its administrative fee to \$5,000 which would leave a \$45,000 fund. He also outlined various ways of dividing fees and administrative costs. Long term it would be on a more formal basis. He said he believes the Dyson Foundation would contribute for a few years but not indefinitely.

Leg. Harris said he always thought the \$2500 administrative fee was a good deal. He also thinks the services of the Arts Council are worth the \$5000 fee, especially to keep us going in the right direction. He would like to see a person from DCAC in Ulster County once a month. Leg. Gregorio said the original amount of \$50,000 was not a budgeted item. For whatever reason he said he was uncomfortable with going into the budget process and it was important for this committee to make sure that this gets into the budget. His opinion is that they should be proactive and ask what can we reasonably spend on an income generating project. It should be at least \$75,000. A general discussion of this matter followed, after which Chairwoman Zimet requested that the following be entered upon these minutes: "This committee has instructed the Chair to draft a full letter supporting and requesting an increase be put in the budget for the Arts fund of \$75,000 or at a minimum the current amount."

The report of the Ulster County Arts Council being concluded, Chairwoman Zimet recognized Rick Remsnyder, Director of Ulster County Tourism.

Ulster County Tourism

Mr. Remsnyder introduced Lisa Berger of his office who distributed a report on Ulster County Tourism Travel & Trade Shows 2008 and on 2008 Publicity involving various publications and writers as well as State Tourism officials. Travel & Trade Shows reached approximately 143,000 people at a cost of about \$5,000. She also distributed a report on 2008 Group Sales. She advised that the tourism properties and attractions around the county get the leads from Tourism. She has also been working with many group sales organizations regarding the upcoming Quadracentennial.

Chairwoman Zimet brought up the subject of radio advertising of upstate counties by radio stations within the City of New York. A general discussion on this matter followed. Leg. Harris asked if we could do some sort of co-operative program and Mr. Remsnyder did not think it feasible. Leg. Gregorio said the entire county should be involved with so many different things going on, such as the Woodstock Film Festival.

On the Ulster County Tourism 2009 Budget, Mr. Remsnyder discussed various aspects of same and the history of his department and the budget. He said he is requesting an additional \$154,221.

At this time Chairwoman Zimet recognized Terry Bernardo, co-owner of Skate Time 209 regarding its omission from the 2008 UC Tourism Guide. Ms. Bernardo distributed a list of points and made a presentation. Following this presentation, a brief discussion between the members of the committee was had, after which the committee and Chairwoman Zimet asked that the following be put in the minutes: "This committee appreciates the work the Tourism Department is doing, especially under the budget constraints that there are".

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The report of Ulster County Tourism being concluded, Chairwoman Zimet recognized Claire Burlingham, Dean of Administration of SUNY Ulster County Community College.

Ulster County Community College:

Dean Burlingham reported that classes for the fall semester will begin next week on August 25th. We are still doing final registration and as of the end of the day this last Monday, August 18th enrollment is up 6%, mostly in full time students. She said we are lagging behind in part-time students. She said the economy and energy costs probably have a lot to do with it

On the State budget, Dean Burlingham said we are part of the Aid to Localities and as of yesterday the Governor had recommended a 6% decrease to base state aid and a 6% decrease in categorical aid. The Legislature did not cut any of our base aid, which would have been a \$1.4 million decrease. The State Legislature did maintain the 6% decrease in categorical aid, which includes child care and high needs programs which is about a \$15,000 decrease we are certain of at this time.

Dean Burlingham said that last year we had the most number of contract course training grants ever. We received over \$100,000 in training grants which were matched by employers. There may be a \$60,000 cut to a portion of these funds. She said it could have been worse. Next year we are being told through SUNY that we may be facing a 12% cut in base state aid which amounts to as \$2.6 million decrease.

Chairwoman Zimet asked if Community Colleges are going to be doing any lobbying. She said we all know how important community colleges are. Dean Burlingham said the Presidents' groups are going to be working closely and following developments. She said on SUNY Day all of the schools get together in Albany and they will lobby for our cause.

Dean Burlingham said that each year the Legislature appropriates \$41 million in Bundy Aid, which is based upon graduation rates of private colleges and universities. She said traditionally when there is an economic down-turn our enrollment stays the same or goes up. There followed a general discussion on community colleges and their importance. The Dean said there are thirty two-year community colleges and they make up more than 50% of the total enrollment of the State University.

Leg. Gregorio asked about the RISE Program. The Dean said Marianne Collins had told her that the contracts are all in place and moving ahead.

Leg. Cummings asked about the smoking policy at the college. The Dean said the college complies with the county No Smoking policy and smoking is not allowed in any of the buildings. She said smoking on campus has been debated many times and it would be very difficult to enforce for students would have to go to Cottekill Road in order to be off county property. She said we have attempted to move smoking away from the building doorways. She said she believes the students would not be very happy about a complete smoking ban on campus.

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In reply to a question from Chairwoman Zimet Dean Burlington said the cell service through the High Falls Water Tower should be up and running by December. However, she said, we are getting much better reception now especially if you have cell service with Sprint, Nextel or AT&T.

The report of Ulster County Community College being concluded, and Terry Breitenstein having had to leave earlier, Chairwoman Zimet recognized Leg. Harris who gave a brief report on the proposed Veteran's Cemetery.

Ulster County Veteran's Service Agency

Leg. Harris reported that a monument will be ordered shortly to mark the entrance to the newly created Ulster County Veterans' Cemetery which utilizes a portion of the New Paltz Rural Cemetery. The cost of the monument is \$5,000 and the New Paltz VFW has already donated \$25000 towards its purchase.

The balance of the funds should be raised shortly. The monument is expected to be installed this fall, and is to be dedicated at a ceremony to be held in conjunction with Veterans' Day at the Ulster County Veterans' Cemetery on Tuesday, November 11th at 11:11am.

The report of the Ulster County Veterans' Service Agency being concluded, Chairwoman Zimet recognized Lee Reidy, Executive Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension.

Cornell Cooperative Extension

Ms. Reidy reported on the recent Volunteer Recognition program held at LaMirage. She also said she had planned a presentation for this evening but in view of the lateness of the hour said she would prefer to give her presentation at the September or October meeting.

Ms. Reidy said she had presented Cooperative Extension's 2009 budget to the County Administrator and that the Committee and the other Legislators would receive copies. She said she does not know at this time about any 6% cut in state funding.

There have been a lot of requests for information on home heating and other energy matters and programs are being planned for early fall. She will have more information at the September meeting.

The report of Cornell Cooperative Extension being concluded, and there being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Leg. Sheeley. The motion was seconded by Leg. Terrizzi and Chairwoman Zimet declared the meeting duly adjourned at 8:20pm.

Respectfully submitted

Janet Salanitri, Recorder

