

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE  
ON ARTS, EDUCATION, TOURISM AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS, HELD AT ULSTER  
COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2008

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

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

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

DR. DONALD C. KATT, President, SUNY Ulster County Community College  
MARIANNE COLLINS, Dean of Advancement & Continuing Education, UCCC  
KATHLEEN KEYSER, Counselor of the RISE Program  
TODD ZEFF, Coordinator of the RISE Program  
ANNE CARDINALE, Director of Office for the Aging  
TERRY BREITENSTEIN, Director, Veterans' Service Agency  
BENJAMIN KREVOLIN, Director, Dutchess County Arts Council  
RICK REMSNYDER, Director, Ulster County Tourism

A quorum being present, Chairwoman Zimet called the meeting to order at 5:00pm and advised that the meeting would be co-chaired by herself and Deputy Chairman Wayne Harris. She then recognized Dr. Donald C. Katt, President of SUNY Ulster County Community College

Ulster County Community College:

Dr. Katt advised that the college administration had reached an agreement with the UCC Faculty Association for a new two-year contract. The agreement has already been approved by the Faculty Association and calls for a 3.5% increase per year plus \$300 per person. The President said that the increase for adjunct faculty is being recommended at 4% for each year. Adjunct faculty would receive about \$2,000 per course. He also discussed the faculty overload payments.

On the second cost item, President Katt said the college is recommending a 60% retirement incentive for those faculty whose years of service and age total seventy-five. This would be paid over two years in bi-weekly installments. There are eighteen people eligible but he thought only about five or six will take the offer. The President said a new instructor would be paid in the \$40,000 range. He also advised that there would be no sick day or vacation pay-off if the faculty member decided to retire. There followed a brief discussion on frequency of retirement incentives and health insurance. Dr. Katt

said the total cost of the contract as presented was \$185,000 and funds are in the budget. The contract will be presented to the Board of Trustees at their meeting on October 21, 2008.

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Leg. Cummings asked about the Governor's recommendation to the State Legislature on funding. President Katt said that we can get through with a modest cut if it happens in November, by using some of our reserve and cutting costs. However, if the Governor goes to 12% (as he recommended for 2009-10) we will have to reduce our staff.

At this time a motion was made by Leg. Cummings and seconded by Leg. Briggs, authorizing the Chairman of the Ulster County Legislature to enter into an agreement with the UCCC Faculty Association. There was no further discussion on the motion and upon voice vote, the following Resolution was unanimously approved.

'WHEREAS, the College Labor Attorney William Wallins and members of the College executive staff negotiated a two year collective bargaining agreement covering the period 9/1/2008 to 8/31/2010, with the Ulster County Community College Faculty Association, and

WHEREAS, the President recommends affirmative action by the Board of Trustees on the collective bargaining agreement, and

WHEREAS, the collective bargaining agreement was reviewed by the Personnel, Education Programs and Services Committee of the Board of Trustees and adopted by the Board of Trustees, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Arts, Education, Tourism and Community Relations Committee does hereby recommend to the Ulster County Legislature, the approval of the collective bargaining agreement covering the period 9/1/2008 between the County of Ulster and the Ulster County Community College Faculty Association."

Continuing with his report, President Katt said enrollment is very healthy and there are more full-time students than we expected. He said these are hard economic times and traditionally in hard times enrollment in community colleges goes up.

In reply to a question from Leg. Gregorius, President Katt advised that with regard to housing, the college is looking to bring water from the High Falls Water District at a cost of about \$2 million. The full cost would be about \$3.5 million which would be 50% county and 50% state. The project is being looked at favorably by both the Towns of Marletown and Rosendale. He said the college feels that bringing in this water line is important, not only for possible housing, but for reasons of long-term safety.

Chairwoman Zimet said we should step back and see if this committee is committed to the concept of dormitories. President Katt advised that there have been several

meetings with the neighbors and they seem much more mellow with the thought that we would not be affecting their wells. There followed a general discussion of water, water lines and the possible shut down of the aqueduct, and the possible effects of same on the college and on its neighbors.

Chairwoman Zimet asked the Committee to discuss the proposed smoking on county property ban and its effect on the college. President Katt said the college is not in favor of smoking or in encouraging it, but many of our students do smoke and to ask them to go to Cottekill Road to smoke is problematic.

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Leg. Sheeley said the reality is that it would be very difficult to enforce and she likes the idea of a designated area on campus. Leg. Briggs said part of college is preparation for real life noting every hospital is non-smoking, inside and outside. Leg. Terrizzi stated she thought it would be better to have a designated area and also asked about the BRC. Chairwoman Zimet said the BRC would have to comply with the Code. President Katt agreed and added that the public sidewalk is only four lines of cars away from the front entrance of the BRC. At this time a motion was made by Leg. Sheeley and seconded by Leg. Cummings as follows:

"That the Committee on Arts, Education, Tourism and Community Relations makes the recommendation to the Health Committee and to the full Legislature that in connection with the proposed ban on smoking on county property, Ulster County Community College be authorized to have three areas designated as smoking areas, each to be at least two hundred feet from any building entrance, and further that the college will offer a smoking secession program to students and staff."

There being no further discussion, Chairwoman Zimet asked for a voice vote on the motion and the proposed Resolution was unanimously approved. Leg. Briggs will bring it to the Health Committee.

At this time, Chairwoman Zimet recognized Marianne Collins, Dean of Advancement and Continuing Education at Ulster County Community College who reported on the RISE Program. She introduced Todd Zeff, Coordinator of the program and Kathy Keyser, full-time counselor for RISE, who was chosen after a very extensive search.

Dean Collins explained the RISE Program which began more than twenty years ago as the PACE Program. Since that time more than five hundred students have gone through the program with almost a 50% graduation rate. Of those 500 students only seventeen, or 4%, continued to receive public assistance. Dean Collins distributed information sheets on the progress of the program and statistics. She said that the Federal regulations and requirements guiding the RISE Program, while still very strict, are more responsive to education for those on Social Services.

The Dean advised that the contract with Social Services expires on December 31, 2008. She said that there were eighteen students at the end of the spring semester. In

addition to those who graduated, over the summer eight students were removed from the roster for various reasons leaving six students. There were four new students for the fall making a total of ten current students, only one of which was a direct referral from the Department of Social Services.

She said her staff has been in constant contact with the Department of Social Services in trying to get referrals into this program. Dean Collins advised that the contract expires on December 31<sup>st</sup> and now is the time to decide if this program is going to be continued. Chairwoman Zimet said the Legislature unanimously felt that this was an important program; that mothers with children should be educated in order to become self-sufficient.

Leg. Gregorius asked for an e-mail setting forth the facts and the names of the persons involved. He said he had a meeting Monday night and this will be a topic at that meeting. Leg. Gregorius said that he will see that this matter is addressed.

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The presentation on the RISE Program by SUNY Ulster County Community College being concluded, Chairwoman Zimet recognized Anne Cardinale, Director of Ulster County Office for the Aging.

#### Ulster County Office for the Aging:

Ms. Cardinale distributed an information sheet on "Save and Heat", containing information on various programs which will help people save money that can be put towards heating costs. She also discussed "Winter Wraps" a program to provide blankets for senior citizens, as well as "Make a Difference Day" at SUNY, New Paltz, where students and faculty put together emergency meals to be distributed by Prestige in connection with the Meals on Wheels program. Also, public hearings are still going on and will continue tomorrow.

Ms. Cardinale advised that HEAP application are being processed now. There have been 330 applications processed to date and there were 1,266 early mail-in applications. She reviewed some of the HEAP guidelines with the committee.

The 2007 Annual Report of the Ulster County Office for the Aging was also distributed for the committee's information.

Ms. Cardinale said her office is going to send a message to the Governor that further reductions in funds will put our programs in jeopardy. She said Office for the Aging is mandated by the State to have its reporting in place by March of 2009 or its funding will be held up.

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

### Ulster County Arts Council by Dutchess County Art Council

Mr. Krevolin discussed the current deficits facing Ulster County arts. He said there has to be more being done to increase the interaction between the arts and various other organizations. Also, he said the arts in Ulster County are very underfunded, especially in terms of infrastructure, and lacks a strong and robust funding base. He said he is looking to have regular office hours at least one day a week in Ulster County. Also, he said his office can also expand the arts and news letter to have more information on Ulster County. Mr. Krevolin would also like to see increased advocacy efforts in terms of communication with this committee as well as with the full Legislature and to build up private sector support.

Chairwoman Zimet said she wanted to see the funding increased. A general discussion on funding for the arts followed. Leg. Gregorius said this committee had already done a resolution that the County Administrator use \$75,000 as the figure for funding the arts. He also suggested that all organizations that received grants under the 2008 budget be asked to supply information as to what they did with the funds. Mr. Krevolin said he would look into having that done.

The report of the Arts Council being concluded, Deputy Chairman Harris recognized Terry Breitenstein, Director of Ulster County Veterans' Service Agency.

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### Ulster County Veterans' Service Agency:

Mr. Breitenstein discussed the Cold War Veterans' Exemption, which has been enacted so that those veterans who were not in service during actual wartime, or those that were in service but did not serve in a combat zone, would be included in the real property tax exemption. The guidelines were to have a 15% exemption if a veteran served during wartime with 10% extra if in a combat zone. It is up to the municipalities which percentage they wish to adopt and most are going with the 15%

On the Veterans' Cemetery, Mr. Breitenstein said the dedication ceremonies will be held on Veterans' Day, November 11<sup>th</sup> at 2:00pm at the New Paltz Rural Cemetery. He said the stone should be installed sometime next week and John Nielsen will build a circle around it with landscaping. The New Paltz VFW donated \$2,500 and the Tillson American Legion a total of \$2,500. The contracts are still in the hands of attorney John Simonson and they should be completed shortly.

The report of Ulster County Veterans' Service Agency being completed, Chairwoman Zimet recognized Rick Remsnyder, Director of Ulster County Tourism.

### Ulster County Tourism:

Mr. Remsnyder distributed information and gave a brief presentation on the TPA Conference held in Saratoga Springs on October 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Mr. Remsnyder then discussed establishing certain guidelines and policies for inclusion of a business in the 2009 Ulster County Travel Guide. Mr. Remsnyder said it appears there are a number of cabins and cottages listed as accommodations in the Travel Guide which in reality are actually seasonal rental houses. A general discussion as to how identification of these non-accommodations could be made followed, after which a motion was made by Leg. Briggs that Ulster County Tourism take whatever steps necessary to determine eligibility for inclusion in the 2009 Travel Guide. The motion was seconded by Leg. Sheeley and upon Chairwoman Zimet asking for a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

The report of Ulster County Tourism being concluded, Chairwoman Zimet asked if there was any further business and at this time a motion to approve the minutes of September 17, 2008 was made by Leg. Sheeley and seconded by Leg. Briggs and upon voice vote the minutes were unanimously approved.

There being no further business a motion to adjourn was made by Leg. Harris and seconded by Leg. Cummings and Chairwoman Zimet declared the meeting duly adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Janet Salanitri, Recorder