

Economic Development, Housing, Planning & Transit Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes October 22, 2008 Ulster County Area Transit

Committee Member Attendees:

Legislator Hector Rodriguez – Chairman
Legislator Wayne Harris
Legislator Peter Loughran
Legislator Joseph Roberti
Legislator Catherine Terrizzi
Legislator Gary Bishoff

Excused: Legislator Mary Sheeley

Other Attendees: Cynthia Ruiz - UCAT, Dennis Doyle – Planning, David Donaldson – Legislature Chairman, Lance Matteson – UCDC, Frank Falatyn – Falatyn Technologies, Vincent & Petra – TSEC,

The meeting was called to order at 6:01pm by Chairman Hector Rodriguez.

Approval of Minutes: Motion to accept the minutes from the September 24, 2008 meeting was made by Legislator Terrizzi, seconded by Legislator Bischoff and carried unanimously.

CYNTHIA RUIZ – UCAT

- Gave update on Ulster Poughkeepsie LINK connection to Metro North service. She stated that the service is doing remarkably well. There was a total of 50 people for the second day. There have been times when we are on time and the train is late and there have been times when we are late by a minute and MN would hold the train upon us calling their dispatch.
- UCAT had a glitch in the Town of Lloyd due to a Mulligan driver talking about his unhappiness of their services ending in that area. The old service and the Mulligan service were running simultaneously in that area until now. Upon Legislator Handsut's request, she spoke to the people of Lloyd telling them that this new service will offer them options they didn't have before. We have re-routed a morning and an evening service to accommodate the people who were previously using the Mulligan service.
- The proposed new schedules are listed on the County's website. Dennis Doyle has offered to sponsor \$10,000 to have a consultant come in and help get through this process.

- Her department is short a few positions and some of her employees have been doubling up on duties to help out with the shortage issue.
- Her trainer, Sandy Closi and a trainer from the Sheriff's Dept, Hadder Omar will be attending a Train the Trainer seminar through NTI (National Transit Institute) on Oct 23, 2008. The seminar is title Terrorist Activity: Recognition & Reaction. It will help train the drivers to be aware of a terrorist situation.

Legislator Terrizzi asked Cynthia how the New Paltz Shuttle service is running.

Cynthia responds: It is not operating at this time because they are waiting for the buses to be delivered which are due around the end of November. They are very close to having a signed agreement with the Town of New Paltz. Last week, Contract Management has finished processing the contract which was sent via email to Toni Hokanson, T/New Paltz Supervisor. She brought it to her Town Board last Thursday, Oct 16th and hasn't heard anything negative or positive about it. Chairman Rodriguez intervened to say that he spoke to Toni Hokanson last week and it seems to him that everything was moving along. He mentioned that he was more troubled about Contract's dept promising him over a month ago that it had been moved along when in fact it was not.

Legislator Loughran asked about an update on the bulk fuel tank.

Cynthia responded that she needs to have an environmental assessment done and Dennis will be helping out with the seeker work. Dennis thinks there was a Capital Project established with Planning money in it to do the seeker work. Cynthia assured Legislator Loughran that the project is underway. It's just a matter of getting the contracts out to the consultants and such.

NANCY SCHAEF – UC EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

Requesting County to fund an additional \$37,000 benefited position for the OET Office.

- Over last 2 years, the Federal Gov't has cut their funding by 33% which affects their training budget.
- The NYS Dept of Labor wants an increase in training but they are operating with less money.
- More demands on staff re: One Stop.
- She could take the money out of the Federal WEA but wants to reserve those monies for training.
- There has been an increase in services ie: Re-entry programs. She is working on a Vocational Human Services Committee to help people with mental health issues to get back out into the workforce.

Chairman Rodriguez asked the committee for their thoughts.

Legislator Loughran expressed his concern that if the County funds this position, it'll turn into more positions to fund and the County will have absorbed the Department.

Nancy Schaeff: If the County does not want to fund this position, then it'll affect the services that the County offers or can offer.

Chairman Rodriguez: Either they hire the person using the \$37,000 Federal money that is allocated for training OR they ask the County for \$37,000 to fund the position so that the Federal money can remain allocated for training. They are going to hire the person

regardless; it's just a matter of using Federal money or County money. They can't fund both without County help.

Chairman Rodriguez asks Nancy Schaef: With the addition of the new person, would that free up staff to work on grant applications to bring in more money to the Department?

Nancy Schaef responds: Yes – it can only help.

Legislator Bischoff expressed that the hesitation of the committee is due to the uncertain economic climate. NYS is threatening to cut aid to Towns and Counties.

Therefore, the County will end up picking up the slack on current County programs that are funding with State money.

Chairman Rodriguez addresses the Committee Members: If he understands correctly, the committee wants the position to come out of Federal training dollars?

Legislator Harris suggested that Nancy go in front of the Budget Appeals Committee

Legislator Bischoff suggested that the Committee not take a position on it until Nancy goes through the Administrator. Let it go to Appeals without any decision or prejudice from this Committee.

Chairman Rodriguez supports Nancy putting in an Appeal but he's not too sure on a consensus to push this through the Committee.

DENNIS DOYLE – UC PLANNING

Departmental Updates:

- There will be a seminar on Oct. 23rd at 7pm at SUNY Ulster in the Student Union. There will be central office personnel from NYS DOT and a consulting firm from Albany talking about the connection of transportation with land use. They will be informing on what local governments need to do to preserve transportation capacity.
- There is a major change that is associated with the Charter and the function of the County Planning Board. They are in the process of putting together a Land Use Referral Guide to help the communities understand the meaning of these changes. The Planning Board has not yet adopted the guide but a meeting will be set up on Dec 9th at 7pm in the Legislative Chambers with respect to this. There are two major changes that occur: (1) we currently review site plans, zoning statues, etc within a 500 foot rule. Currently subdivisions are not reviewed but they will be under the new Charter. (2) The 500 foot rule is everywhere in Ulster County. The Charter expanded the Planning Boards powers to review zoning actions including subdivisions everywhere in Ulster County.
- Last month, he spoke about some of the challenges his department was going to be facing in regards to funding. Part of the discussion was focused on the current fiscal crisis and the other part was the Federal funding of project development on the transportation side. He mentioned that they were going through a process that would take a look at our current Capital Programming for the UCTC.

- Dennis showed a PowerPoint presentation on Financing the State's transportation program from 2008-2012. He spoke about TIP (Transportation Improvement Program) which is at a local level and STIP (State Transportation Improvement Program) which is at a State level. The TIP and STIP have to be fiscally constrained to the Federal money. He looks at the Federal requirements for both TIP and STIP. STIP is a 4 yr. statewide multimodal program and it is done by fiscal year. Projects can be added or subtracted but they must be fiscally constraint. The fiscal constraint issue is there must be sufficient financial information for the projects supporting availability of funds. Bridge funds, congestive management, air quality funds, interstate funds, etc. These funds are not interchangeable. CMAQ (Congestive Mgmt Air Quality) funds are the most difficult to work on. CMAQ funds are being used for the Ulster Poughkeepsie Link service because we can prove that by using the shuttle, we can improve air quality in Ulster and Dutchess Counties.

Chairman Rodriguez asked Dennis if the TIP Committee is based on representatives of those local municipalities.

Dennis responded they consist of chief elected officials of those municipalities as well as DOT. The County Planning Board acts as a host agency. There are special committees that are set up and our TIP subcommittee is one of them. They are 95% Federal, 5% County funded.

VINCENT COZZOLINO – TSEC

Update on TSEC

- Thanks the committee for the funding then proceeds with giving the committee a progress report.
- As of 10/22/08, 70 new jobs have been created in Ulster County all related to solar energy.
- Prism Solar is going to make solar modules and TSEC is working at having them site at Tech City in Kingston. Prism is looking to have 100 jobs added by the end of 2009, 400 jobs added by the end of 2010.
- Solar Smart, company out of NYC, makes off grade solar signs/solar lighting. They have 24 employees in Manhattan and 3 in Ulster County.
- Fala Technologies, through their solar contracts, has added 8 staff to date and has to plan to grow to 12-20.
- Precision Flow, company owned by Kevin Brady in Saugerties, has increased 30 employees this year with the help of an LED lighting contract. Next year, 30 more employees will be added in relation to the C9 contract which is a military grade solar cell.
- Altrean Technologies, alternative renewable energy company out of Rosendale, that does geothermal systems. There are 6 employees on the way to help grow company.
- L3 Communications, multimillion dollar defense contractor, with the help of Maurice Hinchey. There will be 2 "L3" full time employees in Ulster County.

- Through a program under the Ulster County Chamber of Commerce, they were able to bring in some teachers to teach them something about technology for summer jobs.
- Other solar companies up for discussion for work in Ulster County:
 - Terra Wattt Power – Lance and the TSEC team met with representatives. They are currently in a STEP Park in Saratoga and TSEC is working with them to find permanent headquarters.
 - Bright Components – are doing work with Ulster County companies. Some of the contracts that Fala and Prism are getting are through these companies. These companies are opening up for sales staff and marketing Downstate and doing their solar production work in Ulster County

He briefly goes over a chart regarding Ulster County Projects that are Works in Progress (WIP) & Completed.

Chairman Rodriguez asked Vince if he was working with Buildings & Grounds regarding the UC Hwy Dept salt shed project.

Vince responded that they were invited to join in with the project from the UC Environmental Dept, Amanda Lavalley.

3 rd chart relates to funding status:

2008 funding, \$1,476,000 was obtained from the DOE and \$1 million of it went to Prism Solar to relocate in Ulster County. \$476,000 came to TSEC so they can work on the various projects Vince spoke of at this meeting. They also have \$1.5 million in Capital money which is not for operating expenses. This money will be used to...

- Create solar labs in Ulster County. TSEC will be purchasing a solar simulator to be placed in Ulster County and hopes it will encourage companies to come in and use it.
- Purchase a video conferencing system which will be placed in the donated space at Fala Technologies or TSEC at their Industry Park. They are putting one at the City University of NY (CUNY), one at Clarkson University in Potsdam. This will bring the State together and make Ulster County the center of all the solar activity.

In 2009, TSEC is expecting \$2 million from the DOE through a grant and has already been approved by the House, and then it will go to the Senate and hopefully get the President to sign off on it. He would like more money from Ulster County in 2009.

Whenever they get Federal money, there has to be a 20% match.

- \$500,000 grant going to the Benedictine & Kingston Hospitals. This money will be used to by solar products to create solar hot water and use local UC Contractors. It doesn't create new jobs, but economical growth.
- \$500,000 in the Energy & Water Bill which will be given to IBM who has been involved in the landing of Solar Thin Films & Solar Smart. The money will be used for research and development that only IBM can do. TSEC is providing the funding and IBM will be a vendor to TSEC.

Advantages to being Statewide:

There are some jobs that couldn't be placed in Ulster County and were placed elsewhere in the State such as:

Globe Specialty Metals in Niagra Falls, NY – 500 jobs. TSEC needed access to hydro power which is something UC does not have.

Solar Consortium in Ithaca, NY – They are making solar hot water systems.

1443 jobs committed for the next two years between NYS and Ulster County.

So far, TSEC has picked up \$130,000 from Ulster County and he wants to move the extra \$70,000 over to TSEC and in order to do that TSEC needs to provide UC with a report.

As per the DOE report that they just put in, there is a 300 page booklet of reports from people who have gotten DOE grants and they put their accomplishments in. Petra who wrote this report with another staff member, shows that TSEC's accomplishments are beyond any others. Vince left copies of report for committee members to review.

They need a commitment from the County for next year.

Dave Donaldson said that it started out as a request from him so he will do all he can do to start the process for next year.

Chairman Rodriguez mentioned to TSEC prior to leaving that a resolution came up in the Environment Committee meeting that was moved by former Legislator Tracy Bartels in regards to putting out an RFP for getting solar energy resource to the roof of the County Jail. The resolution has been out there since 2004

Vince Cozzolino offered TSEC services for free to understand what it would take to put solar on the roofs of not only the County Jail but the County Building as well. They would use the services of SUNY New Paltz students.

Vince Cozzolino mentioned that he spoke to Amanda Lavalley and they offered to do this project in the summer. They are just waiting for Amanda to get back with them regarding her correspondence with the Jail personnel and getting prints of the building.

Frank Falatyn mentions that his company is doing the same project for the dorms at SUNY New Paltz.

Legislator Bischoff suggests a meeting with Sheriff Van Blarcum regarding this project.

LANCE MATTESON – UC DC

- Handed out a booklet from the Awards Ceremony Dinner which lists awardees.
- Also, a list of 2008 summer projects that either created or saved jobs.
 - The asterisk (*) on list are projects that UCDC were involved in some way.
- He wasn't able to go through all the items on his agenda due to time constraint but mentions some which are:
 - Shovel Ready Projects
 - IDA Projects
 - Marketing for Hudson Valley Economic Development Corp & Conferences
 - Business support and general contributions. UC DC contributions went from \$14,500 to \$44,252.
 - Administrators Budget put \$400,000 on 1 (one) item for Economical Development and they can make that work, if needed. Last year they received \$200,000 for base contract & \$200,000 cap on incentive pay plus \$48,000 to facilitate the Ulster Tomorrow process which was applied to salary, office supplies, marketing & project activity. In their request for 2009 Budget, they did not put a separate line item for Ulster Tomorrow because it's what they do anyway and didn't feel it was necessary. They are willing to take it out of their incentive compensation because they are confident that it can be earned.

Chairman Rodriguez: In terms of the 2008 Budget, how close are you to maximizing the \$200,000 cap?

Lance Matteson responds that they are less than half way through it but with the projects that have land now, he is confident that it will be maxed out. They can easily document the course of where the money is being spent. The overhead of UC DC is in the mid \$400,000.

Chairman Rodriguez asks the committee what their feeling of increasing the incentive cap from \$200,000 to \$300,000.

After some reluctance from the Committee members, Chairman Rodriguez and Legislative Chair Donaldson agreed that the same restrictions would apply for the \$300,000 as they are for the \$200,000. Lance Matteson agreed.

The Committee unanimously approved putting in a request to fund an additional 100,000 in the incentives line for UCDC in the 2009 Budget for solar energy projects that are either in the making or need to be created in Ulster County.

Meeting adjourned at 8:23pm

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Buton