

**Meeting Minutes
September 24, 2008
Ulster County Transit Center**

Committee Member Attendees: Chair, Legislator Hector Rodriguez, Legislator Wayne Harris, Legislator Gary Bischoff, Legislator Catherine Terrizzi, Legislator Mary Sheeley, and Legislator Joseph Roberti.

Absent: Legislator Peter Loughran

Other Attendees: Nancy E.K. Schaef (OET), Steve Finkle (Kingston Empire Zone), Lance Matteson (UCDC), Cynthia Ruiz (UCAT), Dennis Doyle (UC Planning Dept.), Patrick Sheehan (UCDC), Doug Rowles (UCAT), Don Minichino (Mid Hudson News), Victor Melville, and Marcia Lima, Recording Secretary - OET.

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by chair Legislator Hector Rodriguez.

Approval of Minutes: Motion to accept the minutes from the August 27, 2008 meeting was made by Legislator Sheeley, seconded by Legislator Terrizzi, and carried unanimously.

Chair Rodriguez introduced guest Steve Finkle representing the Kingston/Ulster Empire Zone Program. He gave a history of the program which started thirteen years ago when IBM left the area. An application was made to NYS to create an Economic Development Zone around the City of Kingston and the Town of Ulster. The application was approved within the Economic Development Zone of two square miles. The acreage was allocated according to state rules and incentives were provided for businesses that move within that area or are already located in the area. Today the program is called the Kingston/Ulster Empire Zone. Over the thirteen years the City of Kingston and the Town of Ulster have been the largest contributors to making this zone viable to creating its budget. There are seven sub-zones including Saugerties, Ulster, Kingston, Lloyd, Ellenville, Wawarsing and Marlborough. Budget allocations from the state are decreasing. They have been increasing the zones, yet have not increased the amount of administrative funding for the last seven or eight years. Expenses in running the Zone are exceeding the ability to raise money. The Empire Zone is experiencing a deficit and seeks County support. They are looking for \$10,000 - \$15,000. Mr. Finkle would like to come back to the committee with a budget and support letters from businesses if needed. Legislator Rodriguez thanked Mr. Finkle for coming early with his proposal, however there will not be any budgetary suggestions until November. Though he offers support, the committee has to answer the question how do we insure the long term survival of the Zone from an administrative standpoint as well as how will we begin to move toward consolidations?

Legislator Rodriguez recognized Doug Rowles, a UCAT Bus Driver who came in fourth place at the NYS Bus Rodeo held in Albany. He thanked Doug for all his years of service with Ulster County and for representing UCAT with such high standards. The 2009 NYS Bus Rodeo will be hosted here in Ulster County. Cynthia Ruiz, Director of UCAT, commented that Doug is a perfectionist and is a peer trainer for UCAT. He is an exceptional driver and UCAT is very proud of Doug. CONGRATULATIONS Doug Rowles.

Action Items

DRAFT RESOLUTION: Ulster County Expanding Homeownership Program - Finding Of No Significant Impact (FONSI) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and classification of the project as type II under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA – 6 NYCRR Part 617)

Motion to accept the draft resolution by Legislator Sheeley, seconded by Legislator Bischoff and carried unanimously.

Information Items**Ulster County Planning Board Training Seminars**

- October 23 – Transportation and Land Use Connection – Representatives from the NYS DOT including Steve Munson who is part of the transportation Smart Growth will present. To be held at SUNY Ulster Student Lounge.
- Nov. 13 - SEQRA Guiding the Process - NYS DEC – Chief of SEQRA Training, Betty Ann Hughes along with the County Health Department and the Department of Environment will be training. To be held at SUNY Ulster Student Lounge.
- Nov. 20 - Zoning Board Appeals Overview – Directed and focused on east variances, area variances interpretations. The Planning Board staff along with Catskill Center staff will be putting on this training.

Ulster Transit Center Efforts

The Draft Final Report – The Planning Board started looking at sixteen sites and have narrowed it down to three feasible sites which all have problems, site control, flooding, and cost. After conversations and discussions with city officials and elected representatives, the planning board may be asked to provide another site for the facility which is the parking garage in uptown Kingston. This is a priority project.

Army Corp of Engineers Reconnaissance Studies

Reconnaissance studies were authorized by the Congressman. The result of the studies in the Wallkill, Esopus, and Rondout Valley was a recommendation to move forward to an implementation phase or a watershed study phase. The watershed study phase will require about two million dollars per watershed and there are three of them. It will be about six million dollars and four years of studies with a required 50% local match. A non-federal match must be cash. The Department of Environmental Conservation has a letter of support circulating. There must be a study in order to get a federal match. They are looking for a non-federal match for Wallkill and Rondout areas. The state has a program that is a local water front revitalization program. Under this program you can designate inland waterways, which allows you to access local waterfront revitalization funding which can be used as a non-funding match. It requires state legislation. It is in process of getting done and is continuing to move forward.

The County's new flood maps have been delayed pending modeling of the levy systems within the county in order to meet FEMA guidelines. The levy's in the County that meet the guidelines are in Ellenville. Rosendale and Kingston Plaza do not.

NANCY E.K. SCHAEF – OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

Due to federal funding cuts the NYSDOL has been helping with a grant to institute technology based learning into the OneStop. We would use online training techniques through a database that the state has provided. This

will allow customers to do self assessments plus a variety of online courses. For those who do not have computer knowledge, we have contracted with BOCES to provide basic computer skills with ten laptops brought into the OneStop and a staff person to train customers.

OET is also providing staff in the UC Jail to help with a re-entry program for inmates returning to the community. We are trying to provide workshops such as interviewing skills, soft skills, and resume writing. There are no computers in the jail so we plan to talk to BOCES to see if we can provide those tools.

Our Green Talent Pipeline Grant is moving along. As part of the grant, each of the OneStop's in the region have been given a piece of the grant to pay for a Green Talent Specialist who will meet with businesses and educational institutions to get a feel of what job skills and green jobs are available in the area. The specialist will also be present at an event, "High Tech - Green Collar – and You!", to take place on October 16, 2008 from 6:30-9 p.m. at the Saugerties High School Auditorium. There will a panel of area business leaders and educators who will discuss local career opportunities and the skills needed for these high tech and "green collar" jobs. Cynthia Ruiz agreed to put flyers for the event on UCAT buses.

The OneStop will be doing a launch event of its new name "Ulster Works". We are looking at sometime in November. Everyone will be invited. We need to get information out to the public on who we are and what we can do for them under our new name and logo "Ulster Works". Legislator Sheeley asked Ms. Schaef if she would be willing to do an over the phone radio interview with a local radio station. Ms. Schaef stated it would be a great opportunity to get our message out.

LANCE MATTESON – ULSTER COUNTY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Press Release by Mid Hudson News – Excel Homes (the largest modular home manufacturer in the United States) is acquiring the property of Chelsea Modular Homes in Marlboro. Hopefully will be hiring and production by October. They will be hiring between 40-45 people with the former employees of Chelsea Modular Homes getting first preference.

Projects:

Gillette Creamery - The Gillette family is completely satisfied with the level of effort UCDC has put into the project. UCDC is looking for a good outcome.

Prism Solar – Have been working closely with TSEC and with principles of Prism and Tech City. It is progressing and Mr. Matteson is feeling very good about this project.

Solar Thin Film – There have been a lot of steps taken and a series of milestones have been mapped out. The project is moving in the right direction.

Overview of IDA Projects that currently have active pilot agreements – Mr. Matteson read off a list of thirty six projects throughout Ulster County that the IDA is tracking and through the IDA project process has IDA benefits. Legislator Rodriguez asked a question with regards to job creation reverting back to the previous administration in terms of IDA deals that were done and what was actually delivered. This prompted a lengthy discussion on specific businesses. Mr. Matteson did not have the numbers with him but thought close to but slightly below the projected number of jobs. He will get the exact figures for the next meeting.

Mr. Matteson gave a copy of the 2009 Outside Agency Funding Request and the application form to the Legislators on the committee.

CYNTHIS RUIZ – ULSTER COUNTY AREA TRANSIT

Re-Entry Program – UCAT has been working with the Ulster County Sheriff's Department on helping the inmates who are going back into society by showing them how to use the bus transit system. Right now UCAT does not have bus cleaners, so they have negotiated with the Warden and Sgt Vincent Fiscaletti for the inmates to clean the buses on Saturdays and Sundays in a secure building. There is money in the maintenance budget to reimburse the salaries of the guarding officers. The inmates will be getting credit as part of the re-entry and will get a free month bus pass when they are released, if they get a good report from the supervisor.

Starting Monday, September 29, 2008, a Hydro worker will be starting as a bus driver. The Office of Employment & Training funded his CDL and then referred him to UCAT. He is very excited and happy to start work. UCAT is trying to schedule the bus runs so that the employees from Ellenville can carpool with each other.

Bus Rodeo – As mentioned earlier, the Bus Rodeo was a success for UCAT. Doug Rowles came in fourth place. UCAT is very proud of Doug. The 2009 Bus Rodeo will be held here in Ulster County at the Bank of America parking lot.

In July of 2009, the **Empire State Games** will be held here in Ulster County. UCAT will provide transportation from SUNY New Paltz to the Ulster County Pool since it is the only pool in the Tri-County area.

Ulster-Poughkeepsie Link kicked off on Monday September 25, 2008. It is the new connection to Metro-North Railroad (MTA). The shuttle bus delivers to Metro-North trains all day, seven days a week. There are free park n rides in Rosendale, New Paltz, and Highland. There are pre-paid services for SUNY New Paltz students paid for by the Student Association. Carol Hargrove and Tom Jackson are to be congratulated on an excellent job with the scheduling and transition of the new system.

Winter Watch – Ms. Ruiz is waiting to hear back from towns and non-traditional park n rides. She will check with all the towns and property owners to make sure all the non-traditional park n rides are listed on the new schedule. A new draft of the schedule has been moving more to a commuter services trying to hit all the work times. UCAT has been working for months to come up with a good schedule that will not double employee base. Commissioner Rodriguez has available monies for UCAT to use for the hiring of staff to make the new schedule run smoothly.

The new schedule will be released to UCAT employees at their annual training on October 4, 2008. It is a required eight hour required training, so all staff will be participating. CSX will train on railroad crossings, UC Safety Office on hazardous material and spill kit training, Emergency One on blood work pathogens, and Mental Health on safe talk. Lunch will be made available at noon. After lunch the employees will have a written competition with multiple choice of everything they do at UCAT. The results will be tallied while the training continues and the winners will be announced at the end of the day.

UCAT had a simulator for several weeks with 8 stations and with videos. Each station records what they did right or wrong. You can train more employees in the simulator than any other place.

Last year Ms. Ruiz was assigned to the Global Warming Committee which now will become part of the Department of Environment. It is fine if they meet at UCAT, but Cynthia is asking her committee chair if she could attend the committee meetings only when it is a transit related issue. Chair Hector Rodriguez approved the request.

Medicaid Transportation – The NYS Department of Health met with UCAT in June and are happy with what is being done. However they felt the need for two more staff since there is an enormous volume of calls coming in. Their feeling is more people should be able to talk to a person and not an answering devise. Ms. Ruiz spoke with Commissioner Rodriguez (DSS), who approves payment on this project , and he agreed the position was needed. She added the position for one person in the 2009 budget which is 100% reimbursable. Medicaid transportation scheduling pays for itself, it does not cost and UCAT gets fare share assessment on transportation. It is working out fine.

Conference Attendance Forms:

For Cynthia Ruiz and Legislator Hector Rodriguez for a conference to be held in Albany from November 12 thru November 14, 2008. This program has all the issues we have been talking about, Hybrid Buses, Economic Development, etc. Cynthia thought it would benefit if someone from the Legislative Economic Development, Planning, Housing, and Transit Committee attended. The funds will be covered 100%- all reimbursable.

Last September Charlie Schaller went to the Bus, Accident Investigation Training for Identifying Safety Hazards class. UCAT needs someone on call to go to bus accidents. Since he is the Chair of the Traffic Safety Board he was the perfect choice to send. UCAT has to reimburse him for his time. We have to note that there was not a Conference Attendance Form done at the time of the training.

The Belleayre Fall Festival has been cancelled and relocated to Arkville. The Town of Shandaken is having an Outback Octoberfest from October 10 thru October 12, 2008 and is requesting that UCAT provide transportation. No motion is needed since it meets the criteria. Chair Rodriguez gave his approval.

UCAT has contracted outside individuals to count bus fares. The County has a policy that anyone who handles money has to be bonded. These individuals are not bonded and insurance companies will not bond an individual, so therefore UCAT cannot use them anymore. It was recommended that a position be created for the specific job of counting fares. Hence:

A Resolution to create a new position less than halftime, non-benefited for Account Clerk to work 3-4 hours a day five days a week to count bus fares.

Motion to approve was made by Legislator Sheeley, seconded by Legislator Roberti and carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.. Motion made by Legislator Sheeley, seconded by Legislator Terrizzi and carried unanimously.

The next scheduled meeting will be on Wednesday October 22, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. at UCAT

Respectfully by Marcia Lima – UC OET