

**ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE  
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**NAME OF COMMITTEE:** Human Development and Personnel Committee

**DATE:** June 2, 2009

**TIME:** 4:15 P.M.

**PLACE:** C.O.B. Legislative Library, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor

**LEGISLATORS PRESENT:** Chairman Donald J. Gregorius, Peter Loughran, Jeanette Provenzano, Philip Terpening and Glenn Noonan

**LEGISLATORS ABSENT:** Paul Hansut, Catherine Terrizzi excused

**OTHERS ATTENDING:** Marshall Beckman Deputy County Executive, Arlene Reynolds Director Ulster County Human Rights Commission, Lee Cane LWV, Nettie Tomshaw Leg. Employee

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Gregorius at 4:15 PM.

A motion to approve March 23, 2009 Minutes was offered by Legislator Provenzano, Seconded by Legislator Hansut, All in Favor, Carried.

**1.) Draft Resolution June 10, 2009: Authorizing The Chairman To Execute A Memorandum Of Understanding Between The New York State Division Of Human Rights And The Commission On Human Relations For Ulster County For Intake Relationship.**

Arlene Reynolds, Director Of Ulster County Human Rights Commission:

Arlene wanted to re-introduce her self to committee members and to up date everyone on the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Ulster County and the New York State Division of Human Rights that is now up for renewal. The current agreement is setup for a 6 month renewal process, however all the local human rights commissions pressed the state to extend the renewal process agreement to 12 months - thus this new MOU agreement will be in effect for a 12 month period.

The purpose of the “MOU” is to codify a relationship between Ulster County and the New York State Division of Human Rights. A complainant can choose different avenues to file or seek guidance – through Arlene’s department which in turn notifies the NYS Division of Human Rights, or the complainant can hire a lawyer and go to state court and by pass Arlene’s office and NYS Division of Human Rights all together. If the complainant decides to go through the county, Arlene will educate and work with the complainant (who can be any county employee or resident of Ulster County) with the proper forms, have them notarized and forward the documentation to the New York State Division of Human Rights who then will do the investigation.

Arlene will also try to resolve issues and bring people to the table and mediate issues to prevent expensive and negative consequences for everyone. Arlene also attends state training programs on human rights laws – updates, etc. Note, Arlene is only aware of a concern or problem if the complainant comes to her – otherwise Arlene is not privy - or in the loop what so ever.

Legislator Noonan asked what was the Ulster County Human Rights Commission involvement with the jail issue - Arlene stated none.

Legislator Terpening asked if an employee brings Arlene's office a complaint and goes through the hearing process and is unhappy with the results, does that preclude them from going to court? Arlene stated no - there is an appeal process, however very few are reversed on appeal. However during the course of the investigation the complainant can withdraw their complaint and decide to take it to court.

Legislator Gregorius stated all Legislators received a copy of the current county procedure and how it's applied. If we find a problem with the process we can add it to the procedure if necessary.

**\* Motion offered to move Resolution forward by Legislator Provenzano, Seconded by Legislator Loughran, Unanimously in Favor, Carried.**

**2.) Draft Resolution June 10, 2009: Amending The 2009 Ulster County Budget – Long Term Care Point of Entry III – Department Of Social Services.**

**\* Motion offered to move Resolution forward by Legislator Loughran, Seconded by Legislator Terpening, Unanimously in Favor, Carried.**

**3.) Draft Resolution June 10, 2009: Authorizing The Chairman Of The Ulster County Legislature To Enter Into An Inter-Municipal Agreement For The Coordinated Children's Services School Placement Preventive Program With Ulster County Board Of Cooperative Educational Services – Department Of Social Services.**

Marshall Beckman stated this program is a positive re-enforcement vehicle to help reward high risk placement children that would otherwise be placed out of home at high expense - frequently dropping out of school that could potentially cascade into a multiple of problems. The program rewards the student who stays in school by funding activities, trips, music lessons etc. We've had this program in place for many years.

**\* Motion offered to move Resolution forward by Legislator Loughran, Seconded by Legislator Terpening, Unanimously in Favor, Carried.**

#### General Discussion:

Legislator Loughran asked the committee if they would like to request a progress report of the Dept. of Social Services Utilization Study discussed about a year ago. This study would involve the evaluation of mandated state programs to see how they are being utilized in Ulster County. The research would provide the county with leverage to negotiate aid with the state. We as a county don't know how we're doing if we don't monitor the mandated programs. We need a base line report to be able to follow growth rate trends. We would need a report that is simple to read – not convoluted. Sample of what should be evaluated:

- What programs are being utilized
- What programs are not being utilized
- How many people are utilizing each program
- Where the people using the programs are from
- How many are collecting

- How many on social services
- How is the money is being spent

Legislator Provenzano stated the comptroller's office is currently doing an audit within DSS and to check with them as they may be working on this research. Also a request should be made in writing to the County Executive's Office.

Legislator Noonan felt DSS is over worked and probably wouldn't be able to take on additional work. Also asked how the Legislature could utilize the data from the study.

Legislator Terpening would like to also see a study / report done, but also felt DSS has limited manpower.

Chairman Gregorius suggested we follow the new process through the Executive's Office:

- Ask Marshall Beckman if this study has been worked on this past year.
- Ask Elliott Auerbach if the audit currently being done at DSS is related to this topic.
- Invite Elliott Auerbach to our next committee meeting to discuss our concerns.
- Prepare a written request with specifics - addressed to the Executive's Office – to be discussed at our next meeting.

Legislator Noonon suggests the committee review the gag order policy currently in place from 1985. Copies will be put in each committee member's mail box and will be put on next months agenda.

**Motion to Adjourn:**

Motion offered to adjourn meeting @ 4:45 PM by Legislator Loughran, Seconded by Legislator Provenzano. All in Favor.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Donald J. Gregorius, Chairman /nt  
Human Development & Personnel Committee**