

ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE  
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

NAME OF COMMITTEE: Labor Relations and Negotiations Committee

DATE and TIME: May 14, 2008 at 4:00 PM

PLACE: Administrative Conference Room, 6th Floor

LEGISLATORS PRESENT: Honorable Philip C Terpening (Co-Chair)  
Honorable David B. Donaldson (Co-Chair)  
Legislator Wayne Harris  
Legislator James Maloney

LEGISLATORS ABSENT: Legislator Jon Decker  
Legislator Richard Gerentine  
Legislator Peter Kraft  
Legislator Joseph Stoeckeler

OTHERS ATTENDING: Jen Fuentes, HVALF  
Joe Libonati, LIUNA  
John Nilsen, BSOIW & UHCLC  
Brittany Turner, HVALF

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:00pm.

**2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were distributed to all committee members by Brittany Turner via e-mail. If anyone requires additional copies, they are available.

**3. Contractor Licensing Committee**

Legislator Terpening explained that the Contractor Licensing Committee met Monday, May 12, 2008 and began to divide tasks. The next meeting is likely to be May 28, 2008 at 5:00pm at Ulster County Community College. The meetings are open to the public.

Joe Libonati added that Legislator Hector Rodriguez provided a large amount of information and that there are drafts available and information from the building trades. There was agreement that Legislator Rodriguez would like the first round to be extremely comprehensive. However, many feel that beginning with general contractors, plumbing and electrical work is preferable to dealing with all home improvements.

Jen Fuentes suggested that an A & B license be considered, with an A license applying to general contractors and a B license applying to smaller home improvement enterprises. She also suggested consulting with the building inspectors. Legislator Terpening noted that the Association of Supervisors has invited building inspectors.

Mr. Libonati also noted that Legislator Kevin Roberts suggested having the draft completed by June. However, it is Mr. Libonati's preference that the process go slower if that is the best way to ensure that the draft is done right. Ms. Fuentes added that in drafting the policy, it is important to remember to include authority for the licensing board.

#### **4. Ulster County Film Commission & Festival**

Jen Fuentes noted that she has not had an opportunity to evaluate the various options at this time. She will have more information available at the next meeting, although it seems unlikely that this will be feasible for this year. She will continue to research the possibilities.

#### **5. Area Parade Float Registration**

Brittany Turner provided a list that outlines various parades and contact information for Dutchess, Orange, Sullivan and Ulster Counties. The list is as complete as possible, using previous parades, websites and newspapers as sources, however much of the contact information is missing. Ms. Turner requested that information on parades in individual communities be provided in order to complete the list. The majority of parades are Memorial Day, which is too late for 2008. There are also Fourth of July and St. Patrick's day parades.

#### **6. Veteran's Cemetery Update**

Legislator Harris explained that the plan was previously for Rosendale Plains, which had initially contacted the committee. The group was later contacted by New Paltz and Legislator Harris visited New Paltz as a courtesy. The original plan for Rosendale was to develop a portion for Veterans. In New Paltz, there is prepared land that can already be dedicated as a Veteran Cemetery. At the next committee meeting, Terry Brightenstein had a copy of the laws and rules regarding cemeteries and it became clear that Rosendale would not be an option. Legislator Harris again met with New Paltz and considered an initial 5-7 acre section where corn is being planted right now. This area was problematic, however a 2 acre section at the entrance to the cemetery is already being maintained and would only require signs and plantings.

In Dutchess County, the average is 30-35 plots per year with 800 plots per acre. Using this space, there would be approximately 1600 total plots that would last for 80 years. The responsibility of Ulster County would only be administrative, primarily for verification of veteran status and the purchasing of plots. At this point, the plan is to purchase 10 plots from New Paltz and annually renew additional plots. It is possible that after this initial phase, other cemeteries will be contacted to have more regional locations in the future. There will also be an option for a spouse to be laid to rest in adjacent plots. Ideally, the project will be announced in time for Memorial Day. Legislator Harris will keep the group informed of future developments and any assistance for signs, plantings or flag poles.

### **7. Career Day at LIUNA 17 in Newburgh**

Joe Libonati announced that Ulster County BOCES was notified and 2 representatives were present at the informational event for guidance counselors. Orange County BOCES also had a representative.

### **8. DSS House Renovation**

Legislator Kraft was not present to discuss his conversation with Commissioner Rodriguez.

Jen Fuentes had spoken with Commissioner Rodriguez and he believed that permitting would be a challenge for DSS because of the neighborhoods. The legal work needed to obtain the required permits between now and Labor Day is not possible. However, there are clients who need improvements such as wheelchair ramps, weatherization, etc. He will try to identify these clients and provide a list to the committee. Project proposals are being put together and Ms. Fuentes will present it to the Hudson Valley Building Trades Council (HVBTC) this week. The other necessary bodies are the Upper Hudson Central Labor Council (UHCLC) and the Hudson Valley Area Labor Federation (HVALF). The project should be finalized in June.

Ms. Fuentes asked whether people thought it would be best to do all projects on Labor Day weekend or whether the projects should be done throughout the summer and then unveiled on Labor Day weekend. Joe Libonati believed that it would be harder to complete all projects during the holiday weekend.

Legislator Maloney suggested contacting RUPCO, but Legislator Donaldson noted that this may not be an option due to some of the existing relationships with contractors. Legislator Donaldson added that DSS may not be the right agency to work with since many individuals do not own their own homes. He suggested that perhaps a neighborhood be targeted to help the entire neighborhood, such as a block in the City of Kingston, Rosendale or Ellenville. When cosmetics can be targeted in a certain area or entire block, it may make a bigger difference. This can include painting, porch support, hedge trimming, planting, etc. One neighborhood can be completely transformed and it will also provide a good location for press. Ms. Fuentes explained that she will be meeting with Commissioner Rodriguez on Monday, May 19, 2008 but she liked this new idea as well.

Legislator Harris suggested contacting the Office for the Aging (OFA) to also help determine how to keep seniors in their homes. Tax abatements are being explored and the OFA is also a resource, since caseworkers visit the homes and may already have a sense of where efforts may be directed.

Legislator Donaldson added that in Des Moines, IA, they had "Paint the Town Day." Labor organizations and volunteers would choose from a lottery of names and these would be evaluated for need and feasibility. Each year, 8-10 houses would be repainted,

preferably concentrated in one neighborhood. It made a significant difference in the community and it was also easier to get more volunteers concentrated in one place.

All members agreed that the Mayors, etc. of possible locations be downplayed and that it be focused on as a county-wide effort. It was also agreed that the best approach is the begin small and then grow in future years, emphasizing the right homes with minor needs. Ms. Fuentes also suggested that Youth Build and other community partners be considered.

*Jen Fuentes will meet with Commissioner Rodriguez. Ms. Fuentes will also present to the Upper Hudson Central Labor Council and the Hudson Valley Building Trades Council. Ms. Fuentes will also meet with Ann Cardinale of the Office for the Aging.*

*Brittany Turner will check to see if DesMoines, IA is still holding the "Paint the Town Day."*

*All committee members will brainstorm possible neighborhoods in Ulster County.*

*Legislator Maloney will check any possible Kingston locations against the City of Kingston Records. Suggestions already include Down St. and Henry St.*

#### **10. Additional Business**

Jen Fuentes announced the Worker's Rights Law Center raffle. They do substantial work in the area, including \$1.6 million in lost wages. Many of the clients are immigrants, however the organization also deals with civil rights and disability cases. There is full time outreach staff, responsible for teaching workplace rights in the area high schools.

Legislator Terpening graciously purchased a raffle ticket. Everyone else is kindly reminded to please bring your checkbooks for the next meeting or to contact Jen Fuentes, Brittany Turner or John Nilsen.

#### **9. Set Up Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on **Wednesday, June 11 at 4:00pm** on the 6th floor of the Ulster County Office Building, located at 244 Fair Street, Kingston, NY.

#### **6. Adjourn**

*No formal motion to adjourn.*