

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMS, EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES, HELD IN THE LIBRARY CONFERENCE ROOM, ULSTER COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING, KINGSTON, NEW YORK, ON THE 4TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 2011

PRESENT:

WAYNE HARRIS, Chairman
DAVID B. DONALDSON, Deputy Chairman
MICHAEL MADSEN
JACK HAYES
CARL BELFIGLIO
CATHERINE TERRIZZI (Excused)
DONALD GREGORIUS

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

MARK KOMDAT, Dean of Administration, SUNY, Ulster County Community College
LEE REIDY, Executive Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension
JAMES COSGROVE, President, Ulster County Library Association
JANET SALANITRI, Recorder, SUNY Ulster

A quorum being present, Chairman Harris called the meeting to order at 5:03pm. He presented the minutes of the September 6, 2011 meeting of this committee for approval; however, he noted that a correction was necessary, as Legislator Gregorius was excused from that meeting and was not absent. A motion to approve said minutes with the correction showing Legislator Gregorius excused was made by Leg. Donaldson and seconded by Leg. Hayes and upon Chairman Harris calling for a voice vote the minutes of the meeting of this committee of September 6, 2011 were unanimously approved.

Chairman Harris then recognized Jim Cosgrove, representing the Ulster County Library Association.

Ulster County Library Association:

Mr. Cosgrove distributed information packets including a color map showing the Ulster County Public Library Service Areas breaking them down by county, school district, city, town, village and "other" service areas. He said some areas had a relationship to the school district and some areas and school districts overlap. He also said there is not a lot of library law at the state level.

As background. Mr. Cosgrove advised that a lot of libraries start out small and independent, and later as they become larger they form library districts. He also stressed that even though the libraries may get funding through taxing districts, that does not mean they are limited or precluded from getting funding from other areas.

Mr. Cosgrove noted that some areas, such as the Town of Rochester, do not have a public library. At present they pay a fee to other library districts, such as Stone Ridge, to use their library. He said the funding from the county helps to keep a level playing field so we don't wind up with rich and poor libraries. It also pays for the Inter-Library Loan Program through the Mid-Hudson Library System.

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The county, said Mr. Cosgrove, has been funding the Library Association since the 1970s and the original goal for funding was \$2 per capita; however, in 2007 they came up with the Information Portal, which is somewhat like a fee for services. The Information Portal is funded by the county for the libraries while not funding the libraries directly. He passed out a print-out of the Home page of the Portal showing the various databases available. These include "Brainpop" and "Brainpop, Jr." for elementary and middle school students; "Brainpop Spanish"; "AncestryLibrary.com" for historical records, etc; "Foundation Center" for foundations and grants; "HeritageQuest" a genealogical and historical research site dating back to the late 1700s; "Home Improvement Collection"; "Mango", language learning software; and others such as downloadable audiobooks and ebooks.

Chairman Harris said he thought the libraries were very creative in coming up with something like the Information Portal, which is fair and which benefits all libraries in the system equally. Mr. Cosgrove said everyone in the County who has a library card and who can access the Internet either from home or from the library can use the Information Portal. Leg. Donaldson said prior to this some people felt that the funds were not being distributed fairly and were not being specifically tagged for any particular program. He asked how the county funds were allocated for the Portal.

Mr. Cosgrove said less than 1% were for training and promotion of the program such as for the Chamber of Commerce, etc. The balance of the funds goes directly to the vendors for eight databases, all but two of which are accessible through the Internet. He said there are two databases, AncestryLibrary.com and Foundation Center that can only be accessed through certain libraries and they hope to add another two libraries to those listed. He also said they hope to be able to get another Administrator for this program as people are spending a lot of time on this and they all have full time library jobs and sometimes have difficulty finding the time to put into the Library Association.

On the Portal databases, Mr. Cosgrove cited HeritageQuest, for people looking for their family tree. He said the cost of HeritageQuest is \$20,000 which is shared and amounts to \$2,000 per county meaning in Ulster County the cost is about one cent per person per year.

In reply to questions from Chairman Harris and Leg. Hayes, Mr. Cosgrove said Ulster County is the only county in New York State that has two library districts. He said that Cragmoor, Ellenville, Wallkill and Gardiner are in the Ramapo Library District and the rest of the county is in the Mid-Hudson Library District. Regarding his budget, Mr. Cosgrove said last year they had requested \$75,000 and had received \$67,500 and are asking for \$90,000 in the new budget.

Chairman Harris on the subject of the Town of Rochester having no public library, asked Ms. Reidy of Cornell Cooperative Extension, if that was why the "Little Ones Library" was started in that area. She said that was one of the reasons that area was chosen. Mr. Cosgrove said it took quite a while for the Town of Rochester to agree to pay Stone Ridge so that those people could use that Library.

The report of The Ulster County Library Association being concluded, Chairman Harris recognized Lee Reidy, Executive Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension.

Cornell Cooperative Extension:

Ms. Reidy said this is National 4-H Week and there will be a 4-H Fall Festival held at the Fairgrounds in New Paltz on October 16th. There is a national contest for each county and state doing wind turbine science work. Ulster County has eight young people working on a science project. The Fall Festival will be held between 1pm and 5pm and is a great opportunity to find out what 4-H is all about.

On Friday, October 28th, said Ms. Reidy, Cooperative Extension will hold its annual Friends of Extension Dinner jointly with the Ulster County Farm Bureau, at Twin Lakes in Hurley and reservations should be made by October 21st. Honorees this year are the W.G. Minard family, Margaret Gagnon, Kerry Wolfeil, and Kimberly Bissell. She advised that the Environmental Award will be going to Bruce Dully who recently passed away and his daughter will be there to receive the award. The event also features a silent auction and dancing to the music of the bank Hudson Crossing.

Ms. Reidy said the Annual Meeting of Cooperative Extension will be held at Ulster County Community College in the Student Lounge on December 1st at 7:00pm. There will be a guest speaker.

Cooperative Extension has also been working with the agricultural community on the after effects of Hurricanes Irene and Lee. Ms. Reidy said Orange County had some severe losses but the vegetable farmers in Ulster County had some really severe losses, and many of them did not have any crop insurance. There are also a lot of food safety issues which have to be dealt with such as can it be used for animal feed, etc. She said their website has answers to a lot of the questions people have including clean-up and mold. She also said the apple crop was not hurt as badly as the vegetable crop, although they did lose a lot of apples.

Ms. Reidy reported that the "Creating Healthy Places to Live, Work and Play" program is up and running full speed ahead. There is a great effort, both locally and on a national level, to get everyone, not just children, out and moving about, such as bicycling to work and school.

Ms. Reidy discussed the programs for children being raised by grandparents and other relatives. She said these children are dealing with some pretty significant issues of abandonment and these programs try to help them to build up their self-esteem and also try and help the caregivers help them. The funding for this program dried up; however, Mary Marsters got a three-year grant from the Dyson Foundation. Surprisingly she said and indicative of how important these programs are, the grant that was applied for was for \$50,000 and when it was awarded it was for \$60,000.

Turning to Cornell Cooperative Extension's request for 2012 funding, she said they are asking for an increase and not for level funding. She said they have received a major grant which will triple their funding and they are hiring eight new staff. Ms. Reidy said that with all of the grants and contracts they have there have been twenty new jobs created, most of which are full time. Their funding request in 2011 was for \$275,000 and this year they are asking for \$300,000.

Overall, she said, with the twenty new hires and the four positions lost mid-year, we have a net gain in jobs of sixteen. Ms. Reidy stressed that these employees are necessary as we must provide the core

support for all of these grants and contracts. She said that the benefit to the county of these additional employees is substantial and she hopes the county sees that benefit.

On the subject of the premises at Westbrook Lane occupied by Cooperative Extension's offices, Ms. Reidy said the County has always provided housing for them since their inception in 1913. The rent is currently \$106,000 annually which includes all utilities. She said the rent amount is added to the amount of the county sponsor contribution that we report to Cornell which affects the formula for that funding. On the subject of space, Ms. Reidy said they are looking for a place close by where they can hold staff meetings since with the amount of staff they now have they have run out of room. Leg. Donaldson suggested the conference room at UCAT. Ms. Reidy said her staff now numbers close to forty with both full and part time. When asked about how funding is allocated, Ms. Reidy said the grant appropriation money goes to agricultural programming and youth programming. In addition, all family and consumer programs are grant funded as are the environmental programs.

Leg. Belfiglio asked about the farm labor housing grant. Ms. Reidy said that was just finishing up. She said the way that grant was written and the way they need housing were two different things. Most of the farmers around here need replacement housing so we had less of a demand and we would not have been competitive. We have initiated discussions with RUPCO and are still looking at what our options are.

Leg. Hayes asked if she had heard of any discussions with regard to giving people tax credits for child care for children of incarcerated parents. Ms. Reidy said her office is trying to work with Social Services; however, identifying them and gaining their trust is a big problem. Chairman Harris said he believed the Department of Social Services has a program where grandparents or other relatives of these children receive some sort of help.

The report of Cornell Cooperative Extension being concluded, Chairman Harris recognized Mark Komdat, Dean of Administration of Ulster County Community College.

SUNY Ulster County Community College:

Chairman Harris asked Dean Komdat if he could do anything about meeting space perhaps in the Business Resource Center for Cooperative Extension. The Dean said he would be glad to; however, the only problem at this time was that FEMA had taken over all available space and was looking for more.

Turning to his report on enrollment. Dean Komdat said fall enrollment was 2% off budget. He said we had anticipated we would be down 2% from last year and it looks like for the fall, it will be more like 4%. We are currently trying to mitigate this shortfall with our Express Semester which is aimed at those people who were not ready or not sure they wanted to start classes in September. Many of the Express Semester classes are on line. We are also enhancing our Winternet offerings.

The question remains, said the Dean, why is enrollment down? There is a slight shift from full-time to part-time for one thing. Maybe it is the healthcare reform with students not needing to be full-time in order to remain on their parents' insurance. There is also a slight improvement in the economy and

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perhaps some students have gotten full time work. Dean Komdat said Ulster is not alone in this. He said at least twenty of the thirty community colleges are experiencing declines in enrollment. Chairman Harris asked what the 2% decline translates into in terms of dollars and the Dean said it changes and depends on full-time or part-time or other factors; however, it is easily \$60,000 to \$100,000.

Reporting on events on and off campus, Dean Komdat said last Friday the college's Foundation held its 35th Anniversary Gala at Hillside Manor at which there were 240 attendees. Honorees this year were Chairman of the UCCC Board of Trustees John Dwyer, UCCC Vice-President and Dean of Enrollment Management Ann Marrott, Gary Kvistad of Woodstock Chimes & Percussion and Kevin Zraly, Windows on the World Wine School.

Dean Komdat said the college has, with the help of faculty and staff, be opening the "Start Here Go Gar Boutique...and more" which is aimed at providing some quality clothing for those people who have been unable to afford that outfit for a job interview, or who just have trouble affording a warm winter coat. He also advised that with the assistance of the Ulster Community College Foundation and The Ridge Gym we have been able to upgrade our weight room by acquiring some gently used exercise equipment.

The Dean also discussed the Department of Labor grant to The Solar Energy Consortium/Orange County Community College and said SUNY Ulster has been allocated over \$250,000 in training funds and is the leader among the area community colleges in clean energy training. On a separate matter, he also noted that the college has been requested by the County Executive's Office to open a dog park on the Stone Ridge Campus for a New Paltz group.

In reply to a question from Leg. Gregorius who was unable to attend the last meeting, Dean Komdat said the water project is in the works. The design is essentially done and it was determined that we could not go under the bridge but will have to tunnel under the creek in order to bring the water across. Also, he said, we cannot get our easements approved until such time as we have our funding in place so that part of the project is on hold. Leg. Gregorius said he would review the proceedings and the college's last report.

There was also a brief discussion of SUNY 'S Mid-Hudson Regional Showcase to be held at the Performing Arts Center at SUNY Purchase on October 18th. Dean Komdat said transportation will be provided and reservations should be made with Jenn Zell in the President's Office by October 11th.

The report of Ulster County Community College being concluded, Chairman Harris recognized Leg. Jack Hayes.

Other Business:

Leg. Hayes said he has been working with the Office for the Aging. They will be looking at senior care in the area and at the training colleges for nursing. He said we have a significant need and should be taking a look at this question and give it some consideration. He will follow up and bring more information to this committee in the future.

Chairman Harris told the committee that in addition to the reports and funding requests in detail of the Ulster County Library Association and Cornell Cooperative Extension just brought forth at this meeting,

there was information in the packets distributed to them regarding the funding requests of the following: Family (Supervised Visitation Program); Ulster County Community Action; Ulster County Soil & Water; UPAC; Dutchess County Arts Council; and RSVP.

Chairman Harris also distributed a spreadsheet handout titled "Contract Agencies" marked "updated 10/04/2011" indicating contract agencies funding history, recommendations and budget amounts requested for 2012. He urged all committee members to review same prior to the next regular legislature meeting. A copy of this spreadsheet, at the direction of Chairman Harris, will be attached to and made a part of these minutes.

There being no further business a motion to adjourn was made by Leg. Madsen and seconded by Leg. Donaldson and Chairman Harris declared the meeting duly adjourned at 6:29pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Janet Salanitri, Recorder
Adm. Assistant, SUNY, UCCC