

MINUTES OF THE MEEETING OF THE ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE  
ON LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMS, EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES, HELD IN  
THE LIBRARY CONFERENCE ROOM, ULSTER COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING,  
KINGSTON, NY, ON SEPTEMBER 7, 2010 AT 5:00PM

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

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

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

DR. DONALD C. KATT, President, SUNY Ulster Co. Community College  
MARK KOMDAT, Dean of Administration, SUNY, Ulster Co. Comm. College  
LYDIA REIDY, Executive Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension  
MARY MARSTERS, Cornell Cooperative Extension  
JENNIFER PATTERSON, Cornell Cooperative Extension  
DONA CRAWFORD, Cornell Cooperative Extension  
JIM COSGROVE, Ulster County Library Association  
MARGIE MENARD, Ulster County Library Association  
VICTOR MELVILLE, League of Women Voters  
ROBERT SUDLOW, Ulster County Executive's Office  
JANET SALANITRI, Recorder

A quorum being present, Chairman Harris called the meeting to order at 5:05pm and asked for a motion to approve the minutes of August 2, 2010. Said motion was made by Leg. Belfiglio, seconded by Leg. Terrizzi and upon Chairman Harris calling for a voice vote the minutes of August 2, 2010 were unanimously approved. Chairman Harris then recognized Dr. Donald C. Katt, President and Mark Komdat, Dean of Administration, both representing Ulster County Community College.

SUNY Ulster County Community College

Dean Komdat advised that the fiscal year ended August 31<sup>st</sup> and distributed his financial update prepared through that date. He said enrollment was 106% of the budgeted number and almost 133 FTE's over our budgeted projections.

Looking at the Report of Revenues and Expenditures, Dean Komdat said he thought that the 95% of budget for expenses may look a little low but will increase as end of year accruals and adjustments are incorporated. Our audit is scheduled for October.

Dean Komdat also said that we have added day classes at the B.R. C. He said that could present us with some parking challenges but we'll have to wait and see. In on-going matters, the water kick-off meeting was August 12<sup>th</sup> and the Educational Consortium with Rockland, Orange and Sullivan County Community Colleges will be meeting on September 17<sup>th</sup>.

Leg. Terrizzi wanted clarification on the almost \$600,000 bracketed amount for tuition and fees, and Dean Komdat said that the bracketed number is actually a positive variance and will be shown that way in future report.

He also said enrollment for full-time students was up for the fall 2010 semester and we are very pleased with the numbers. President Katt said that if our Collegian Program enrolls as many students as it did last year we could again exceed our enrollment projections.

President Katt gave a report on the RISE program. He said we had 42 social services recipients referred to the program, of which 14 chose to come and participate in orientation and 7 of those will be joining the 13 returning students for a total of 20 students for the fall of 2010. These are all single parents raising children and 13 are Human Services majors.

The President reported that three RISE students graduated in May with honors and two as Phi Theta Kappa members, so the program does work. With twenty students this year, we are making a positive difference.

Speaking on the status of the 4-year Nursing degree program running through SUNY-IT, President Katt said there are about two dozen students -who already have their RN- who are registered for the IT courses this semester. There are three courses being offered and they are held in the evening.

On our Nursing Program, the President said we had 75 students entering this year as compared to 60 entering last year. We could take the additional students now that we have a new Nursing Lab facility and a new full-time nursing instructor. There is still a waiting list with about 75 people on it. An additional 65 people took the assessment test but didn't score at or over the cutoff point.

President Katt reported that the entering assessment testing was instituted after going through the accreditation process with the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission, which evaluates the nursing programs throughout the state and country. They were concerned about our passing rate on the nursing competency exams. He said many schools rely on assessment exams. Westchester Community College's Nursing program was seen as a model, he said, and they use an entrance exam to identify the quality student who can make it through the program.

Regarding students already in the program, they were told in the fall of 2008 that they would have to take the exam in 2010 and there were practice exams on line. President Katt said most of the students on the waiting list had been working on their pre-requisites.

President Katt said the future of the program looks bright. We continue to plan to take 75-80 nursing students each year. In addition we have completed negotiations with Health Alliance of the Hudson Valley (HAHV) (the parent corporation for Kingston and Benedictine Hospitals) for them to pay tuition for ten nursing students each year who agree to work for one of the hospitals after graduation. This "grant" will help pay for the new Instructor position.

One of the areas the Ulster Community College Foundation tries to raise gifts for is the Nursing Department said President Katt, and over the years it has received many donations to that cause. A recent contributor is Michael F. Tucker. Dr. Elizabeth Tucker, for whom our new Nursing Lab was named, was one of our first students. She passed away several years ago and her family continues to honor her memory by gifts dedicated to Nursing. The President said there was also a \$20,000 donation from an Ellenville resident to keep the program current.

Leg. Terrizzi asked if we had been tracking the RISE graduates to see if they were employed and President Katt said he believed, over the past 25 years, every graduate except one has gotten off the welfare rolls.

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

#### Cornell Cooperative Extension:

Ms. Reidy reported that the Ulster County Fair went extremely well with approximately 33,000 to 40,000 people attending. While not the highest she said, those figures are certainly respectable. Ms. Reidy said they are looking for 4-H youth leaders and asked if anyone knew of someone who was interested in working with kids to have them contact her office.

As one of the 4-H projects, the participants have a "Doggie Drill Team" which represented Ulster County in the New York State Fair this past weekend. Ms. Reidy said the team placed first and it really is amazing to see how they kids train these dogs.

Ms. Reidy advised the committee that Cooperative Extension's Agricultural Tour would be held on September 30<sup>th</sup>. It will be leaving from their office on Westbrook Lane at 10:00am and will head south to Ferrante's Farm in New Paltz. Emphasis will be on working farms and Ferrante's is big on agri-tourism. They will then go to Kiernan's and then Fazio's where they will meet rabbits and ducks. She said they may also get to witness a mobile slaughtering operation. They will also go to Porpiglia's apple farm

and the last stop will be the Stoutridge Winery. The return time is 5:00pm. The Farm Bureau will be sponsoring the luncheon.

Turning to the budget, Ms. Reidy said it had been submitted and is similar to the previous one. Also, on the suggestion of Leg. Gregorius, she sent a copy to the County Executive's Office and requested a meeting to go over same and answer any questions they might have.

Ms. Reidy discussed the statewide Cornell Cooperative Extension shared networking consolidated back office business program. She said they all have their own Boards of Directors and we are all inter-dependent. We are now looking to combine IT, Finance and HR.

Cooperative Extension received an \$8,000 grant from the Dyson Foundation to do a Strategic Plan which we have really felt the need to do said Ms. Reidy. The Plan will show where we want to be in five years and how we are going to get there. The Plan should be finished by January or February of 2011, and she will have a report to the committee in March or April.

At this time Mary Marsten of Cornell Cooperative Extension reported on the Relatives as Parents Program. These are relatives of children whose parents or parent are unable, for whatever reason, to care for them. This program, said Ms. Marsten, is aimed at and does keep these children out of foster care, and helps these caregivers meet all of the needs of these children. Ms. Marsten introduced Jennifer Patterson, who is the Coordinator of this program.

She said they try to provide the families of these children with a safe place to meet and discuss the problems associated with raising these children. Some other supportive endeavors include a monthly support group with guest speakers, jobs counseling, referrals to legal services, help with schools and special education, etc. This is also a social experience for the grandparents and the other caregivers who now find themselves somewhat tied down socially. Ms. Marsten said it is also a good time for the kids involved to get together and meet and get to know other kids who are in the same situation as themselves.

Leg. Hayes asked if the grandparents or caregivers receive any financial assistance and Ms. Patterson said Social Services has programs for a lot of these children. In reply to a question from Leg. Harris Ms. Patterson said there are about 70 children in the program but there is not really any average because some families have one child and some have six or seven.

Ms. Patterson said they received a grant from The Brookdale Foundation and were part of a regional program. The program was also the recipient of a grant from the Dyson Foundation. She said some of the people in the program need legal advice, which is pro bono, since some are afraid that the children will be taken away from them.

Chairman Harris said that during his educator years, he would watch the stabilizing force of the grandparents, particularly in the lower socioeconomic neighborhoods. The families would come and go, but home was always where the grandparents were.

The presentation by Jennifer Patterson being concluded, Mary Marsten then introduced Dona Crawford who gave a presentation on Cornell Cooperative Extension's Master Gardener Program.

The program, said Ms. Crawford, consists of about 75 volunteers who are trained by Cornell Cooperative Extension. One of the things they do is man the Gardening "Hot Line" where 3488 hours of services were logged. In addition to giving gardening advice on the telephone, they also do it by e-mail, regular mail and in person. All information is research based through Cornell University .

Ms. Crawford said the Master Gardeners get their gardening information out to the public by going to various farmer's markets, the Ulster County Fair, the Garlic Festival and other events. Another way they broadcast information is through a series of workshops on Integrated Pest Management. A discussion ensued on the emerald ash borer which has become a major threat to the ash trees in New York State.

Ms. Crawford reported on Cooperative Extension's programs on Storm Water Management and in particular the demonstration rain gardens in the Towns of Ulster and Saugerties and at the Town of Rosendale Library. Basically, she said, rainwater comes off the roof and instead of going directly into the creek or through a parking lot or a roadway it goes through this rain garden of highly absorbant plants which filters the water thus the rainwater enters the system much cleaner. She said the demonstration gardens have been so successful they are extending it for one more year.

Other events planned for by the Master Gardeners are a seedling sale in January, a bus trip to the Philadelphia Flower Show, a Winter Lecture Series at BOCES, a plant swap in July; and a tour of the xeriscape garden. Ms. Crawford said a Master Gardener appears each month at one of the farmers markets in the area. In addition, they have done a number of school projects. The important thing to remember, said Ms. Crawford, is that everything the Master Gardeners do, they do as volunteers.

Leg. Terrizzi asked the meaning of MS4. It is Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System. Leg. Belfiglio said two years ago the State required new laws for new construction. Chairman Harris said that several years ago the implementation of MS4 was a major problem in terms of how to deal with and support the municipalities. It was an unfunded mandate.

The report of Cornell Cooperative Extension being concluded, Chairman Harris recognized Leg. Jack Hayes.

Legislator Jack Hayes:

Leg. Hayes advised that as Chairman of the Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee of the Legislature, he is working to establish a Commercial Vehicle Safety Program, which could be created to enhance the safe operation of commercial vehicles without excess regulation by creating incentives and promoting a partnership approach to the transportation industry.

Leg. Hayes said he would like to talk with SUNY Ulster as a host and later to the high schools and BOCES on a long-term basis about creating curriculum opportunities using existing space. He referred to SUNY Chancellor's new Strategic Plan and said through education we have economic development.

Lee Reidy asked Leg. Hayes if he had spoken with the Ulster County Transportation Council about this and he replied that he would be contacting them also. There was a brief discussion of several experiences regarding trucking regulations. Chairman Harris said over the years he has seen the Community College be very responsive to new programs, especially in a poor economic climate.

The presentation of Leg. Hayes having been concluded, Chairman Harris recognized Jim Cosgrove of the Ulster County Library Association.

Ulster County Library Association:

Mr. Cosgrove said his organization has submitted their proposal for funding for 2011 and it amounts to \$.68 per person in the County. He also distributed a sheet showing the various Library District Elections throughout the county during the past year showing school and special library districts winning. He said this shows that people actually do vote for their libraries. Mr. Cosgrove also advised that the annual meeting will be next Monday at Guido's in Kingston and invited those present to attend. He also said the Ulster County Library Association has achieved 501c3 designation so we will also be reaching out to various foundations for funding.

Margie Menard, also with the Library Association said that the area libraries try and help many of the different agencies in the county. Programs such as Relatives as Parents use the library. A general discussion on libraries in the area, old and new, including the Carnegie Library building in Kingston, followed.

The report of the Ulster County Library Association being concluded and there being no further business, Chairman Harris called for a motion to adjourn. Leg. Belfiglio so moved, Leg. Terrizzi seconded and Chairman Harris declared the meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Janet Salanitri, Recorder