



ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATIVE NEWS

ULSTER COUNTY NEWS INFORMATION

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Ulster County Legislature Holds Organizational Meeting, Unanimously Elects Peter Criswell To Serve as Chair

(Kingston, NY) –The Ulster County Legislature unanimously elected Legislator Peter Criswell to serve as the 19th Chair of the Legislature during its organizational meeting this evening.

“I am truly honored to assume the role of Chair for the Ulster County Legislature. As we navigate the path ahead, our collective focus will be on prudent fiscal management, ensuring that taxpayer dollars are used wisely to provide exceptional services. In addition, our commitment extends to addressing critical issues facing our community—housing, affordability, climate change, mental health, the opioids crisis, emergency response, and more. In my tenure as Chair of the American Rescue Plan Act Committee, I witnessed the transformative potential of county governance. I carry that experience into this role, aspiring to lead with dedication and collaboration. I look forward to working with colleagues from across all branches of government to sculpt a future where Ulster County works effectively and inclusively for each and every constituent,” **said Chair Peter Criswell (District 7 – City of Kingston).**

Chair Criswell was first elected to the Legislature in 2019, he holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Bard College and a Master of Science degree in Business Leadership and Strategic Management from Manhattanville College. His professional career has focused on the nonprofit sector, working in leadership positions at several important Hudson Valley institutions such as Hudson River Heritage, Dharmakaya Center for Wellbeing and, the Hudson Valley LGBTQ Community Center, and the Hudson River Maritime Museum.

In 2022 and 2023 Criswell Chaired the American Rescue Plan Act Special Committee charged with examining programs to help turn the tide on the pandemic, address its economic fallout, and lay the foundation for a strong and equitable recovery.

Additionally, caucus leadership was announced with Legislator Abe Uchitelle (District 5 – City of Kingston) serving as Majority Leader and Legislator Kevin Roberts (District 12 – Town of Plattekill) serving as Minority Leader.

“I am grateful to my Democratic colleagues for putting their trust in me to lead our Caucus. Together we will continue the work of improving access to housing, upgrading our public transportation system, improving healthcare services, and the other key priorities of Ulster County residents. I look forward to a productive relationship with Chair Criswell and Minority Leader Roberts,” **said Majority Leader Uchitelle.**

“I thank my colleagues in the Republican Caucus for putting their faith in me to be the voice of the Minority. This role is of the upmost importance in the Legislative process to offer alternative visions and policies, as well as voice caution and deeper consideration on spending plans and taxes that may negatively impact our communities which may not otherwise be heard in county government. I look forward to a productive and respectful relationship with Chair Criswell and Majority Leader Uchitelle,” **said Minority Leader Kevin Roberts.**

All twenty-three members of the Legislature were sworn in to their seat by Supreme Court Judge David Gandin and were joined by family, friends and loved ones as they took their oaths of office. New members joining the Ulster County Legislature are:

- Jason Kovacs (District 3 – Towns of Saugerties & Ulster)
- Eric Kitchen (District 4 – Town of Ulster)
- Greg McCollough (District 6 – City of Kingston)
- Joe Donaldson (District 8 – City of Kingston, Town of Esopus, Town of Ulster)
- Rich Walls (District 13 – Town of Shawangunk)
- Deb Clinton (District 16 – Town of Gardiner)
- Limina Grace Harmon (District 20 – Village of New Paltz)
- Jeff Collins (District 23 - Town of Woodstock, Town of Hurley)

According to the Rules of the Legislature Committee assignments and a schedule of meetings are to follow within twenty days.

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