



Commentator

April 2010

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League does not support or oppose candidates for public office but does encourage its members as individuals to participate actively in the political process. The League acts on those issues the membership chooses for study and action

The LWV of the Mid-Hudson Region covers the Ulster County area and the Dutchess County area. We belong to the LWV of New York State and the LWV of the US.

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CALENDAR		
2010		
MAY		
4	7:15pm	Board meeting at Jacki Moriarty's, 167 Apple Hill Rd., Hurley
5	11am-4pm	"Albany on the Record" Capitol (Call Jean to carpool, 336-6622)
10	10:30am	Observer Corps Meeting at Deisings, 111 North Front St., Kingston
18		School Board Elections and Budget Vote
20	6-9pm	Annual Meeting & Pot Luck Supper, Town of Esopus Library, 128 Canal St, Port Ewen
JUNE		
1	7:15pm	Board meeting TBA

Check our Calendar on-line at
<http://midhudson.ny.lwvnet.org/calendar.html>
 for updated information

Commentator archives, State and National League newsletters are at <http://midhudson.ny.lwvnet.org/Newsletters.html>

MEMBERS: Need a ride? Want to car-pool?
 Contact Jean McGarry, 336-6622 or jfmcg@hvc.rr.com

Interested in one of our committees? Just show up at a meeting.
 Our members are always welcome.



Prez Sez...*Greetings,*

Lately there seems to be a “doom and gloom” mood permeating the nation. Citizens in every community are concerned with escalating costs and the possibility of facing a higher tax bill. At the same time, few individuals are willing to give up long-standing services or risk any change in the way business is accomplished for fear it may adversely affect their lives. NIMBY is pretty common, perhaps an understandable reaction to change. The problem is that many well intentioned citizens as well as public officials believe the first step to any suggestion for change is to conger up all those preconceived notions and slam the door shut with a resounding NO.

In Ulster County there is continued debate on the future of Golden Hill and the sharing of services especially as it relates to highway maintenance. Local governments wrestle with the rising costs of criminal justice and social services. School districts throughout the state are slashing programs and cutting staff as they attempt to do more with less.

We cannot afford to be close-minded in these difficult times. We need to avail ourselves of those opportunities for deliberation. We need to attend those forums where we have the opportunity to receive information. And after participating in the process, we need to make our decisions based on the public good.

To date, our league has received several requests to moderate forums in preparation for the statewide school board elections and budget vote on May 18th. Urge your friends and relatives to attend. . Yes there is much “doom and gloom” out there today but let’s try to stem the tide of negativity or apathy. The League knows how to do it best. Get knowledge. Get power.

*Jean***ADVOCACY
COMMITTEE****Shared Services
Study**

Informational resources can be found on the Ulster County Municipal Resources page at <http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/municipal.html>.

Links of interest include

- The Draft Report at www.co.ulster.ny.us/municipalities/FINAL%20DRAFT%20Highway%20DOC%20with%20charts%20and%20maps.pdf and Frank Cassetta’s summary is at our website at midhudson.ny.lwvnet.org/files/Highway_Service_Cooperation_-_Summary.pdf
- the Shared Services Program within the NYS Department of State Division of Local Government Services <http://www.dos.state.ny.us/lgss/sharedservices/index.html>
- the Best Practices page of the NYS Association of Counties. http://www.nysac.org/County_Corner.php
- <http://www.dos.state.ny.us/lgss/sharedservices/index.html>

**OBSERVER
CORP****County Executive
Press
Conference
“Taxpayer First”**

On 4/14/10 County Executive Michael Hein introduced his “Taxpayer First” initiative, a 10 point pro-active plan designed to address 2011 fiscal problems that Ulster County faces. This is the first time it has been done so far in advance of the 2011 Ulster County budget process. (Go to <http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/pressreleases/Taxpayer%20First%20Web%20Info.pdf>)

Mr. Hein noted at the outset that tough choices will have to be made; the taxpayer cannot afford any new tax increase; and it is necessary to be responsible.

Ulster County’s problem: a possible \$15 million to \$25 million dollar budget gap is not unique....other counties in NYS face the same problem due to Albany mandates, falling revenues and rising expenses.

The 10-point plan will involve staff reductions, attrition and overtime reductions, retirement incentive, prescription drug plan, employee health insurance, the sale of the county certified home health agency license, improved use of space, mobile health clinics, selling unused property and video court appearances and the proposing of legislation to created a conflict Counsels Office.

The savings expected to be achieved is estimated at \$8.6 million dollars.

The Q & A period that followed had many questions. Mr. Hein provided information and

Ulster County Legislature Meeting

offered more detailed information as well.

He advised that the tax increase reflected in his presentation was 3.5%; his goal is for no increase.

As he noted, he does not know what the sales tax revenues will be or what the state budget will be...both will impact the county.

Hein noted he is not going to wait to move ahead, he will be pro-active.

He also commented that the shared service project that is being worked on has more work to be done; some of the towns will participate; the majority of T/Supervisors understands and supports the idea; he is sending teams of people to talk with the Town Boards.

Mr. Hein said yes there will be possible layoffs of county highway personnel.

The Golden Hill fund balance is gone, the overall Fund Balance is not where he wants it to be; he is presently dealing with five labor unions.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

The April 20, 2010 meeting of the Legislature was convened at 7:00 PM by Vice Chair Fellicano, opening with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Sherman Kenly and Evan Knowlton of Troop 20, BSA, Hurley, recipients of Pride of Ulster County Awards for having achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. After noting communications to the legislature (available through the office of the Clerk of the Legislature), Privilege of the Floor was granted to Butch Dener, Melanie Knight and Charls Lyonhart to receive a proclamation of April as Organ Donor Awareness Month and describe their personal experiences.

The Public Comment was opened for speakers. Andrea Smith and Laura Smith of Warwarsing spoke in support of legislation to provide relief from water damage to properties as a result of Ashokan Reservoir leakage.

Todd Schmitt of UC CSEA urged action on the resolution regarding contract approval with the UC Staff Association. He pointed out that the issues had been unresolved for over 4 years. He then noted that, the County having terminated the Community Corrections program and eliminated jobs in Probation & Pre-trial Release, the county jail would soon be at full capacity, The county will find itself with inadequate alternatives to incarceration. He also spoke about the Golden Health Care Center – referring to it as the Crown Jewel of the County – pointing out the substantial need for repairs while noting some \$92 million was spent for a jail.

Terry Gilbert spoke on the merits of the Golden Hill staff and quality of service to the County.

Lynn Dunham spoke in favor of Golden Hill and against job losses in Social Services by describing the adverse consequences to the most vulnerable members of our populace and the excellence of county workers who make delivery of these services possible.

Carl Chipman, supervisor of the Town of Rochester, spoke on the issue of Safety Net allocation methods.

The Legislature then turned its attention to the resolutions scheduled for consideration. Of the 29 measures, 18 were on the Consent Agenda and of the 11 on the Non-Consent Agenda, all but 1 was adopted unanimously. (One legislator abstained on one resolution). While little could be gleaned from legislators' few and brief comments on the unanimously adopted legislation (see committee reports below for some enlightenment), two items sparked lively comments.

The Non-Consent Agenda included Resolution 96 under which an agreement between The County of Ulster and The Ulster County Staff Association (discussed above) was proposed to be approved. When raised, the Clerk advised that it had been pulled and a lengthy debate ensued on the propriety and merit of and the procedure for such an action. Voices from the minority party were raised in strong opposition; the issue was put to the Legislature's attorney for an opinion. Legislators Parete, Donaldson, Provenzano and Lomita pointed out prior practice and County Attorney rulings that prohibit such withdrawals and noted that some kind of vote of the legislature is required. Legislator Gerentine then moved to refer the matter back to committee for further consideration which generated additional debate. Ultimately, the vote was taken and the contract approval was postponed by the following votes: *Against Referral*: Aiello; Briggs; Donaldson; Fabiano; Hochberg; Lomita; Loughran; Parete; Richard; Parete, Robert; Provenzano; Rodriguez; Shapiro; Sheeley; Stoeckeler *For Referral*: Bernardo; Decker; Felicello; Gerentine; Gregorius; Hansut; Harris; Hayes; Madsen; Maloney; Petit; Roberts; Ronk; Sweeney; Terpening; Terrizzi; Zimet.

The second item generating a flurry of debate involved Resolution 114 intended to express the "Sense of the Legislature" and urge opposition to the "Farmworkers Fair Labor Practices Act", a NYS bill ([S2247-B / A1867-A](#)) to require collective bargaining, overtime, unemployment and disability benefits as well as other conditions of employment improvements for farm

Economic Development and Tourism

workers

Legislator Donaldson expressed harsh criticism for the resolution and suggested it be renamed the "Support of Robber Barons" resolution. That a County legislator could support such a resolution seemed, to him, absurd. He viewed the legislation as a return to the conditions of labor in 1870. The resolution was defeated upon a party-line vote 16-15 as follows: *In Favor*: Aiello; Bernardo; Briggs; Decker; Fabiano; Felicello; Gerentine; Hansut; Harris; Hayes; Maloney; Petit; Roberts; Ronk *Opposed*: Donaldson; Gregorius; Hochberg; Lomita; Loughran; Madsen; Parete, Richard; Parete, Robert; Provenzano; Rodriguez; Shapiro; Sheeley; Stoeckeler; Zimet

(NOTE: While a majority of the legislators present voted in favor of the resolution, the rules of the Legislature require a majority of the *members* of the legislature to pass a resolution. 17 votes are required unless by law a greater number is specified. Legislature Chair Wadnola and Legislator Frey were absent.)

To the satisfaction of those who spoke during the Public Comment period and others concerned about flooding in Ulster County, Resolution 113 urging passage of the state bill authorizing use of surplus funds from The Greater Catskills Flood Remediation Program by Ulster County passed without opposition.

Jean and Jim McGarry

Date: April 5, 2010 Start Time: 4:55 p.m. Finish Time: About 6:20 p.m.

Mr. James F. Maloney, Chairman, called the meeting to order with roll call.

Mr. Lance Matteson, President, Ulster County Development Corporation (UCDC), discussed the pending contract between the county and UCDC. The structure of the contract is to remain the same: \$200,000 base, \$200,000 incentive and continued support of The Solar Energy Consortium.

Draft Resolution #0423 regarding approving guidelines for a performance based economic plan between UCDC and the county, a 2010 appropriation, was passed as amended. There was discussion about the types and quality of jobs sought - retaining jobs is important, new jobs are more important.

Draft Resolution #0421 passed regarding authorizing the chairman of the Ulster County Legislature to execute an agreement with UCDC – 2010 appropriations.

Draft Resolution #0422 regarding authorizing the chairman of the Ulster County Legislature to execute an agreement with the UCDC for specific TSEC related services - 2010 appropriations was passed following a presentation and discussion with Carl Meyer, president and co-CEO of TSEC. The discussion again addressed the issue of the types and quality of jobs: most of the TSEC jobs are at the technician and lower engineering levels in manufacturing.

Draft Resolution #0420 passed regarding approving 2010 appropriation (\$15,000) and guidelines for funding the Kingston/Ulster Empire Zone – amending the 2010 Ulster County budget. The NYS Empire Zone program is unlikely to sunset.

Draft Resolution #0405 approving the proposed Certificate of Incorporation and consenting to the formation of a local development corporation: NYS let the applicable law expire and \$2B are held up. Issues of law were discussed and Elliot Auerbach, UC Comptroller, recommended waiting to vote until the issues are settled – he will issue an opinion by the end of the week. Deputy Chairman Hector Rodriguez proposes moving the resolution allowing for amendments. Voted and passed.

Draft Resolution #0417 amending the capital project for the Ulster County Area Transit (UCAT) building and HVAC controls and amending the capital project for construction of a UCAT fuel storage facility – amending the 2010 capital project fund – Department of Public Works (Buildings and Grounds) were discussed by Art Smith, Budget Director, Bob DiBella, Director rPublic Transportation, and Dennis Doyle, Planning Director: the issues raised at the last committee meeting (March 1, 2010) were resolved by American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, abbreviated ARRA, funds will be reapplied and through some other savings. Voted and passed.

Mr. Rick Remsnyder, Director Tourism, and Liza Berger updated the committee on topics discussed at the previous committee meeting. 100,00 copies of the tour guide will be made. The NY Times Travel Show, the Atlantic City Camping and RV expo, and a LGBT event were good venues. The ulstercountyalive.com web site is up and a few bugs are being fixed.

Mr. Dennis Doyle, Director, Department of Planning, updated the committee on housing: funding for housing rehab - \$400,000 to Cornell Co-op Extension and \$300,000 to RUPCO. Fees are paid to the county. Motion voted and passed.

**Legislative
Programs,
Education and
Community
Services**

Mr. Doyle announced a proposed information session for new legislators to be held during the second week of the month.

Draft Resolution #0404 urging the NYS Legislature and the Governor to oppose proposed NYS laws concerning labor laws – collective bargaining - for farm workers: this memorializing resolution passed with opposition.

Document prepared by Vic Melville, 4/19/10

Date: April 6, 2010 Start Time: 5:00 p.m. Finish Time: 6:25 p.m.

Mr. Wayne Harris, Deputy Chairman, called the meeting to order, followed by roll call.

Mr. Harris introduced Larry Kithcart and Tony Papanella to discuss UC Community Action programs: accessible living, Head Start, food and weatherization. UC Community Action employs over 100 people. The weatherization program is supported by American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, abbreviated ARRA, funds and there was discussion about outreach for the program and its relationship to HEAP.

Mr. Jim Cosgrove, UC Library Association, and Ms. Marge Menard of the Kingston Area Library addressed the committee on their programs and the request for county funding.

Ms. Lydia Reidy, Executive Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County, reviewed current programs and activities, including Garden Day 2010, removable greenhouses, funding cuts (Integrated Pest Management is threatened). The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) of \$400,000 to Cornell Co-op Extension (and \$300,000 to RUPCO) is expected.

Mr. Mark Komdat, Dean of Administration, SUNY Ulster, reviewed current funding issues (e.g. NYS mid-year aid cut of \$237,000, tuition and early retirement). The issues related to the proposed water acquirement system (a second water source is needed) were discussed. Graduation is May 19, 2010.

Draft Resolution #0414 & #0415 regarding STOP DWI were voted and passed.

Document prepared by Vic Melville, 4/19/10

**Governmental
Services,
Environmental &
Administrative
Committee**

Date: April 19, 2010 Start Time: 6:03 p.m. Finish Time: 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Kevin Roberts, Chairman, called the meeting to order followed by the approval of the minutes from the March 15, 2010 meeting.

Ms. Kathleen Mihm, and Mr. Thomas Turco, Commissioners, Board of Elections, discussed the space needs of new election machines as new purchased additional machines are required.

The new machines are expected by June and the surplus machines are not to be used by the county after Sept. 1, 2010. They want the board and testing on one site, allowing for security and inspection by candidates. The surplus machines may have another use other than scrap. They requested any help available from the committee.

Ms. Amanda LaValle, Coordinator, Department of the Environment, discussed several projects, including: the SEQRA hearing recently held (see Resolution #118 below); the Golden Hill LED lighting grant; the PV installation on the salt shed at the Ulster County Fair Grounds in time for the fair; and the Earth Day Clean Up at the Sojourner Truth Ulster Landing County Park to be held Sat. Apr. 24., 2010.

Resolution #119 regarding a proposed public hearing on Tues. May 11, 2010, to consider cancellation or reduction of interest, penalties, and other charges of a property owned by Thomas and Candace Rizzo received considerable discussion. A lawyer for the county presented the resolution for discussion. There was concern about precedence such action would have and the cost (\$300) of a public hearing. Several options were discussed, including sending the matter to the Commission of Finance. Agreement was reached to request the Rizzo's to speak at the public comment period of the legislature session.

Mr. Michael Bemis, Executive Director, and Michelle Leggett, Coordinator, Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency, reviewed the 2009 UC Recycling results. The trends are good. Most schools are now in compliance. Food waste is now in focus with a NYS draft plan and a pilot at SUNY New Paltz in place. The pharmaceuticals, household hazardous waste and electronic recycling event held on Sat. Apr. 17, 2010, at the UCRRRA site in the Town of Ulster was a good success. 280 pounds of pharmaceuticals and 42,000 pounds of electronics were collected. New sites are in plan.

Resolution #90 confirming the appointment of a member of the Environmental Management Council was passed.

Resolution #92 concerning amending the rules of order to set a procedure for Memorializing Resolutions was pulled by Chairman Roberts after considerable discussion about the intent,

process and effect of proposing and adopting memorializing resolutions.

Resolution #93 regarding setting a public hearing (on Tues. May 11, 2010) on Local Law No. 1 of 2010 was passed.

Resolution #115 concerning creating a task force to study the policy decisions needed to examine the long term financial viability of the Golden Hill Health Care Center was passed following an extensive discussion. Legislators Robert Parete and Kenneth Ron had been asked by Legislator Walter Frey of the Health committee to address the committee about the resolution. The discussion addressed the policy aspects, executive and legislative authority, and membership on the task force. It was noted that an amendment may be considered.

Resolution #116 re-establishing the UC Trail Advisory Committee – UC Legislature passed.

Resolution #117 eliminating the full-time Assistant Deputy County Executive position for UC – County Executive passed. Mr. Vincent Martello, in that position, is to be placed in a vacant position in the county Health Department.

Resolution #118 adopting proposed TYPE II Actions State Environmental Quality Review ACT (SEQRA) for UC passed.

Other business was adopting the Environmental Subcommittee and its members.

Document prepared by Vic Melville, 4/22/10

Budget and Finance

The Legislative Budget and Finance committee was convened on April 13, 2010 at 5:00 PM by Chairman Gerentine and adjourned at 6:10. Members present, Legislator Provenzano absent. Other attendees: Budget Director Art Smith and Personnel Officer Brenda Bartholomew and many union employees, and the press.

Initially, the committee dealt with sixteen resolutions dealing with a variety of topics ranging from approving various contracts, a bid on property in the T/Lloyd, funding the Kingston/Ulster Empire Zone, to inter-municipal agreements with three towns re Stop DWI.

While the committee approved the resolutions, one dealing with creating a special task force to study the policy decision needed to examine the Long Term Financial Viability of the Golden Hill Health Care Center was put on hold until the Government Services Committee can address it as it was a late resolution. The Budget and Finance Committee will address at its next meeting after GSC considers it.

There were two special reports made to the committee. The first on present by Personnel Officer Bartholomew was an explanation on the new contract for unionized managers.

The contract referenced is to be found in a resolution re approving an agreement between the county and the UC Staff Association (UCSA) for the period January 1, 2006-December 31, 2010. The UCSA, affiliated with NYS United Teachers (NYSUT), was formed to represent certain mid-level managers employed by UC.

Apparently this group has not received any increases during the period 2006 to the present. What has been agreed to is a 13% increase for 2010. The dollar amount, \$517,698, does not include any retroactive dollars or any compounding of interest. Instead, commencing with January 1, 2010 the salary for those involved would be 13%. Going forward 60% of that salary increase will be adjusted for the number of years employed, i.e., if employed for four years (2006-2010) the person would receive 60%, for three years, 75% of the 60% involved, etc.

Anyone of this group of employees who retired during that four year period receives nothing, which is viewed as a savings.

Legislator Gregorius expressed concern over the process that was used to negotiate this agreement, but not that the employees should receive the increase. The process is different now given the requirements of the charter. He wanted more time to review the process. Legislators Harris and Maloney also indicated a wish to have more time to review. Legislator Frey moved to table the resolution until the next meeting April 20. Passed.

The second special report was made by Art Smith, Budget Director dealing with the potential 2011 budget impacts. It was noted that in preparing this report it had been assumed that the NYS budget would be passed, but it has not been. Thus, "it is not possible to present a precise estimate of budgetary impacts, but it is possible to present a potential impact on some major areas based on current information."

More information is needed from the state. The later the state budget is the greater negative impact it will likely have resulting in a need to prioritize payment of bills and other related matters.

There were five key areas that were mention that could have potential budgetary impacts for county fiscal year 2011. (Note: the capital M refers to millions)

Health and Human Services

Health Insurance Costs: possible \$2.2 M-\$2.6 M increase

Retirement Costs: even though the NYS Pension Fund has had a positive gain as of March 31, 2010 the gain is below the 8% rate of return required by law to maintain the pension fund. The possible increase could be \$1.5M to \$2.75 M.

Medicaid (FMAP=Federal Medical Assistance Percentage) While good during 2009 and 2010, the funding for this expires 12-31-2010. If the proposed extension is not passed the worst case scenario appears to show an increase for the county of \$2.0M to \$4.6M.

Golden Hill Health Care Center: the current daily Medicaid rate is \$177.04; \$199.91 has been proposed. If that is approved and \$3M for IGT (Intergovernmental Transfers) that is viewed as low impact; if neither is approved, high impact would be \$1.8M-\$4.9M.

In order to minimize the impact of a loss of \$7.3M in sales tax revenues it was necessary to utilize dollars from the County Fund Balance for 2010 as well as to implement spending controls, which the County Executive did in 2009. However, the county does not have this flexibility to use for 2011.

The bottom line with these figures: the county faces a \$15.5M to \$25.35 M problem.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

The Legislative Health and Human Services Committee was convened by

Chairman Walter Frey on April 8, 2010 at 6:35 and adjourned at 8:20. Members present. Other Attendees: Erison Rodriguez of ProAct, Inc., Michael Kavanaugh, Majority Counsel, DCE Beckman, DSS Commissioner, Director of Temporary Assistance Marijane Hunlock, Paul Fowler.

Following approval of the March meeting minutes, the committee heard a presentation from Mr. Rodriguez of ProAct, Inc. This referred to the ProAct Discount Prescription Drug Card Program and the Discount Vision, Lasik and Hearing Discount Program for UC residents. ProAct, Inc. is a subsidiary of Kinney Drugs, Inc. This is a free card, no cost to the county or to those who participate. Following a q & a session, the committee approved passage of the resolution pertaining to this matter.

DCE Beckman provided an update on Golden Hill: restrictions on bathing had been lifted; still working on the long term correction of the pipe situation; 5 residents are still at risk so restrictions for them will remain in place; and water test will continue on a quarterly basis.

He then introduced a report on the Methadone Clinic which is operated by and at Kingston Hospital under the direction of Al Nace. The hospital is considering providing service 7 days per week by opening the emergency room to the clinic. The per annum cost to the county for the additional time is about \$20,000.

At that point Paul Fowler, representing a group of concerned citizens, which included the mother of a young man who had recently died from ingesting methadone, spoke to the committee. He urged the county to open the clinic seven days a week during morning hours. Additionally, the mother of the young man mentioned above made an impassioned plea for there to be tighter oversight of the program and those who dispense the methadone. DCE Beckman offered to speak with her and Chairman Frey said the county would find the \$20,000 in the budget.

The next agenda item involved a presentation by DSS Commissioner Rodriguez and Director of Temporary Assistance Marijane Hunlock. This was part of the ongoing commentary of DSS responsibilities and services to the county.

Mrs. Hunlock reviewed the laws and rules governing the assistance offered through Temporary Assistance: Family Assistance and the Safety Net Program. Reference was also made to the various programs provided to clients to enable them to return to self-sufficiency or remain off of assistance: Employment, RISE (college program), HEAP, Housing, etc.

The Commissioner pointed out that the work here is to provide programming to support the concept of economic self-sufficiency.

As the Safety Net program had been in the news most recently regarding how it was paid for, explanation was provided on how DSS determined where the person lived: DSS has never used the zip code in a client's address, but rather used whatever information the landlord puts on the landlord statement as to where the property is located where the client resides.

The committee then dealt with the remaining seven resolutions, which included the creation of a special task force to study policy decisions re the long term financial viability of the Golden Hill Health Care Center. All the resolutions were passed.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

Board of Health

The Board of Health meeting was convened by Chairman Dr. Stellato on April 12, 2010 at 7:32 and adjourned at 8:20. Due to a lack of a quorum this was not an official meeting.

Present: Board members Dr. Stellato and Joan Authenrieth. Other attendees were Dr. Hasbrouck, Mrs. Veytia, Kevin Dumond and Katrina Kouhart.

While no business requiring voting was involved, reports/updates were presented.

Dr. Stellato reminded the attendees that based on the resolution passed in March, Board of Health meetings would start at 7 PM effective with the May, 2010 meeting.

Dr. Hasbrouck noted the following: copies of his Director's Update are provided for board members, DCE Beckman and Walter Frey, Chairman of the Legislative Health and Human Services committee; the Partners in Public Health planning councils (PiPH) were an outgrowth of the Health Summit held in March and will be used to be a connection to the community to provide feedback to the DOH; there will be a meeting of various participants from the Health Summit who will meet in mid-May to discuss results of the summit and introduce the councils; he meets with Dr. Karnasiewicz (Dr. K.) and DCE Beckman to discuss issues and develop a partnership; the Lead Primary Prevention Program is moving ahead with identifying high risk housing and working with the landlords as part of a \$245,000 grant program sponsored by the NYSDOH; in March, the board approved a new fee schedule, which is a moderate increase when compared with other counties; such increases are being evaluated by the county attorney with a projection of commencing in the fall; and finally a process is being developed to appropriately handle the 200 defibrillators through out county property.

Mr. DuMond reported on the work of the Environmental Health section: work is progressing on the revision of the UC Sanitation Code which has not been done since 1980 and a new format for hearings has been developed: inspection, documentation by DOH, presented to UC Attorney, and an independent hearing officer, Louis Klein, has been employed to handle the cases that may arise. Additionally he reported on those who live in T/Wawarsing and have issues with the handling of the water system in that town

Mrs. Veytia reported on the Long Term Home Health Care Program and the License Home Care Service Agency license process that the group is presently involved in. This refers to the license that DOH has which for the Long Term Care aspect is presumably going to be sold if an appropriately vetted purchase is approved.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

**The Ulster
County
Association of
Town
Supervisors**

The Association of T/Supervisors was convened by President John Valk, T/Shawangunk on April 20, 2010 at 8:30 and adjourned at 10:05.

Initially, County Executive Hein spoke to the group. He commented that while there may be an improvement in the extent of the recession, the impact will linger for a longer time. It therefore is important to develop innovative ways to provide services. He noted that the highway services involved a contract that will work in some areas but not others. Mr. Hein believes that a significant number of towns will eventually be involved, not sure that half will be.

The monetary problem exists at all levels of government. In his discussions with his opposites in other counties the problem has moved from doing "more with less" to doing "less with less."

He commented that he took exception to Mr. Appler's comments regarding "big government" and "unfunded mandates". He asked the supervisors what are your solutions to the present problems, what are we going to do? He is open to discussion and suggestions.

When asked if the county could take over the Safety Net program he said no, it doesn't have the dollars; and yes he is aware of the sales tax issue.

He noted that there is a need to redesign county government to what it can and should be; and it is not going to be the largest employer in UC.

There was a brief comment regarding the Safety Net program by a member: perhaps better enforcement of legal aspects would reduce the numbers that are involved.

Mr. Hein's comment was that while he did not know how much of the town budgets were mandated, 70% of the county budget was mandated; and he must look at every aspect.

Supervisor Fairbairn observed that the advent of the county charter form of government was a big plus.

There followed two reports dealing with the remaining parts of the county study on shared services: municipal courts and economic development.

Judge Timothy Cox, President of the UC Magistrates Association offered a variety of comments regarding municipal costs.

His principal concerns were that he did not believe the people doing the study had any

experience with town courts and that he objected to determining how effective the town court was based on the costs per case. He believes that it is not the job of town courts to make money for the town but rather to provide a service for the town. He noted that among other aspects town courts deal with small claims up to \$3000, preliminary felony matters, evictions, etc. Supervisor Valk pointed out that when a state auditor examines the books and notes a net loss then the town does have to consider such.

Judge Cox then noted that the video arrangement recently mentioned by the county as a possible savings would require a change in the law for UC to implement. Basic to his point was that a defendant has right to talk to his attorney.

Judge Cox also raised the question while the suggestions being made may be to save the county money, who (what) is paying for the town equipment.

Justice Hunt of Shawangunk commented that public safety is also a consideration as moving prisoners is the most difficult of activities of prison guards. Suggested that the state and federal authorities have been using this process for many years. Judge Cox apparently with respect did not agree. He also indicated no the Magistrates' Association had no official position on consolidation in answer to Supervisor's Moran's question.

Supervisor Fairbairn suggested that employing a circuit rider for the three towns be considered.

The second report was by Lance Matteson, President of the UCDC. He spoke about why a shovel ready program was important in the overall program of economic development.

He pointed out that based on a recent marketing study the Hudson Valley is better thought as a place to go to, but it needs to develop land ("green fields") and infrastructure where businesses, large and small can build exactly what they want to. The towns/county need to support this concept and decide where they want to see such development.

Additionally, this process can apply to redevelopment of an area, i.e., Tech City. He also suggested that it is wise not to stereotype where it was decided to build.

Mr. Matteson made note of some examples of this type of program: water, power, incubators, and sewer: all to support new business or established businesses in local areas: T/Lloyd, Saugerties, City of Kingston; others: Winston Farm property-Saugerties, the Scharade property in Ellenville.

Following the reports members discussed the Safety Net Program (through DSS) and how it is affecting town budgets, the need to have discussion on sales tax allocation; the shared services project (David Bolles was quoted as indicating 8-9 towns have verbally shown an interest; reviewing the contract which they generally seemed to feel there should be only one; Supervisors' committee also examining; and the need to keep some county workforce and equipment (presumably to help towns out with certain large jobs).

The last item dealt with skate boarding. The members exchanged situations on how some handled, i.e., keep areas fenced, supervised, and watch the insurance.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

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League of Women Voters
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April 2010
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