



# Commentator

## July- August 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.

President:  
 Dare Thompson  
[darethompson@gmail.com](mailto:darethompson@gmail.com)  
 (845) 236-3074

Newsletter:  
 Jim McGarry  
[lwvmhr@hvc.rr.com](mailto:lwvmhr@hvc.rr.com)  
 845-336-0304

Membership:  
 Betty Chin  
[Blc2003@hotmail.com](mailto:Blc2003@hotmail.com)  
 845-331-2572

CALENDAR		
<b>2010</b>		
<b>JULY</b>		
4		Independence Day
6	10:30am	Observer Corps meeting at Deisings, 111 North Front Street, Kingston
6	7:15pm-9:15pm	Board Meeting at Jean McGarry's, 180 South Rd, Ruby, NY 12475
<b>AUGUST</b>		
2	10:30am	Observer Corps meeting at Deisings, 111 North Front Street, Kingston
2	1:30pm	Resource Development meeting at Margaret Sellers, 80 Ringtop Rd, Kingston
3	7:15pm-9:15pm	Board Meeting at TBA
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>		
7	7:15pm-9:15pm	Board Meeting at TBA
16	6-9pm	Salad Supper with LWVNYS lobbyist, Barbara Bartoletti. Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 320 Sawkill Road, Kingston, 12401 <i>(see note under Program News)</i>
<b>OCTOBER</b>		
16	9am-1pm (tentative)	<b>Energy Options Update</b> Town of Esopus Town Hall, 174 Broadway Street (Route 9W), Port Ewen, NY 12466 <i>(see note under Program News)</i>
<b>NOVEMBER</b>		
2	6:00am-9:00pm	<b>ELECTION DAY</b>

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](mailto:jfmcg@hvc.rr.com)

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

**Prez Sez...**

It is an honor to be your new president and a joy to follow Jean McGarry, who has left the League in such great shape.

Fortunately she and most of the '09 -'10 board are staying on – and even Emilie Hauser and Chris Henning will be staying actively involved, even though they will no longer be on the board. I know we thank them all for their dedicated and effective service.

I am also really happy to hand over my treasurer duties to someone as competent and enthusiastic as new board member Dorothy Winrow and to have another Southern Ulster resident, Cindy Lanzetta, joining the board. We will have more about both of them in a future Commentator.

Good teacher that she is, Jean gave herself a report card upon her exit last month. We all think she was too hard on herself and we give her an A+!

She has also inspired me to tell you what I will be "grading" myself on these next two years.

1) Lose no ground! Our fairly small band of active volunteers are accomplishing so much - voters service, observer corps, advocacy, study groups and much more. Just keeping them as strong as they are will be an accomplishment. I get a B if I can hold the line, an A if we actually improve on what we're already doing.

2) Strengthen our membership, PR, and voters service efforts so we don't wear out a few hard workers. The Finance Committee (now called Resource Development) has already adopted membership development as their top goal and Jean McGarry has agreed to work closely with Cindy Bell on voters service, but finding people to replicate the efforts of Esther Stickley on PR is still a challenge.

Fortunately Esther is still helping with PR but we owe her a break! If any of you reading this want to help, please speak up. We need people to write press releases, contact print, radio and other media outlets, add to our Commentator and website content, and generally make sure we are not hiding our light under a bushel. We will train and support you and it's great professional experience.

3) Become more active in Southern Ulster and Dutchess. This is a biggie. Historically our volunteer strength has been in the Kingston area even though we have many members elsewhere in our very large region. Can we spread our impact more broadly? I read the Poughkeepsie Journal and belong to the Poughkeepsie Friends Meeting so I have a foot in both So. Ulster and Dutchess, so I will do all I can to help. But we need help from others!

4) Do more to involve young people in our activities. If you're a teacher at any level, a young adult yourself, a parent - HELP! We all know that our collective future, not just the League's, depends on this.

Call me any time between 9 AM and 11 PM (really) or email me at [darethompson@gmail.com](mailto:darethompson@gmail.com) to get more involved. I'd love to hear from you.

Onward!

*Dare*

**PROGRAM NEWS**

**NEWS OF NOTE:** LWVNY State Legislative Director Bartoletti Appointed to U.S. Election Assistance Commission Advisory Board (NEW.) U.S. Senator Charles Schumer appointed Barbara Bartoletti to serve on the EAC Board of Advisors, responsible for developing guidance for states to meet requirements of the Help America Vote Act, adopting voting system guidelines and certifying voting systems.

**UPCOMING PROGRAM:** Thursday, September 16, 6 - 9, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 320 Sawmill Road, Kingston, 12401. Salad Supper with LWVNYS lobbyist, Barbara Bartoletti. A great opportunity to socialize with your fellow League members and hear from our long-time volunteer LWV lobbyist in Albany as the political season really starts to heat up.

An advocacy workshop with Barbara will take place an hour or two before the supper if Barbara's schedule permits. Watch for details and plan to hear from as good a citizen/LWV lobbyist as you're likely to meet ANYwhere. Our Ulster County volunteer lobbyist, Tom Kadgen, will also be on hand with tips about lobbying at the local level.

**SAVE THE DATE!** Saturday, October 16, 9 AM - 1 PM (times still tentative) - Town of Esopus Town Hall, 174 Broadway Street (Route 9 W), Port Ewen, NY 12466

**Energy Options Update** Aimed at municipal officials of all kinds (elected, appointed, volunteer), this conference will update participants on what municipalities and their citizens can

do to conserve energy and reduce carbon emissions. This builds on a conference held on March 13 that drew 300 participants. Reservations will be required. Tours of the facility - a state of the art "green" building - will be available.

Speakers will be announced in the next Commentator.

## Naturalization Ceremony



On June 11, 2010, League members Shirley Kobran, Gloria Plasker, Esther Stickley and Jean & Jim McGarry represented our local league as 45 individuals were sworn in as citizens of the United States. While the league regularly participated in this event years ago, the ceremony was not held in Ulster County for 16 years. It is with much gratitude from all participants that through the initiative of County Clerk Nina Postupack, this moving and historic ceremony is again held in Ulster County.

League members served as official greeters to the new citizens. While extending our congratulations, we distributed voter registration forms, the pamphlet, "First Vote," the Ulster County Directory as well as our local league recruitment tri-fold.

Candidates came from all corners of the world- Iran, Egypt, Guyana, Peru, Italy, Pakistan, New Zealand, Taiwan and Canada, to name a few. We may be hated by many on this earth but as evidenced on this day by this very diverse group, there is nothing quite as thrilling as becoming a citizen of the United States.

Jean McGarry



## Annual Meeting

The League held its Annual Meeting on May 20<sup>th</sup> at the Esopus Town Library, preceded by a potluck supper and socializing.



Assemblyman Kevin Cahill & Kelsey Mahoney

**Kelsey Mahoney**, a graduating senior at Kingston High School, kicked off the business portion of the meeting with a delightful report on her experience as our representative at the state LWV's **Students Inside Albany** program this spring. She said it was a very positive experience that "opened my eyes on how politics works."

She especially enjoyed hearing a citizen lobbyist tell about her efforts to get "Buster's Law" - a law that addresses animal cruelty - introduced and passed. She also really enjoyed "shadowing" Senator Bonacic and Assemblyman Cahill. Bonacic even walked her past a group of lobbyists so she

could experience the way they "come at" him.

**NOTE:** since the meeting, Dare Thompson and Kelsey Mahoney have agreed to appear on Jody McTeague's Saturday morning radio show on WKNY. You can hear them at 1490 on August 7 at 10 AM. Among other things, they will discuss getting young people interested in politics.

After that we passed the 2010-11 **budget** that was printed in the April Commentator and we elected **officers** Dare Thompson (president), Irene McInnis (vice president), Jacki Moriarty (secretary) and Dorothy Winrow (treasurer). We also elected the following **directors**: Cindy Bell, Cindy Lanzetta, Jean McGarry, Margaret Sellers, and Esther Stickley.

They will join **continuing directors** Frank Cassetta, Betty Chin, Karen Goertzel, Evelyn Ness, and Lee Ridgway.

A special welcome was given to Dorothy Winrow and Cindy Lanzetta who will be serving on the board for the first time.

Lee Cane and Christine Henning were elected to the 2010-11 **Nominating Committee**. They will be joined by two members appointed by the board.

We also agreed to **reopen the study "on the future of the Ulster County Health Related Facility"** (Golden Hill) and to **continue the study on "how the sharing of services between**

**local government units would achieve local efficiencies and effectiveness.”**

Finally we all **thanked Jean McGarry** for her very successful tenure as president and presented her with a huge gift box, which turned out to contain Woodstock chimes. Fortunately she is remaining on the board and actively involved!



## ADVOCACY

### Health & Well-Being

Readers will recall we wrote about a report entitled County Health Rankings released February 17, 2010 by the University of Wisconsin's Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. It can be found at [www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org).

Now, under the leadership of Gerald Benjamin, and the efforts of KT Tobin Flusser, Project Director and her team, The Center for Research, Regional Education and Outreach (CRREO) at SUNY New Paltz has published a more broadly based Regional Well-Being Index (available at [www.newpaltz.edu/crreo/regional\\_well-being\\_2010.pdf](http://www.newpaltz.edu/crreo/regional_well-being_2010.pdf)) covering Dutchess, Orange, Sullivan and Ulster counties and the Mid-Hudson region as a whole, based upon selected economic, environmental and social indicators, combined in accord with rigorous statistical standards.

According to this first report, "Well-Being" in the Mid-Hudson Valley ranks at 50 on a scale of 0 to 100. For Ulster County, the ranking was 57; Dutchess County, 51; Orange County, 47; and Sullivan County, 41. This compares to a median score of other similar counties in New York state of 46.

Additionally, CRREO's 2010 Regional Well-Being report separately measures on a scale of 0 to 100 conditions in the four counties and the region in the areas of Economy, Education, Environment, Community & Equity, Governance, Health, Arts & Culture, and Safety and presents more detailed snapshots in such regional areas of interest as Community Supported Agriculture, Stream Bio-Monitoring, Women in Government, How Municipal Websites Inform Citizens and Premature Mortality.

These scores provide baselines from which future trends in Regional Well-Being and in specified areas will be measured by CRREO, informing policy makers and advising citizens of how their governments and communities are doing. The major data sets developed for this project, which will be regularly updated, provide an additional resource for the region, and a basis for special in-depth analysis of prioritized projects.

### Shared Services Study

#### LINKS:

The Ulster County Municipal Resources page at <http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/municipal.html>.

Links of interest include

- The Draft Report can be found on the County Website at [www.co.ulster.ny.us/municipalities/FINAL%20DRAFT%20Highway%20DOC%20with%20charts%20and%20maps.pdf](http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/municipalities/FINAL%20DRAFT%20Highway%20DOC%20with%20charts%20and%20maps.pdf)
- Frank Cassetta's concise summary is at our website at [midhudson.ny.lwvnet.org/files/Highway\\_Service\\_Cooperation\\_-\\_Summary.pdf](http://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. [www.nysac.org/County\\_Corner.php/](http://www.nysac.org/County_Corner.php/)

### OBSERVER CORPS

***We are pleased to welcome one of our newest Board members, Cindy Lanzetta, to the Observer Corp. She will report on environmental issues covered by governmental consortiums.***

### Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council;

***Observer Note:*** *The Greenway Act of 1991 continued the State's commitment to the preservation, enhancement & development of the world-renowned scenic, natural, historic, cultural and recreational resources of the Hudson River Valley, while continuing to emphasize appropriate economic development activities and remaining consistent with the tradition of municipal home rule. With the addition of the Hudson River Valley becoming a National*

**Greenway  
Conservancy for  
the Hudson River  
Valley, Inc.;  
Hudson River  
Valley National  
Heritage Area**

*Heritage Area, Greenway became to steward of that program as well. This is a good opportunity for Dutchess & Ulster League members to work together. The next meeting of this group is October 14th, and the location will be announced. If you would like to join us contact Cindy Lanzetta, 845-236-7288 or email [packback56@yahoo.com](mailto:packback56@yahoo.com)*

Joint Meeting, June 9, 2010, 9:30am to 12:30pm, Stoutridge Vineyard, Marlborough, NY

This was a meeting of related Regional Planning entities that manage State & Federal Funds to promote the Greenway Criteria of:

Regional Planning, Natural & Cultural Resource Protection, Heritage & Environmental Education, Public Access, Economic Development. For more information go to:

[www.hudsongreenway.state.ny.us](http://www.hudsongreenway.state.ny.us)

The first part of the meeting was to conduct the groups' business. Besides typical business items there was the distribution of various grants:

Greenway Community Grants (over \$35,000)

Greenway Water Trails Grants (over \$7,500)

Designation of additional Greenway Trail & Water Trail Designations (including Ulster County's Sojourner Truth Ulster Landing County Park)

Acceptance of Federal & State monies for over \$100,000 of additional funding.

Acting Executive Director, Mark Castiglione finished the business meeting and Ulster County Planner Jennifer Schwartz Berky did a power point presentation about the Greenway Principles and the Greenway Compact process that Ulster County is developing and hoping to use on a local level. Ms. Berky used the Town of Marlborough as the laboratory for an exercise for Greenway Board members & guests. After a presentation particular to Marlborough, people were assigned to breakout groups to envision goals the Town may consider to leverage the following assets:

Agriculture, Hamlets & Main Streets, Waterfront, Scenic & Historic Resources, and Environment & Ecology

After the breakout sessions each group reported out to the groups on the potential goals it has developed for Marlborough.

The session ended with announcements about :

[www.TeachingtheHudsonValley.org](http://www.TeachingtheHudsonValley.org)

[www.hudsonvalleyramble.com](http://www.hudsonvalleyramble.com)

[www.hudsongreenway.state.ny.us](http://www.hudsongreenway.state.ny.us) – Call for proposals Small Grant Program

Respectfully submitted by Cindy Lanzetta

**Ulster County  
Transportation  
Council  
Technical  
Committee**

Meeting - June 23, 2010, SUNY Ulster College, 10am

[www.co.ulster.ny.us/planning/tran.html](http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/planning/tran.html)

The Ulster County Transportation Council (UCTC) serves as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Kingston Urbanized area as well as a portion of the Poughkeepsie-Newburgh Urbanized Transportation Management Area (TMA). The MPO designation permits members of the UCTC to have the privilege and responsibility for making final decisions concerning transportation planning and programming of Federal aid projects in Ulster County. MPOs are comprised of local elected officials, municipal staff, the State Department of Transportation, Federal Transportation Agencies, Public Transit Operators and other transportation stakeholders who work cooperatively on local and regional transportation planning initiatives.



**Perrine's Bridge**

Programming transportation improvements in Ulster County is one of the UCTC's most important functions. Projects identified in the UCTC's Year 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan are prioritized by the UCTC for placement in the UCTC's five-year Transportation Improvement Program or "TIP" utilizing several project selection processes developed by the UCTC and the New York State Department of Transportation. Any local, county or State agency intending to utilize Federal and/or State funds to advance a transportation project in Ulster County must have the project placed on the UCTC TIP. Projects programmed must comply with Federal laws and guidelines of SAFETEA-LU, Public Involvement requirements, Title VI/Environmental Justice requirements, American with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The public is encouraged to participate UCTC's transportation planning and policy-making

process. Information on current UCTC activities, projects, and [meeting schedules](#) can be found on this website.

In addition to the Kingston Urbanized Area, Ulster County is part of a larger urbanized area known as the Poughkeepsie-Newburgh Urbanized Area (locally referred to as the Mid-Hudson Valley, New York, Transportation Management Area) or TMA. TMAs are defined in Titles 23 and 49 of the U.S. Code as urbanized areas over 200,000 in population. Portions of Dutchess, Orange, and Ulster Counties together form a TMA and, as a result, are responsible for coordinating a congestion management process (CMP) as well as integrating CMP strategies with the long range transportation planning process.

The UCTC is hosted by Ulster County with full-time staff support housed in the [Ulster County Planning Board](#).

Meeting began with a review of the 2035 Draft Long Range Transportation Plan. This document will be available online for review. Especially interesting is Chapter 3 that has demographic information that gives a good overview of Ulster County.

Ulster County has double the amount of anticipated need to the amount of available funding. With Federal & State revenues declining the shift will be toward local funding sources.

Additional business included authorizing additional funds for transit service.

Staff and NYSDOT introduced the Draft 2011-2015 TIP Update. (These are the projects that will move forward with Federal, State & Local monies)

Ulster County, Dutchess County & Orange County will be submitting a grant application to HUD for \$5 million to launch a Smart Growth Initiative for the Mid-Hudson Region.

Respectfully Submitted, Cindy Lanzetta

## Ulster County Legislature Meeting

### **June 15, 2010, 7PM; 31 Legislators present. (Absent: Legislators Belfiglio and Roberts)**

After being called to order, the Legislature first presented Lucy Pollaco and Bill Paulus with Pride of Ulster County for having been selected as Seniors of the Year.

Prior to the regular meeting the legislature held three public hearings. One, regarding the addition of lands to the designated Agricultural Districts of Ulster County, specifically regarding inclusion of lands of Rivendell Winery, again brought forth substantial testimony in opposition. Readers will recall a similar application was before the legislature last year without success. Opponents contend that a proposed use, a retail outlet on the premises, is a commercial enterprise rather than an agricultural activity – a conclusion reached by the New Paltz Zoning Board of Appeals. The lone speaker on behalf of the designation, Susan Wine, contends the use is consistent with the agricultural uses of the property as presently configured and such uses of similar facilities within the town. Rivendell argues in litigation that the ZBA's decision is arbitrary, capricious, and unlawful and further that it is being denied equal protection of the law. The issue of broader interest is that, regarding land use matters, the "Home Rule" authority of New Paltz and the "Home Rule" authority of Ulster County, each created by state laws, are in contention.

The Public Comment segment included comments from Fred Rockwell and his sister Kalley Ashby regarding the problem of feral cats and the lack of humane resources in the County. Kingston City Alderman Tom Hoffay spoke in support of the Resolution #162 by which the full amount of certain public assistance costs would be assumed by Ulster County.

Twenty items were on the agenda for the evening (Chairman Wadnola had withdrawn his proposal to reduce the legislature from 23 to 21 members.) Of these, 17 were adopted unanimously, 1 had a single dissenting vote, 1 had 5 dissenting votes, and 1 was defeated by an 11-20 vote.

Resolution 156, authorizing acceptance & rejection of bids on tax foreclosed properties (adopted 26-5), induced a number of legislators to speak. Legislator Zimet observed that the Legislators are "unwilling executioners of an unfair tax structure" and that something be done about it including standing up, county by county, against the state by demanding it get its house in order, stop over taxing the people, and stop unfunded mandates. Legislator Donaldson observed that the vote must be yes and that, without the revenues these sales generate, further program cuts will have to be made. He further noted that former Treasurer Kirschner had implemented a number of ways to help ease the burden for taxpayers. Legislator Provenzano pointed out that the County is obliged to pick up the cost of unpaid town and school district taxes. Legislator Felicello expressed the thought that the County charges a phenomenal amount of compounded interest and that for unpaid taxes of \$268,458.53 the county would

receive \$536,154.00. To him, the County is ripping off the taxpayers. Legislator Sweeney stated he was not elected to put people out on the street. Legislator Gerentine said everyone has the same compassion but that at one time there was some 20 million of unpaid taxes being funded by those who do pay. State law describes clearly what is to be done. The problem is Albany. Legislator Rich Parete observed most properties are not occupied – those in foreclosure have taxes paid by the lender; many are landlocked. Often speculators – some of whom have bought properties at auction – own the properties. He was of the opinion that no one would be on the street because of these sales. Legislator Sheeley advised the members of the facts of one parcel... run down, ill kept, unresponsive to purchase offers, and left vacant for years. Returning to the floor, Legislator Donaldson, responding to comments of Legislator Felicello, observed that some properties on the list have been county property for a long time before being sold and that as to the interest issue, the rate has been “fixed” a number of times, but that is a matter that could be revisited.

**NOTE:** *One of the public hearings held earlier was in regard to a request by a home owner for cancellation or reduction of interest, penalties, and other charges resulting from the failure to comply with a property tax Installment Agreement. These are two tools property owners have to avoid the consequences of tax foreclosure.*

Later in the meeting Resolution 162, again proposing that the full amount of certain public assistance costs (Safety Net) be assumed by Ulster County, came to the floor. Modifying Resolution 147, defeated at the May 18<sup>th</sup> meeting (10-20), this resolution provided for implementation phasing in over 5 years rather than 2.

Legislator Donaldson, after giving a brief history of the debunking of the “separate but equal” doctrine under *Plessy vs. Ferguson* by *Brown vs. the Board of Education* observed that the current charge-back system creates *de jure* segregation in that, under County Law, it rewards communities that have little or no affordable housing opportunities while punishing communities for providing them. While advocating for Kingston, he added Ellenville when noting its progressive history and highest per value tax rate in Ulster County, partly due to the charge-backs. In closing he stated he found it odd that anyone representing Ellenville would oppose the legislation he and Legislator Loughran propose.

Legislator Provenzano spoke in favor of the resolution and rhetorically questioned why there is a cost breakdown of safety net for each taxing unit as to Safety Net but not for other county services. She wondered whether legislators ought to consider the cost/benefits to their constituencies of various highway expenses, some of which were authorized at this meeting.

Thereupon the vote was taken. While the vote reflects an element of political partisanship (3 Republicans voted aye, 4 Democrats voted no) it mostly reflects geographic and demographic differences.

**AYES:** Donaldson, Loughran, Provenzano (*City of Kingston*); Madsen, Maloney, Wadnola (*City of Kingston and Town of Ulster*); Parete, Richard, Parete, Robert (*Hurley, Marbletown and Olive*); Briggs, Sheeley, Stoeckeler (*Marbletown, Rochester & Wawarsing*)

**NOES:** Gregorius, Shapiro (*Denning, Hardenburgh, Saugerties, Shandaken and Woodstock*); Lomita, Petit (*Esopus and Rosendale*); Hayes, Ronk, Terrizzi (*Gardiner, New Paltz and Shawangunk*); Hochberg (*Hurley, Marbletown and Olive*); Aiello, Fabiano, Frey, Sweeney (*Kingston, Saugerties and Ulster*); Hansut, Maio (*Lloyd and New Paltz*); Bernardo, Felicello, Gerentine, Harris (*Marbletown, Rochester & Wawarsing*); Rodriguez, Zimet (*New Paltz*)

Jim McGarry

For further information about current and past legislation, be sure to look at the Observer Corp reports below as well as the UC Legislature Committee Agendas/Minutes at <http://www.ulstercountyny.gov/committeesinfo/index.html>

## Economic Development and Tourism

Date: June 7, 2010 Start Time: 4:52 p.m. Recessed Time: 6:30 p.m.

Mr. James F. Maloney, Chairman, called the meeting to order followed by roll call. The May 3, 2010, minutes were approved.

Mr. Dennis Doyle, UC Planning Director, addressed the committee on 2010 Agricultural Districts Inclusions. The discussion focused on rational of districts – they may limit farmers’ potential liabilities but may not be used to avoid health and safety considerations.

Two proposed properties for inclusion were discussed at length with concerned citizens addressing the committee. A proposed resolution will be considered by the committee following a public hearing on the properties in questions. This committee meeting will continue following the public hearing.

**Legislative  
Programs,  
Education and  
Community  
Services**

All draft resolutions appointing members to the Ulster County Planning Board passed.

Mr. Rick Remsnyder, UC Tourism Director, distributed a packet on Ulster County Tourism including the new Ulster Travel Guide (some questions were raised about its content). How the Walkway Over the Hudson and a water taxi from Rhinecliff to Kingston can be included in tourism plans were discussed. Mr. Remsnyder reviewed the update the UC Marketing Plan where the emphasis is on NYC radio and a TV segment being developed. The recent tourism conference received compliments but that politicians not give speeches.

Mr. Carl Meyer, Co-CEO of the Solar Energy Consortium (TSEC) briefed the committee on efforts with the Ulster County Development Corporation (UCDC) and UC Planning. Several initiatives were discussed including a proposed project at TechCity and solar tech renewable collaborative projects.

Document prepared by Vic Melville, 6/21/10

Date: June 1, 2010 Start Time: About 5:00 p.m. Finish Time: About 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Wayne Harris, Chairman, called the meeting to order and announced this meeting was primarily devoted to a presentation and discussion of the Ulster County Community College (SUNY Ulster) 2010-2011 Proposed Budget by Donald Katt, President, UCCC, and Mr. Mark Komdat, Dean of Administration, UCCC. Eventually, the UCCC budget will receive an up or down vote by the county legislature as individual items cannot be changed.

There was discussion about trends of enrollment (up) and financial support from the state (down). Until the final state budget is passed, there are some unknown effects on the UCCC budget.

The proposed tuition rates (full-time at \$3,820, up from \$3,620, and part-time at \$140 per credit, up by \$5) and comparisons to neighboring community colleges raised questions about the competitive position of Ulster. At the time of the meeting, the proposed tuition rates in Dutchess County were not known. [Subsequently, the Dutchess rates were reported (full-time at \$2,900 and part-time at \$121).]

The public hearing on the tentative budget of UCCC for the year 2010-2011 is scheduled on Tuesday, June 8, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. The county legislature is expected to vote on the proposed UCCC budget on Tues. June, 15, 2010.

Ms. Lydia Reidy, Executive Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County, reviewed current programs and activities, including: local growing conditions (potatoes and tomatoes may still have another blight this year), the effects of late frost on apples is being watched, an August agriculture tour is planned, the healthy Kingston kids program, efforts to support the Ulster County Fair, concerns about homeowners misuse fertilizers and pesticides, and a Teen Council.

Document prepared by Vic Melville, 6/21/10

**Governmental  
Services,  
Environmental &  
Administrative  
Committee**

Date: June 14, 2010 Start Time: 6:32 p.m. Finish Time: 6:55 p.m.

Mr. Kevin Roberts, Chairman, called the meeting to order followed by the approval of the minutes from the May 17, 2010 meeting.

A proposed resolution regarding a proposed public hearing and amending the county administrative code to reduce the number of legislative districts from 23 to 21 failed to pass. Mr. Kenneth Gilligan presented comment.

The proposed resolution regarding an agreement with the Town of Ulster for use of the Ulster Police Firearms Range and Training Facility – Sheriff's Office was passed as amended.

All other proposed resolutions were discussed and passed.

Document prepared by Vic Melville, 6/21/10

**Environmental  
Subcommittee**

Date: June 14, 2010 Start Time: 5:32 p.m. Finish Time: 6:24 p.m.

Legislator Brian Shapiro and Legislator Laura Petit are the co-chairs, and he led this meeting.

Ms. Amanda LaValle, Coordinator, Department of the Environment, discussed items including performance contracting (Legislator Petit asked about the NYSEDA connection), the Siemens Comprehensive Survey Report which is due in July, the Block Grant is available and can be drawn down, and that the Sojourner Truth Ulster Landing Park has Greenway designation and the trail improvements have been made. Legislator Robert Parete asked if capital projects are being tracked for LEED compliance as that is expected by the county energy plan.

Mr. Gary Capella, Executive Director, UC Soil & Water Conservation District, presented the district's annual report and anticipated activities for 2010 report that reported to the Governmental Services, Environmental & Administrative Committee of the Ulster County

## Health and Human Services

Legislature.

Mr. Robert Sudlow, Deputy County Executive, discussed IT equipment disposal procedures, flood plain projects, and recycling projects. A late resolution related to Silver Hollow Road Steam Bank Stabilization – FEMA Funded Work Project passed.

The committee discussed the county energy policy, LEED certification, and the electronics disposition issue (the Governor's EO #4).

Document prepared by Vic Melville, 6/14/10

The Legislative Health and Human Services Committee was convened at 6:35 on 6-3-10 by Chairman Walter Frey and adjourned at 8:25. Members present. Other attendees were Marshall Beckman, DCE, DSS Commissioner Rodriguez, Deputy Director Lynn Carlson, Sheree Cross, Director of Golden Hill Health Care Center.

Initially the committee dealt with four resolutions:

-authorized Legislative Chairman to Execute a Contract with NYS Office of Homeland Security to support Public Health preparedness planning efforts-DOH-passed

-amending the 2010 county budget for the Career Pathways Program-Dept of Employment and Training-passed

-Directing cost of all assistance and care for which towns and cities responsible shall be a charge on DSS and Administered under the direction of the DSS Commissioner: this was a new payment plan spread over 5 years. During discussion, Parete indicated support, this the towns he represented would be negatively impacted; Harris indicated no support for this and that the towns he represented would be negatively impacted by about \$200,000; Petit indicated no support; T/Supervisors had called her, while recognizing need to change this process, did not believe this was the way and she agreed with this thinking. Did not pass

-set date for public hearing on local law prohibiting the use and possession of tobacco products by minors-passed

The second agenda item dealt with a presentation by five parents who were concerned about the possibility that certain programs sponsored by Mental Health might be affected by budgetary problems. Each of the presenters spoke positively about their individual experiences with Kids Together, Nexis and Strides: how much benefit their children and they as parents had found them to be. Emotional series of talks, particularly when one of the speakers spoke about her child, who had died and another was a teen aged son who spoke in place of his father.

There was a brief discussion about the FACETS program which has been cut by some, i.e. Saugerties School District, due to budgetary problems. Apparently all of these programs are funded through 3rd party insurance, Medicaid, state/federal funds and private insurance, which tend to not provide dependable support.

The third agenda item was a request from the representative of the Cancer Society to put up warning signs about the hazards of smoking which also indicate where the person can get help to break the habit.

During discussion suggestion was made to piggy back this onto the resolution dealing with the public hearing mentioned above. One comment made suggested that the resolution be kept simple-ban the smoking, don't get to involved with how much the fines would be or hoe to enforce. It was pointed out that there already is a process "on the books" through the Department of Health. Broome County has adopted such a law, a copy of which was made available to the committee. Other counties have not apparently raised objections to the concept. The committee appeared to generally agree it was in favor of developing an appropriate resolution and the aspect about fines.

Sheree Cross, Director of the Golden Hill Health Care Center updated the committee on the progress regarding the legionella problem. There is none at this time.

After the Center's work group completed its research, evaluated what process would be the best resulting in the copper-silver ionation being selected. On June 15 this will be submitted to the county legislature for approval. If that occurs, installation will be immediate.( These dollars will be taken from the Center budget). This is considered a capital project. Cost \$87,000 plus \$17,000 to install and guaranteed for a year, 20 year life. While this will be 100% county payment, the county will receive 100% reimbursement over the 20 years through Medicaid dollars through daily reimbursement.

The County Health Department has been a participant in these discussions and this system is the best. (Note: this process controls the legionella but does not eradicate it)

Question on the state's position: has none one way or the other.

Commissioner Rodriguez then introduced the next installment of what DSS does.

This presentation was handled by Lynn Carlson, the Deputy Director of Services.

Child Protective Services: 22 case workers; handle abuse and neglect reports that are forwarded from the state. Over the last 5 years number of cases has risen: stands at 2600 now. Within 24 hours must respond to the state report; has 60 days to complete all of its investigation; does go to Family Court to obtain necessary authority to investigate specifics and if necessary to remove child from the home.

During the week CPS investigator goes by self during the day; at night and on weekends, CPS has back up from sheriff's department.

The CPS worker must be very careful what is written in report as such can be subject to review by lawyers, judges, etc. in the event of a court hearing.

Family Violence Unit: Has existed since 1985. Involves law enforcement (state police, T/Ulster) personnel and CPS workers. Jim McCoy (police) and Lynn Carlson have been joint leaders since the beginning. She emphasized how careful the workers must be in examining the evidence. She distributed the pictures to show that while some injuries might appear to be examples of abuse one was a problem the child was born with, the other an accident, the third showed a beating. This unit has the services of the state forensic labs and can add more police if necessary. There is very little turn over from cases workers, some from law enforcement as the latter are from different jurisdictions. The name of whoever reports a possible problem, or the organization, both remain anonymous, but such could be revealed if the case goes to court. In any event such information will not be confirmed, even if other people deduce who or what is responsible.

Protective Services: This is the mandated preventive unit which has 12 case workers. This involves court ordered services and also self-referrals from those who recognize they need help. People are referred to programs such as had been mentioned earlier in the meeting and to UC Mental Health. Every effort is made to avoid removing children from the home.

Ms. Carlson made the point that if the preventive services are cut there would be more removals and placements occurring.

The last item of business dealt with the funding for Family Services for which the state wishes to cut \$100 million dollars, and pass such costs onto the counties. The committee appeared to be in agreement to write a letter to oppose such and also the idea of a memorializing resolution by the entire county legislature.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

**The Ulster  
County  
Association of  
Town  
Supervisors**

The Meeting of the Association of Town Supervisors was convened at 8:30 by T/Supervisor President John Valk on 6-15-10 and adjourned at 9:50. Eleven members present.

Initially, County Executive Hein spoke briefly about several topics:

While there had been no signs for the newly opened Walkway, there are now at exit 18 of the Thruway; other state DOT signs will be going up in a few days. He remarked that some 600,000 people have nevertheless found their way to this new attraction.

There are apparently thousands of different agencies in NYS, but there is no comprehensive list for referral purposes.

The County and the UC DOH are working on the obesity program. Additionally there was a Health Summit in May which brought together 100 representatives. The point is to make Ulster County the healthy place in NYS...frank discussion, and working together.

Dr. Hasbrouck, the Director of UC DOH spoke about the work that the department was involved in support of making UC Healthy. The department has been reorganized and it is now in the process of determining what it can do to contribute to doing just that. It is reaching out to the communities to determine what they need, what is ailing them, what they want, etc. He and his staff are prepared to interface with the various communities in UC to do this. Partners in Public Health Councils have been created: Youth, Women, Seniors, and the Environment. He distributed a report card which suggests that UC has quite a way to go in order to raise the marks that tend to be C or D or F in areas like access to health care, overweight and obesity, vaccine preventable disease, maternal & child health, unintentional injury and environmental quality. These indicators will be examined every other year to determine improvement. He feels that this is an honest appraisal and supportive of the goal of transparency. The DOH has embraced the New York's Statewide Prevention Agenda, which places a far greater emphasis on health promotion and disease prevention. Wants to meet with towns individually on a monthly basis to discuss what is on a menu and to hear what the towns' concerns are. Vince Martell is the Director of Community Relations and is the person to contact.

Elliott Auerbach, UC Comptroller spoke on what his branch of the county government is presently involved in. While he mentioned Safety Net program, he noted his interest is in being sure that the municipalities are being correctly charged. PILOT-Payment in Lieu of Taxes. His staff is looking at how this process is being handled. He noted that UC is an economic driver as more than 2000 individuals work for the county and there is a \$98 million dollar budget attached to that. He suggested that the towns should also consider how many businesses throughout their towns do business with the county. He and the staff examine every bill coming in to be paid. There are interns from Marist and SUNY New Paltz who are working on various projects in his office. He also pointed out that he and his staff have the ability to go out and help local municipalities about internal fiscal controls. They have done the same thing for not for profits recently.

Commissioner Rodriguez of DSS spoke on the Safety Net matter....they have reviewed what has been done so far to correct any errors. DSS has the sole responsibility to determine eligibility. The concern is the accuracy of the address. To help in this matter, they are updating the DSS software to ensure correctness. Case loads are up. He noted the following: Change in Medicaid: as of January 2010 there is no resource for eligibility for MA; as of April 2010 no more Face-to-Face interviews. This is easier for the public. However, DSS must handle matters then by mail, there are 3 parts to the application that must be mailed and then returned. DSS must see original Birth Certificates, Passports or Driver's License....the Commissioner has approached the T/Clerks Association and it is considering whether they can verify the documents for potential applicants so that such will not have to be sent in the mail and possibly lost or even stolen. He thanked the towns for their assistance and support during the last heating season.

Sam Magarelli of Woodstock spoke on developing a volunteer recognition day or month similar to what is done in Woodstock. Apparently Chairman Wadnola had asked him to come and do this as he plans to issue a proclamation in July with regards to such being done in August. Mr. Magarelli has done this in Woodstock; and explained that a not-for-profit group was created to raise money to cover the expenses....as government could not....and a picnic is provided .....a nice way to acknowledge the work that so many do to contribute to the well-being of a community.

There was a brief comment period regarding the shared services progress.....as yet not everyone is involved....some of the towns are not .....a few appear to be in contract negotiations with the county.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

### **Golden Hill Task Force Committee Meetings**

#### **Tuesday, June 10, 2010 3-5 PM**

The Task Force has been appointed by the County Legislature. Legislator Walter Frey, Jr. is Co-Chairman along with Legislator Mary Sheeley. Legislators Wayne Harris and Jeanette Provenzano, Lee Cane, Dr. Laurie Cassel, Kenneth Hyatt, Lou Kirschner and Dr. Chester Robbins are also Task Force members.

Other attendees included: Paul Vosburgh, Architect; Marshall Beckman, Deputy County Executive, Sheree Cross, Director, GHCC; and Nettie Tomshaw, Legislative Staff.

The meeting was addressed by the Architect, Paul Vosburgh. He gave some background, then compared the plans and costs of building new with doing a renovation of the current facility. He showed options for both a 200 bed facility and a 280 bed facility. The most recent, though not current study indicated that Ulster County was short 15 beds and the existing beds are not well distributed for access by all parts of the County. The "ideal" nursing home size was said to be 120 beds.

The current facility has 280 beds, built in 1969 and is 41 years old. The site work condition is poor, as is the building envelope, the HVAC, the electric and the data/phone systems. The roof is good. The building has problems with water pipes (corrosion with related Legionella), code compliance deficiencies, program deficiencies and has an institutional feel. It does not meet current "Green energy standards". It does not support the Skilled Nursing Facility mission of patient centered care. It does not facilitate the development of patient communities. It would enable the needed culture change and

Plans were presented for both new construction and rehabilitation.

Rehabilitation of the existing facility would take 5 years. It would involve reducing the current census of patients by about 40 to create swing space. It would have a life expectancy of 20 years, due to expected changes in standards. It would correct the current deficiencies and replace the aged infrastructure and would meet LEEDS green building standards. A 200 bed

facility would cost \$40.1M for construction with a total project cost of \$50.3 (or \$251,500 per bed.) A 280 bed facility would require adding another wing for swing space during construction and would cost \$62.1M, with a \$84.5M total project cost (or \$302,000 per bed.) When the building was finished, there would be space available for offices, perhaps for the Office for the Aging. A negotiated percentage of construction costs would be reimbursed by the State. Some energy related funding might be available from NYSERDA.

New construction takes two years and would consist of a large rectangular building with 3 floors for 200 residents or 4 floors for 280 residents. It would have a life of 40 years (presumably changes and rehab would be needed sooner as the "state of the art" changes), and would be approximately the same kind of construction that would be expected in a Motel 6. While it would be "state of the art" programmatically, it would not be fancy or exceptionally durable. Costs for the 200 bed facility are estimated at \$44.3 M for basics, with a total project cost of \$60.1 M (or \$300,500 per bed) for the whole project not including cost over runs, land costs and disposal of the current facility. Costs for the 280 bed facility would be \$52.6 M and \$71.3 M (or \$255,000 per bed.)

#### **Facility Tour**

The presentation was followed by a tour of the facility, which was clean and well kept. We encountered an architect who helped design the building who is now a resident. He said, "Don't mess with the building, it is a good one." We saw the plain, institutional environment, the mechanicals and pipes that had hidden the Legionella infection. We noted spaces that had no ground level exterior access, which is important for fire safety, and parts where residents could not move around to other areas easily. We were shown where reconfigurations and additions to the structure would be made for social space, solariums, connections and new space. The building is a strong structure built mainly of brick and concrete block.

#### **Monday, June 7, 2010 6-9 PM**

The Task Force gathered for two presentations, Finances and Demographics. David Bonk, CMA ; Toski, Schaefer & Co. gave the presentation which began with general cost drivers.

The key drivers affecting the public nursing home strategic alternative decision process come from national, state, county and facility levels. They include:

- **Regulation** and reimbursement changes (big changes are coming)
- **Economics** including personal income, reimbursement, inflation, financial markets which all effect the cost and profitability of doing business
- **Industry trends** towards community based care, shorter stays and increased use of technology
- **Technology**
  - Medical- prolong life and how care is provided
  - Information –
    - increases speed in which information is processed and care is given
    - Increases efficiency and ability to adapt to changes in care
- **Demographics** including age both of potential residents and the support population, education influences resident expectations, income the type of financial payers, gender and race effect facility culture.

Ulster County experienced a net influx of US citizens that peaked about 2004. There is now a net decline. There has been a steady international in-migration. The total population of the County has been gradually increasing, as has Medicaid spending.

**Area Culture**, expectations of elder care, care quality, workforce culture, value systems and social awareness all effect what care can be provided. The mission, or the belief and commitment to the type and place of care and whether it is provided publically or privately will effect what the community is willing to do as will the influence of unions. Local and national history will also affect us.

Public facilities tend to serve indigent populations who use Medicaid, and have low measured needs and a low reimbursement rates or high levels of need and high costs which are not fully reimbursed. They are generally older and more institutional looking which is less appealing to higher paying "self pay" people. Public perception may be tied to their poorhouse ancestry and substandard, poor quality care. Public expectations may exceed their performance creating a lack of market competitiveness.

Reimbursement mechanisms starting from the 1935 Social Security Old Age Assistance benefits which forbids payments to Alms or Poor houses were reviewed. The current situation is very uncertain. As of 6/7/10 facilities continue to receive payments under an old rate based back in the early 1980's, with additional budget cuts planned.

Ulster County Nursing Home financial data using accrual accounting, shows, as of 12/31/2008 that Golden Hill Health Care Center (GHHCC) had a \$8.35 M loss for the year, by far the highest of the six homes listed in Ulster County. Next highest loss was the Northeast Center for Special Care (NECSC) at \$1.26M. These figures differ from the County numbers (\$4.04 M net County costs) which consider Inter-Governmental Transfers (IGT), use of fund balances (\$2.1M), and costs borne directly by UC taxpayers (\$1.9 M). There is also a difference in the period of time in which certain costs and payments are counted and a \$2M charge for Workers Compensation. The future of IGT payments is unknown, and recent payments have a different formula than previous payments, with the County having to put matching funds up front to get payment through Medicaid funding. The net loss per resident day for GHHCC was \$84.03, NECSC was \$13.37. Both have 280 beds. GHHCC counted 99,413 resident days, NECSC, 94,538 in 2008. The expenses/resident day at GHHCC was \$315.54, at NECSC, \$348.46.

The study also compared GHHCC resident demographics with public nursing homes in Albany and NE Central NY. The GHHCC population was 75. 25% Medicaid, compared to the non-profit percentage of 56%. GHHCC was the lowest Medicaid percentage of the three publics compared. It had the lowest Medicare at 9.16%. (Medicare is often the payer for out of the hospital rehab.) The non-profit had 16.7% Medicare. Medicaid pays the least, Medicare pays more and Self Pay, the most. The non-profit also had more admissions due to the facility's sub- acute and rehab programs. The majority of all admissions came from hospitals. GHHCC discharged fewer patients to home and had a higher proportion of residents who died in house (42%).

Expenditures for salaries and benefits make up about two-thirds of the operating budget of a nursing home. GHHCC pays about \$142.17/resident day and \$100.38 for benefits. Benefits are 71% of wages. Wages and benefits are 77% of total costs. Comparable public facilities had salaries of \$104.21 and \$129.27 per resident day and benefits of \$53.73 and \$48.32 per day. The non-profit facility had wages of \$134.16/ resident day and benefits of \$26.35. Supplies and purchases were in the upper quartile of the comparison. Capital rates were within reasonable standards at \$7.88/resident day, however newer public facilities had a capital rate of \$16.81.

Of the total expenditure of \$31.37 M in 2008, \$9.8M was paid for benefits. \$3.2 M was paid for health benefits for active employees and \$1.9M additional for Other Post Employment Benefits due to GASB 45. This was much higher than comparable institutions for similar plans. The County administered self-funded Worker's Compensation costs were also higher at GHHCC due to additional reserves recorded as an expense. Pension costs were considerably higher than other public or non-public facilities.

Over a five year period of 2005-2009, GHHCC has had a \$36.5 M net operating loss. County subsidies have amounted to \$23.7 M, the IGT has provided \$8.1 M, and other Non-Operating subsidies, \$6.8 M for a net income of \$2.1M which was positive fund balance used the next year.

Cost containment strategies used nationwide were listed. Most were familiar.

**The Current Reimbursement Environment** trends continue to be **downward**.

NYS facilities are still waiting for re-based nursing home rates due to the Budget crisis. The Governor has proposed reductions of 10% for Nov 15, 2009 to March 31, 2010 with an estimated impact of \$532,000 to GHHCC. Additional proposed reductions amount to an estimated \$533,000 over the next 16 ½ months estimated by NYAHS. The IGT funding continues through 2011.

There is a cap on capital cost base for new facilities of \$239,000 a bed. This would yield a maximum total project cost of \$77,567,885 for 280 beds for new construction. For renovations, negotiations would produce 60 to 80% reimbursement of costs. All reimbursement would occur through the rates in the future.

The presentation is available including Tables and Charts at:

[http://midhudson.ny.lwvnet.org/files/Golden\\_Hill\\_Financial\\_Considerations\\_2010.pdf](http://midhudson.ny.lwvnet.org/files/Golden_Hill_Financial_Considerations_2010.pdf).

**Dennis Doyle, Director of Ulster County Planning Department: Demographics of Nursing Home Bed needs in Ulster County**

#### **Population Trends**

There are three different projections ranging from about 180,000 to 310,000 people in 2035. The Planning Department uses a moderate trend, projecting about 215,000. In 2000, the Kingston Metro area had about 58% of the people over 65 years old and 59% of those over 85. Southern Ulster had 26% and 27%, Southwest Ulster 10% and 8%, and the

Mountain communities 6% and 5%.

As the baby boomer population ages, Ulster County will, like the rest of the country grow older. Those over 80 will double from about 6000 in 2000 to 12,000 in 2035. They will also increase as a percentage of the population from about 4% to 7%. Those over 65 will grow from about 23,000 to about 43,000. (The average age of GHHCC residents is about 89.)

Population growth is projected to take place largely in areas with water and sewer, including Kingston City, Saugerties, Ulster, Esopus, Lloyd, Marlborough, New Paltz, Shawangunk, Plattekill and maybe Warwarsing.

#### **Economic Trends**

Gross regional product is forecast to increase in the 1-2% per year range, while median personal and household income would average 3 to 4% increases in the next 10 years.

#### **Location**

Existing nursing homes are largely located along the I-87 corridor. They group around Kingston. The Ellenville area is lacking nursing homes.

#### **Trend in Nursing Home Patients**

- Likely to be older
- Likely to have specialized care needs
- More likely to rely on government assistance

#### **Friday, Jun 11, 201**

A discussion meeting.

Sheree Cross explained the impact of NYS budget reductions on GHHCC financing.

- The trend factor was cut, but the increase was not included in the UC budget, so there is no effect.
- \$16.9 M in rate appeals were cut, but UC has no rate appeals, so there is no effect.
- Reduced "bed hold" payments (when a resident goes to the hospital, the GHHCC still gets reimbursed) is complicated and the effect is unclear.
- The GHHCC has no waiting list, as it used to have.
- The occupancy rate has been relatively high.
- Pharmacy cuts are about \$1/day per resident

Lee Cane asked where the September 1 deadline came from. She thought it would be hard to meet.

The Executive set the deadline, with UC budget requirements in mind.

A new study of needs for Residential Health Care Facilities (RHCF) beds for the planning target year of 2016 was released showing that Ulster County had 21 too many beds. This does not confirm earlier anecdotal information and Sheree Cross will look into it.

Jeanette Provenzano talked about subsidizing the GHHCC. She pointed out that we subsidize the Community College. Why shouldn't we subsidize GHHCC? All of the Legislators present felt that the Legislature did not support privatization and there was little opposition to maintaining a GHHCC, that the Blue Ribbon Panel report was never accepted by the committee or on the floor.

Arthur Smith, UC Budget Director, talked about the difference between the charts used by the Budget Office and the Legislature, and the accrual accounting used by the consultant. Basically the budget uses charts based on expected payouts in any one fiscal year, while accrual accounting tracks expenditures in that year. These can be quite different.

Inter-Governmental Transfers (IGT) were also discussed. The old IGT ended in 2003. These were purely an additional source of revenue from State and Federal sources. The new IGT is part of the FMAP (Federal Medicaid Participation). To get the federal funds the County has to put up the equivalent of the State and Local match. In 2009-10, Ulster County had to advance \$2M from the GHHCC fund to draw down \$2M in federal matching funds, using a 50% Federal match. The Federal matching rate now varies with the unemployment rate, producing even more uncertainties.

The use of Bond Anticipation Notes (BANs) was also discussed. Depending on the financial markets, the short term interest on these notes is often less than the bonds that will eventually replace them. Capital costs are paid back in the rates over the life of the facility. Rates are higher for residents that need more care such as AIDS, ventilator and dialysis patients. A high occupancy rate ensures maximum reimbursement.

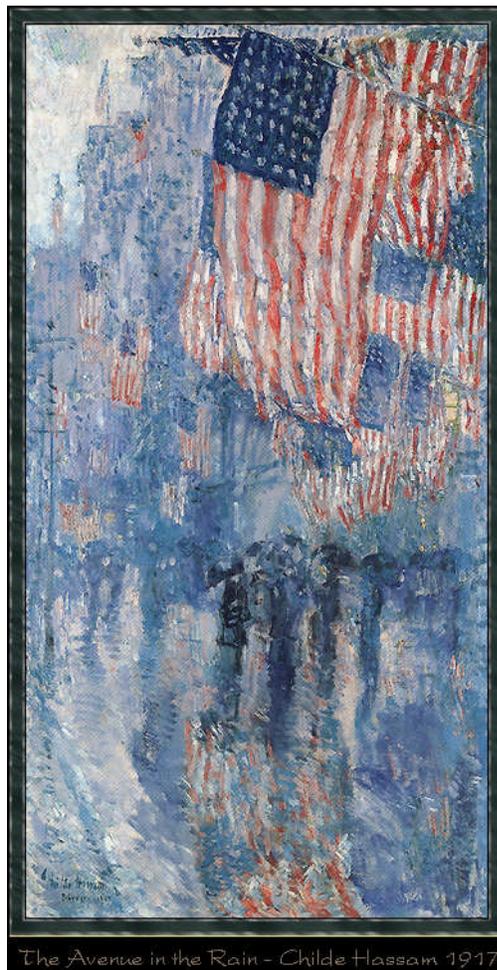
Ulster County currently carries \$109,664,734 in outstanding debt subject to the debt limit.

That is 7.81% of the constitutional limit for the 2010 adopted budget. Most of the debt is related to the jail.

John Rohrbaugh, consultant from SUNYA Rockefeller Institute gave the Task Force homework. He asked them to add briefly worded items to the three lists below and email them to him:

- A. Stakeholders who would be affected by any decision concerning Golden Hill (for example, current residents of Golden Hill or current employees of Golden Hill)
- B. Future circumstances that would worsen the consequences of any decision concerning Golden Hill (for example, reduction in Medicare funding or some county emergency requiring millions of dollars of expenditures)
- C. Actions that could be taken (decision options) concerning Golden Hill (for example, renovate the facility or build a new facility.) In other words what are the alternatives that should be considered?

**Happy  
Independence  
Day!**



*The Avenue in the Rain - Childe Hassam 1917*

I/we wish to become members of the LWV of the Mid-Hudson Region through May 31, 2011

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (eve) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I/We enclose: Individual Membership (\$50) \_\_\_\_\_ Household Membership (\$75) \_\_\_\_\_  
Additional gift to the LWV Education Fund (*tax deductible*;) for our use  
(Please send a separate check which **MUST** be payable to NYSLWV Ed Fund) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

If you are upgrading to a Household Membership, please  
include the name and email address of new members \_\_\_\_\_

Will receive *Commentator* \_\_\_\_\_ online &/or will read it on website or \_\_\_\_\_ Please mail *Commentator*

**(Complete the above form and return it to us with your check at  
PO Box 3564, Kingston, New York 12402)**

The League of Women Voters of  
the Mid-Hudson Region  
PO Box 3564  
Kingston, NY 12402

*July-August 2010  
Commentator*