



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 and Dutchess County area. We belong to the LWV of New York State and the LWV of the US.

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Commentator

May 2010

| CALENDAR | | |
|----------|---------|---|
| 2010 | | |
| JUNE | | |
| 1 | 10:30am | Observer Corps Meeting at Deisings, 111 North Front St., Kingston |
| 3 | 4pm-8pm | Annual Board Planning Meeting at Jacki Moriarty's, 167 Apple Hill Rd., Hurley |
| 11 | 12noon | Naturalization Ceremony, Ulster County Court House, 285 Wall St., Kingston |

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.

As announced at our 50th Anniversary Luncheon, a scholarship fund in memory of our dear friend Emily Johnson, has been created at UC BOCES. Please consider making a charitable gift to help continue Emily's good works.

Make your checks payable to:

Emily Johnson Scholarship Fund

and mail to:

Treas., Emily Johnson Scholarship Fund
UC BOCES,
175 Rt. 32 North
New Paltz, NY 12561

Any questions contact Len Cane 338-0706

Prez Sez...*Greetings,*

This is my last Prez Sez column. I offer you a self- evaluation of the last four years of my league presidency.

Satisfactory (Goals met)

- Revision and updating of the by-laws
- Restructuring of the league board (greater flexibility and accountability)
- On- line Commentator (cost effective, environmentally smart)
- Continuation of on-line local voters' guide
- Revival of Observer Corps (formation of a standing committee)
- Successful promotion of the Ulster County Charter form of government
- Establishment of an Advocacy Committee (initial goals to follow up on past initiatives of promoting the charter form of government and improvement of criminal justice in Ulster County)
- Moderator Training
- Numerous successful programs and forums (thanks to a well-oiled program committee)
- Three successful celebrations honoring longtime members, the Ulster County Charter, and the 50th anniversary of our local league
- Revival of the league's participation in the county Naturalization ceremony (June 11)
- Providing an "at a glance" comprehensive activity sheet available to both current and new members to encourage greater participation
- Financial stability

Needs Improvement

- Observer Corps- needs more members to extend coverage to City of Kingston, Town of Ulster
- Website -needs committee and study groups to regularly submit timely information
- Retention of membership
- Greater diversity of membership

Unsatisfactory (Goals Unmet)

- Greater member involvement and coverage of Dutchess County
- Attracting young people to become members

Comments

There have been suggestions for expanding our membership and it is my hope that we will put these suggestions into action. To attract youth, we need to reach out to the local colleges and set up independent "mini" leagues that operate in the spirit of our mission statement but allow for the concerns and interests of that age group. To create more interest and activity in Dutchess County, we should attempt to partner more with the World Affairs Council Organization. Many of its members are also league members. Ironically, they have the same difficulty of trying to attract members on the west side of the Hudson River. Perhaps we could assist each other to help expand interest and action on both sides of the river.

It's not a stellar report card but I do believe our league has accomplished much these past four years. Thank you for all your support. It has been a great experience.

Jean

ADVOCACY

The following report, from LWVNY Board member Aimee Allaud, was circulated among NYS local league presidents.

April 29, 2010

Governor Paterson Signs Eight Bills Into Law Includes Bills to Improve and Simplify Ballot Access

Governor David A. Paterson signed eight bills into law this week, including two bills that will improve and simplify ballot access in New York State.

The Governor signed A.4015/S.5988 into law, which will provide that an affidavit ballot submitted on Election Day at a polling place will constitute an application to register to vote or to change political party enrollment. Previously, voters whose names were either not found in the poll books, or whose names are not listed as being enrolled in a party in a

primary election, were required to cast affidavit ballots. This bill codifies into statute the current custom of using the affidavit ballot as a registration or change of enrollment tool.

Governor Paterson also signed into law his Program Bill No. 63, A.5276-B/S.2868, which will simplify the absentee ballot process by removing a requirement that the voter provide certain information on the reason for the voter's absence. Currently, the absentee ballot application form requires that individuals provide specific information about the nature of their disabilities or why they won't be in their polling district on Election Day, as well as name and addresses of employers and specific information regarding whereabouts. This bill will repeal many of the provisions of Election Law 8-400 that dictate what information voters must provide when applying for an absentee ballot.

CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU ALL FOR YOUR HELP IN THIS SUCCESS! (17 years in the making!)

“Albany on the Record”

On May 5th Jean McGarry, Jacki Moriarty and Cindy Lanzetta traveled to Albany to attend “Albany on the Record.” The LWVNYS joined with many other organizations such as NYPIRG, Common Cause/NY, and the Brennan Center for Justice to get public officials to address the problems of Albany and to ask how each would restore public trust. Among those asked to attend were the Governor, Attorney General, Comptroller, and Legislative Leaders. All participated except Attorney General Andrew Cuomo.

Jay Gallagher of the Albany Times Union served as moderator. Here are a couple highlights. Responding to the need for term limits in the Legislature, the Governor did not feel this was a viable solution to fix Albany. Rather than worrying about the next election, public officials should stand up to their convictions and do what best serves the public interest. Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver was asked about the need for less partisanship in redistricting to insure more competitive elections. The Speaker replied that most cumbersome and complicating to redistricting were constitutional restraints and Supreme Court Decisions. He added further that competitive districts were impossible to exist in some parts of the State.

While solutions were not abundant, the dissatisfaction with Albany was resounding. Perhaps it will serve as a first step in restoring the public trust.

Jean McGarry

Shared Services Study

County Executive Announces: The Town Of Saugerties To Partner With The County In Streamlining Highway Services – see:

http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/pressreleases/News%20Release%20Shared%20Services%20Saugerties%20FINAL%205_6_10.pdf

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
- Frank Cassetta's concise 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

OBSERVER CORPS

Ulster County Legislature

The monthly meeting convened at 7:00 pm by Chairman Wadnola and adjourned at 8:40 pm. Legislators Sheeley and Stoeckeler wer absent. Legislator Aiello left at 8:01 (*after the vote on Resolution 146.*)

Remarks were received from 8 members of the public who, primarily, advocated for approval of a labor agreement between the County and middle management personnel. (See discussion on Resolution 146 below and under the Budget and Finance section.) Carl Chipman, Supervisor of

the Town of Rochester, speaking on behalf of the UC Association of Town Supervisors, spoke against a proposal to alter the method of allocating certain public assistance costs.

Most of the resolutions before the legislature were adopted unanimously or with minimal opposition. Items approved included appointments to a number of boards, setting dates for public hearings, amending the list of employees required to make disclosures, approval of various road reconstruction projects, equipment and related financing,

A notable authorization involved authorization of the purchase of an "E911" system to replace the out-of-date "911" system. ([Resolution 145](#)) The equipment will be acquired from reserve funds accumulated from a special charge imposed on phone bills for several years.

Another contract of note, ([Resolution 149](#)) authorized the purchase of mobile computer software & training to permit interconnection with other police agencies and the County's record management system. The contract is wholly funded by a Homeland Security grant.

Readers will recall that the Legislature is to be reduced from 33 to 23 members for the term beginning 2012 and Chairman Wadnola's proposal to change the target to 21 members. Although his resolution had been on the agenda, he withdrew it before the meeting..

Taken out of order, [Resolution 146](#), *Approving An Agreement Between The County Of Ulster And The Ulster County Staff Association (UCSA) For The Period January 1, 2006 Through December 31, 2010* was the first item on the Non-Consent Agenda to be addressed. Several legislators spoke strongly in favor of the agreement, emphasizing the substantial delay in reaching accord, the reasonableness of the terms and the degree of compromise underpinning the successful negotiation process. Four legislators, Hayes, Maloney, Roberts and Sweeney, voted against the measure but only Legislator Maloney spoke about his reasoning.

Touching on a number of issues, including the economic stress Ulster County taxpayers are suffering, Legislator Maloney made particular note of the lack of involvement of the Legislature or any of its members in the negotiation stage. He was mindful of the structure imposed by the terms of the Charter under which the county now operates, and expressed his thought that, once established, the Charter Revision Commission undertake to consider this issue. (§C-5 of the Charter provides for the formation of such a commission within 5 years after enactment of the Charter. Our Advocacy Committee has included within its purposes the preservation of the integrity of the Charter. Proposals that shift the delegation of authority under the Charter are of interest to the committee.)

The only resolution that failed to pass had been proposed by Legislators Donaldson and Loughran, both representing portions of the City of Kingston. Entitled [Resolution 147](#) *Directing That The Cost Of All Of The Assistance And Care For Which Towns And Cities Are Responsible Shall Be A Charge On The County Social Services District And Administered Under The Direction Of The County Commissioner Of Social Services, Pursuant To Section 72 Of The Social Services Law*. Legislator Donaldson spoke in favor of the bill pointing out a variety of inequities of the existing system and distinctions cities like Kingston have compared to towns within the county. He mentioned the many homeless individuals and families from throughout the county receiving temporary housing assistance within the city. He spoke of public road maintenance and public transportation differences. In like manner, Legislator Loughlin spoke in favor of the measure and included reference to costs of county services levied upon city residents despite not receiving any benefit of those services. Legislator Bernardo took exception to characterizations of town residents she described as unprofessional. Legislator Zimet lamented that, once again, this vexing problem will not be addressed nor resolved. Legislator Gregorius spoke on the inequities of the intertwined Safety Net and sales tax allocations that are at the heart of his fiscal concerns. He, and several others, called for a bi-partisan examination of the matter. Legislator Provenzano pointed out the 14 years that have passed without dealing with the problem. She also pointed out that, without City consent, the County can only levy 1½ % sales tax. Thereupon the question was called and a long roll ordered upon the demand of Legislator Donaldson. A new round of statements on the question ensued with few members adding to the previous comments.

The vote, ultimately taken, defeated the legislation 10 for, 20 against. Legislators Briggs, Donaldson, Hochberg, Loughran, Madsen, Maloney, Richard Parete, Robert Parete, Provenzano and Wadnola voted in favor of the resolution.

Jim McGarry

**Governmental
Services,
Environmental
&
Administrative
Committee**

Date: May 17, 2010 Start Time: 6:02 p.m. Finish Time: 6:40 p.m.
Library Conference room, 6th Floor, County Office Building

Mr. Kevin Roberts, Chairman, called the meeting to order followed by the approval of the minutes from the April 19, 2010 meeting.

The resolution regarding the reduction of the number of legislative districts from 23 to 21 was withdrawn by the sponsor. All other regular resolutions passed.

All late resolutions were passed. The late resolution regarding the appointment of members to the Periodic Compensation Review Committee was amended for a minority appointment of Mr. Donald Bell. The LWV of the Mid-Hudson Region had been asked to make a recommendation. (Donald is a member of the LWV of the Mid-Hudson Region).

Ms. Amanda LaValle, Coordinator, Department of the Environment, discussed several projects, including: the annual MS4 storm water report and many items under the non-point source subject. These items include training, public education and outreach, workshops, grants for homeowner raingardens, county facilities practices and discharge violations.

The Environmental Subcommittee was adopted at the previous meeting. Following this meeting, Environmental Subcommittee is to meet for an organizational meeting.

Ulster County Legislature: Environmental Subcommittee

Date: May 17, 2010 Start Time: 6:50 p.m. Finish Time: 7:23 p.m.

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

This organizational meeting focused on procedures, a review of items previously discussed in the main committee and several projects discussed by Ms. Amanda LaValle, Coordinator, Department for the Environment. The current projects include: a Sojourner Truth Ulster Landing Park trails day, flood area teardowns, an energy and sustainability block grant, an energy newsletter to Ulster County employees, and an Ulster County computer recycling program.

The regular time for this meeting will be at 5:30 p.m. prior to the Governmental Services meeting.

Document prepared by Vic Melville, 5/24/10

**Economic
Development
and Tourism**

Date: May 3, 2010 Start Time: 4:47 p.m. Finish Time: 5:55 p.m.
Library Conference room, 6th Floor, County Office Building

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

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

A draft resolution setting a public hearing for June 15, 2010, on the addition of lands to Agricultural Districts passed.

A draft resolution re-establishing the Ulster County Railroad Advisory Committee passed.

Mr. Carl Meyer, Co-CEO, The Solar Energy Consortium (TSEC), made a report on activities related to several firms. There was a discussion about public funding and how many jobs have been produced – encouraging but challenging. The primary goal of TSEC has shifted to coordinating manufacturing organizations and developing R&D partnerships from a previous emphasis as a research center.

Tourism Committee: There is a tourism conference to be held at the Kingston Holiday Inn on May 4, 2010. Legislator David Donaldson asked about the separation of reported responses from the ulstercountyalive.com website and the NYC transit ads.

Mr. Lance Matteson, President, Ulster County Development Corporation (UCDC), thanked the committee on five recently passed resolutions. He reviewed a recent manufacturing conference held locally in which there was discussion of support for manufacturing and response from the manufacturing about their needs.

Across the county there is a variety of energy initiatives, programs and projects. Of note, PV is big in Ulster County residential and coming in the commercial area. There was discussion about tours and other activities including conferences to engage the public and public officials on solar. An audit report is due in June about county facilities. The recent energy conference (co-sponsored by the LWV of the Mid-Hudson Region) held at SUNY New Paltz was discussed; however, the P.A.C.E. program was not mentioned. A resolution was discussed that would support a bill being initiated by Assemblyman Kevin Cahill.

Document prepared by Vic Melville, 5/24/10

Legislative Programs, Education & Community Services Committee

Date: May 4, 2010 Start Time: 5:05 p.m. Finish Time: 6:33 p.m.
Library Conference room, 6th Floor, County Office Building

Mr. Wayne Harris, Chairman, called the meeting to order, followed by roll call and approval of the April 6, 2010 minutes.

A resolution appointing members to the Ulster County Community Action Committee, Inc. passed. Legislator Donald Gregorius requested the weatherization program (funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, abbreviated ARRA) information is widely publicized and distributed through churches, etc. OK with the committee.

Legislator Carl Belfiglio requested the committee minutes be available one week before the meeting. OK by the committee.

After Mr. Mark Komdat, Dean of Administration, SUNY Ulster, was introduced, a resolution was passed on the notice of the public hearing on the tentative budget of UCCC for the year 2010-2011 on Tuesday, June 8, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. He reported a 1-2% increase in enrollment next year.

Ms. Lydia Reidy, Executive Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County, reviewed current programs and activities, including farm labor housing, golf day, career days, the healthy Kingston kids program, the Master Gardeners program, and the Plant a Row for the Hungry program.

Ms. Grace Thompson, executive of the Court Appointed Special Advocates of Ulster County (CASA) addressed the committee on the purpose and needs of the program. The program now has 22 volunteers and the care results in significant cost avoidance.

The meeting concluded with a discussion of the upcoming budget: the process, issues, and relationship to the county executive process. A July "draft" proposal is expected.

Ms. Nico Lang, Director of Programs & Arts Services, Dutchess County Arts Council, discussed DCAC funding and the program activities and awards in Ulster County.

Document prepared by Vic Melville, 5/24/10

Public Works and Capital Projects Committee

The meeting was called to order on May 3, 2010 at 7:00 PM and Meeting at 7:45 PM. All committee members were in attendance. Bob Sudlow attended as the executive liaison to the committee. Minutes of the April 5 meeting were approved.

A resolution calling for a capital project to reconstruct various roads in Ulster County for \$350,000 was passed. A resolution calling for the purchase (\$475,000) of highway equipment for the Department of Public Works, was passed. Both will be submitted to the UC Legislature and if approved, will be funded by bonds. A resolution authorizing the continued rental of space for the Department of Mental Health satellite office in Highland was passed.

An issue concerning new guardrails and signage in Old Hurley has been handled by the executive.

Frank Felicello raised a concern that the employees of the public works department were anxious about future plans and their job security. After discussion, it was felt that the employees should receive a briefing on the status and uncertainties of the future, since plans cannot yet be made solid. He also requested that the committee receive more information on the work being done in the county. Bob Sudlow agreed to provide the committee with the progress reports they used to receive, to be distributed prior to committee meetings, and to make sure members had more information if they requested it through him.

Lee Ridgway, Observer Corps

Budget and Finance

The Legislative Budget and Finance Committee which met April 20, 2010 dealt primarily with resolution 96: referenced an agreement between the County and the Ulster County Staff Association for the period January 1, 2006-December 31, 2010. **[ED NOTE: This resolution is renumbered as Resolution 146 considered at the May 18th meeting of the County Legislature]**

The same committee was pre-occupied with the same matter for the most part when it met on May 11, 2010.

This summary combines these two sessions. Note: The summary of the committee's April 13 meeting contained in the April Commentator contained the first reference to resolution 96. Brenda Bartholomew, the Personnel Director, gave a detailed explanation of the new contract.

While the committee spent an extensive amount of time with resolution 96, it did consider several other resolutions all of which were passed.

At the meeting on April 13 after an explanation had been given as to what would be involved in this new contract: a 13% increase for 2010 (the employees-middle managers, had not had a raise since 2005); there was no retroactive sum, no compounding of interest and the flextime principal

had been dropped...the dollar amount involved was \$517,698.

Legislators Gregorius, Malloney and Harris had raised concerns about the process that was involved, i.e., County Executive now negotiates the contracts and the county legislature approves, a process which is a result of the adoption of the county charter. This was viewed as a new method of handling matters and the legislators felt they needed more time to review the process. Therefore a motion to table the motion until the next meeting was passed.

Today, April 20, the committee prepared to take up the original motion again.

During the discussion on the motion the members of the committee were obviously concerned about why some members wanted to delay voting again and as one member express it "moving on". There were those committee members who indicated they had received calls from other legislators who had questions about the contract. At no time did Chairman Gerentine or any of the other legislators who stated that they had had calls ever reveal who the legislators were who had called or what the questions were.

Others could not understand why anyone on the committee, if they had questions, had not done their due diligence, found out the answers, and thus be prepared to vote at the meeting... Legislator Lomita voiced this view.

Legislator Felicello, in his capacity as acting Chairman of the County Legislature, advised the committee that Chairman Wadnola had requested that the committee postpone its vote until questions were answered.

When it was determined that the Personnel Officer had attended all the contract negotiation meetings, the question raised was why then, given that and the fact that she was present now, couldn't questions be asked now. It appeared that the idea was to have the Personnel Officer attend the Republican caucus. Legislator Hansut noted that having spoken to the County Executive some three times, the latter had agreed to have the negotiator speak to the Budget and Finance Committee on May 11.

Legislators Sheeley and Provenzano both felt this matter was being handled unfairly and was wrong, the latter feeling it was all political, and that the committee should vote and move forward.

Legislators Hansut and Feliciano expressed concerns about how the contract money had been provided for and that they did not believe there were enough votes on either side of the aisle to pass the resolution. Motion to delay the vote until May was passed.

Before the committee moved on to other business, a member of the middle manager group from the UC Mental Health Out-Patient Unit spoke to the committee. She was very impassioned in telling the committee that its action in not passing the resolution was incredibly disrespectful, unfeeling, and regrettable.

When the Budget and Finance Committee met on May 11, Chairman Gerentine announced that the labor negotiator dealing with resolution 96 was present and that it would be necessary to go into executive session. Some 25 minutes later the committee was called back to order. Chairman Gerentine stated that no action had been taken on whatever had been discussed at the executive session.

Again Resolution 96 was dealt with. At this meeting Legislator Zimet was recognized by the chair to advise the committee of her intent to present an amendment to the resolution and its content. Since she is not a member of the committee the amendment must be offered from the floor at the meeting of the Legislature on May 18. The content of the amendment was to show that there are anticipated savings in 2010 at this time of \$800,000 (would be deposited in the General Fund); that the \$517,698 to cover the salaries would come from that amount. Her intent was to deal with any perception on the part of the public as to where this money was coming from.

During discussion which also involved comments from Art Smith, County Budget Director resulted in the determination that this money should come from the \$18 2/3 million dollars in the General Fund, the sum, which is known, not anticipated, and had been determined at the end of 2009.

The present resolution 96 was passed.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

The Budget and Finance Committee was convened by Legislative Chairman Gernetine on May 18, 2010 at 5:20 and adjourned at 5:55. Members present Legislator Sheeley was absent.

Resolution 145 dealing with authorizing a purchase of a new E911 emergency communications phone system. The committee was advised passage by May 30 would save \$10,000. Passed.

Resolution 141 was a memorializing resolution that supported a resolution in the NYS Assembly and NYS Senate that would allow the county clerks to receive 12.7% of every internet transaction that takes place in UC. County Clerk Nina Postupack and reported on this at the April 20 meeting.

She had indicated then that as much as \$275,000 could be received by UC of these bills pass.
Passed

The remainder of the meeting dealt with Resolution 147 as it referred to the Safety Net Program handled by DSS. The various committee members offered opinions and observations: determination of what to do should be made by the county legislature, therefore while some committee members did not agree with the idea of the county taking over the Safety Net Program costs, the resolution should be brought to the floor of the legislature. A second observation expressed and supported by more than one member: payment of the program should be discussed in conjunction with discussion on the sales tax and how it is distributed among the county, towns and city of Kingston. In conjunction with this it was suggested that Chairman Wadnola, who was in attendance, should appoint a committee to discuss this matter. Since negotiating a contract is the province of the county executive, it was also suggested that he be involved.

Legislator Gerentine noted that he had sat on the committee which had previously arranged the sales tax distribution; further that committee had recognized that Kingston had safety net problems which results in committee approving increasing amount of sales tax city of Kingston would receive from 10% to 11 ½ % at that time. This comment appeared to come as a surprise to some committee members.

Additionally, Elliott Auerbach, UC Comptroller, provided upon request the following: His office reviewed 4,240 bills which initially was handled by two people at DSS over a period of six weeks. His staff found 91 incorrect bills in 2009 which involved 40 people. Total amount \$1,200,000 of which \$64,000 was in error. These bills have been rebilled to the correct municipalities. This is all in reference to the Safety Net Program costs. The year 2008 is now being reviewed.

DSS will now use the Real Property Screen to check these costs. Legislator Maloney requested that Budget Director Art Smith be asked to explain the chart that was handed out with respects to the costs.

Budget and Finance Committee did not support the resolution, but it will be brought to the floor of the legislature for resolution.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

Health and Human Services

The Legislative Health and Human Services Committee was convened by Chairman Frey at 6:34 on May 13, 2010 and adjourned at 7:49. Members present. Legislator Briggs absent.

Minutes of previous meeting approved.

Principal items dealt with were a presentation by Rita Woods of DSS on the Early Intervention Program and Pre-School Intervention and a resolution dealing with the Safety Net Program.

Ms. Wood noted that the programs deal primarily with children under 5, who have potential developmental problems. There are a variety of services available to families who find themselves with children needing such, i.e., speech, physical, occupational therapies, counseling, special education, individual education plans, etc. There is no cost to the families so involved; but costs are covered by municipalities (county, cities), NYSDOH, Medicaid. Children may be referred to these programs by parents, doctors, child care providers, pre-nursery school teachers.

The second item was the resolution originally submitted by Legislators Donaldson and Loughran referring to the Safety Net Program and having UC handle any of the costs presently handled by the towns and cities in UC and administered under the direction of the UC Commissioner of Social Services.

There were a variety of comments and each of the members commend, along with observations about the charts showing the allocation of monies under the program as it is presently handled and if the county over saw the program's costs.

At one point the chairman suggested tabling for 30 days to obtain more information. However, when the motion to pass was made, Chairman Frey voted no, Legislator Petit voted no...she wanted more time to study the financial charts, Legislator Ronk voted no, Legislator Parete voted yes (would do so on floor as well), Legislator Harris voted yes (but only to bring it to the floor, as he believes that is where this resolution should be discussed by the full Legislature), Legislator Stoeckeler voted yes.

While the above resulted in a tie vote, the resolution will nevertheless go before the full Legislature as it was submitted on time for consideration.

Other resolutions were passed.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

Board of Health

The UC Board of Health was convened by President Dr. Stellato at 7 PM on 5-10-2010 and adjourned at 8:06. Members present: but David Clegg and Marion Ostrander were absent. Other attendees: Dr. Heller, Medical Examiner (ME), Kevin DuMond, Environmental Sanitation, Katrina Kouhart, Dr. Hasbrouck's secretary. Dr. Hasbrouck arrived later but communicated via speaker phone earlier on.

Minutes for previous meetings in March and April were approved.

Dr. Heller reported as follows: he attended a one day coronor's 101 training in Binghamton; county coroners were there but not all MDs, but were ME. He found it to be generally informative. Locally, the ME's office has been busy, generally dealing with unattended deaths at home; several accidents and suicides. Met with several funeral directors today and he has established an on-call group as well as a rotational order process so that each is more equally involved with the work from the MEs office. In general his office is in the process of developing both process and procedure for everyone who deals with the ME's office, i.e., everything from badges to jackets, to whom to call to how to obtain death certificates. Dr. Hasbrouck re-enforced this development as a means of improving what he referred to as a "dysfunctional system" in order for such matters to run smoothly.

In discussion it was established that generally death certificates can be located through the county clerk's office

Kevin DuMond of the Environmental Services office reported as follows: the UCDOH is in the process of getting the primary lead grant worth \$240,000. The grant RFP submitted by Dr. Hasbrouck is presently being reviewed by the NYSDOH.

Recently the UCDOH was audited by the NYSDOH Audit Division over a period of 2 days. The result: the state group indicated at its exit interview that it was very pleased at the way that the local group has been turned around since the last audit last year. Mr. DuMond hopes to have the state's written report for the next meeting.

The bid for the copper/silver installation process at the Golden Hill Health Care Center to control Legionella has been awarded to a company named Enrich from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DuMond noted that it may be the end of the summer before the Sanitary Code update is completed as the County Attorney's office is overwhelmed with work and this is the busiest time of the year for his group coming up, i.e., inspection of children's camps. Nevertheless, his team will work on the memo from the County Attorney's office regarding the remaining portions that need to be worked on.

Dr. Hasbrouck reported that UCDOH had received a special award from the NYSDOH Commissioner for its response to the H1N1 virus situation.

The remainder of the meeting dealt with a report from Dr. Hasbrouck regarding the efforts of the UCDOH to comply with County Executive Hein's Taxpayer First Initiative direction to it.

The 4 field offices: Ellenville, remains open; but the ones in Saugerties, New Paltz and Kingston will be closed; then a larger site will be opened in Kingston, once such is obtained and renovated, which will serve all three of these areas. Renovation to be done by Buildings and Grounds, so that the October 1 deadline is met. The NYS DOH must also approve.

There will also be "mobile sites". Apparently churches are being considered as they would charge only a small fee (\$100 per time used or per month) to handle immunization clinics or WIC and only need a simple agreement. Dr. Tack raised the question about using the schools instead since they are public buildings, have ample insurance, which Dr. Hasbrouck commented that a more involved agreement, MOA was needed and insurance aspects did not make such arrangements as useful.

The sale of the county home health aid license has been arranged to Will Care. Apparently it will add the 40 patients that the county has to its 35 to make a 75 bed responsibility. This sale will involve both purchasing and management contracts in order to meet the June 30 county closing date regarding the CHHA license.

A discussion ensued following this portion of the report. Dr. Tack indicated his concerns about the fact that there are now only two "medallions" in UC authorized to provide care to Medicare recipients, Willcare and Always There, where there had been 4 (3 private, 1 county). His concern was also that having only two would reduce the ability to provide the necessary personnel to provide the service that may be needed by those who are medicare recipients.

The last item of business that was briefly discussed related to a case apparently involving a diagnosis of meningitis. It appeared from the discussion that the length of time from when the person was found unconscious in a public street to the hospital to the diagnosis and then locating the emt personnel who initially handled the person was quite long. Dr. Tack was concerned that there should be a process developed to handle potential public health problems that could develop in situations like this.

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 5-18-2010 and adjourned at 10:07. Eleven members present.

Initially the County Executive Michael Hein offered remarks re the progress of the shared services project. He reiterated the statement that no political pressure would be applied to any town; he wishes the process to be as transparent as possible; believes it has value; willing to make tough decisions; willing to have discussions with any of the members; short term agreements may work. Mr. Valk stated he was glad to hear that the towns still have home rule. Commented that highway superintendents had a problem with county numbers. County Executive continued to emphasize that it may work for some and not for others.

There appeared to be concern and general agreement among the supervisors that bringing the press in at the first meeting, January 4, was inappropriate. Better to have made decisions first and then called the press in. County Executive reiterated his position on transparency. The supervisors agreed that communication between the supervisors and the county vastly improved over previous periods.

Discussion then went on to other topics...the Walkway which is a benefit to Ulster County. T/Lloyd is seeing more business generally, more jobs, have had to hire more police. There are no signs. Mr. Hein said that if the DOT and the Thruway do not come through with signs (apparently there are none), he said that he will arrange for.

There were three other speakers:

Michael Berg from Family had two points in his talk: Family is sponsoring a county wide food drive in order to replenish 37 food pantries in UC. Has had support from UC and the Chambers of Commerce of Ulster County and New Paltz. He asked the towns to provide space to store such items as canned goods. The drive will be held during the end of June and the July 4 weekend. He also noted that the hours of operation of the pantries have been changed primarily because working families were unable to make use of the pantries as easily under previous hours. Long term program deals with keeping seniors in their homes. Family has sent out 1000 surveys, about 200 have been returned. He introduced Tobie Kravitz, who founded the Jewish Family Services group. She explained that they are looking to the towns for assistance in helping to keep seniors in place (Staying in Place). There will be a gathering at UCCC on June 15, from 9-12; the agenda will allow for discussion on ways each community can work to provide those services to seniors who may live in the community.

The second speaker was Krista Barringer from the county Youth Bureau. She reviewed the process to be followed so that the communities can show what they do in order to ensure continued funding.

Jonathan Drapkin, President and CEO of Pattern for Progress, spoke last. He advised that whether study on shared services over or not he was willing to work with them on determining what if any services they might be interested in sharing with each other, besides those from the study (he noted that Mr. Hein was aware of this point).

Before adjourning, there was a brief discussion on the Safety Net program and the group's position on whether funding it should continue as is or if the county should take it over. The group voted not to support the resolution which is to be discussed at the county legislature.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

For information from the Association of Towns of New York, check the web site at www.nytowns.org/

**MEMBERSHIP
NEWS**

See our Annual Report at midhudson.ny.lwvnet.org/files/50th_Annual_Report.pdf or contact a board member for a printed copy.

Congratulations to Lee Cane who has been appointed by the Ulster County Legislature to the Golden Hill Task Force. The League has previously studied this issue and will undertake an updated study next year. The push for action strengthened with County Executive Mike Hein's [2010 State of The County](#) report and Fred Wadnola's [Chairman's Message](#) on March 2, 2010 resulting in [Resolution No. 115](#) adopted on April 20, 2010. For information on the May 25th summit on county-run nursing homes convened by the New York State Association of Counties and hosted by Ulster County, check the Daily Freeman May 13th issue. (You can search the archives online at www.freemanonline.com/ or click [HERE](#))

Don Bell has been appointed to serve on the Ulster County Periodic Compensation Review Committee. This is a new committee required by the newly implemented Ulster County Charter. Congratulations to Don & Lee.

LOST AND FOUND:

A watch was found at Wiltwyck after our Anniversary Luncheon. If you are missing your watch, please contact Jean McGarry



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)**

League of Women Voters
Mid-Hudson Region
PO Box 3564
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May 2010
Commentator