



Commentator

April 2011

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

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

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CALENDAR		
2011		
APRIL		
5	7:45-9:45 pm	Board Meeting at Gloria Plasker's, 106 Park St., Hurley
6	6:00 pm	Shared Services study group for Ulster County at Jacki Moriarty's, 167 Apple Hill Rd, Hurley
7	2:30 pm	Resource Development meeting at Margaret Sellers's, 80 Ringtop Rd., Kingston
12	1:00 pm	Observer Corps meeting at Margaret Sellers's, 80 Ringtop Rd., Kingston
13	3:00 pm	Shared Service study group for Dutchess County (location TBA) Further info: Ellie Charwat at 462-7061
19	7:30 pm	Tentative: Viewing /Discussion of the film "Carbon Nation." Back Stage Productions, 323 Wall Street, Kingston
28	7:00 pm	Fair redistricting efforts in Dutchess and statewide with LWNYS legislative director, Barbara Bartoletti. Poughkeepsie Quaker Meeting House, 249 Hooker Ave., POK
MAY		
3	7:45-9:45 pm	Board Meeting at Gloria Plasker's, 106 Park St., Hurley
5	2:30 pm	Resource Development meeting at Margaret Sellers's, 80 Ringtop Rd., Kingston
10	1:00 pm	Observer Corps meeting at Margaret Sellers's, 80 Ringtop Rd., Kingston
18	6:00-8:30 pm	ANNUAL MEETING at Esopus Town Library, Port Ewen (starts with potluck supper)
JUNE		
5	1-4 pm	Annual Luncheon at Wiltwyck Golf Club, Kingston
7	7:45-9:45 pm	Board Meeting at Gloria Plasker's, 106 Park St., Hurley
9	2:30 pm	Resource Development meeting at Margaret Sellers's, 80 Ringtop Rd., Kingston
14	1:00 pm	Observer Corps meeting at Margaret Sellers's, 80 Ringtop Rd., Kingston
TBA	4 - 8 pm	Board 2011-12 PLANNING Meeting

Check our Calendar 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>

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

PREZ SAYS

I joined the League in my late 20s, and I've been blessed with many years of training and advice from wise and experienced League leaders. So when the state League president asked me to be state coordinator of coaches to local leagues, I said "yes" more to pay the the League back than because it was something I was eager to do.

But then I spent a two days in Providence last month with 30+ other state and national coaches, LWVUS staff and board members, and our passionate and down-to-earth national president, Elisabeth MacNamara, and I felt blessed all over again. The good humor, intelligence, honesty, and commitment of the crowd reminded me again why wherever I've lived, the League has always been "home." So many familiar issues came up in conversations - climate change, redistricting, candidate forums - you'd ALL have been right at home.

The weekend was about the LWVUS partnership program with state leagues called MRI (Membership Recruitment Initiative). It was encouraging to hear that the staff and volunteer coaches have been constantly refining their training as they learn more about the needs of the local leagues, and the MRI now includes a strong thread of leadership development as well as training in membership recruitment and retention. They've discovered that many leagues are so busy keeping up with all the issues they care about, we don't stop and figure out how to involve more members and develop future leaders. We fail to ASK.

So I'm asking! Interested in becoming more involved in League? Just let me - or any League leader - know.

As this Commentator shows, being an observer at meetings and possibly sharing your notes, is one of many activities. Other members participate in studies, write letters to the editor, "work" the county legislature, interview state and federal elected officials, put on public forums, moderate candidate meetings, do PR and fundraising...the list is long and there's bound to be something just right for you.

We'll try to do a better job of reaching out to you, but please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

With the Annual Meeting coming up, we wanted to let you know that while our League will continue to act upon state and national LWV positions, particularly climate change, health care, taxes, and good government, the board also recommends continuation in Ulster and Dutchess Counties of the Shared Services study and a new study on Solid Waste Management. It also recommends that we continue to monitor and act upon revisions to the Ulster County Charter based upon our position in support of the charter.

Dare

PROGRAM NEWS

Redistricting Update

Only for a few months every TEN years do you have such an important opportunity to make sure that your vote actually counts. Redistricting efforts are going on at the state and county levels right now and we hope you're telling your elected officials that you want a fair, non-partisan process.

On Thursday, April 28, at 7 pm at the **Poughkeepsie Friends (Quaker) Meeting House at 249 Hooker Ave., Poughkeepsie**, we'll have our **state LWV legislative director, Barbara Bartoletti**, here to talk about what's happening at the state level. A bill sponsored by Sen. Bonacic has passed in the state Senate, thus allowing those who voted for it to say they have lived up to their pledge to work for fair redistricting. The problem is that it requires an amendment to the state constitution which means that fair redistricting will be put off for another decade. There are better bills out there and we need to insist that both the Assembly and Senate establish fair redistricting NOW. Go to www.lwvny.org for further details on legislation.

This meeting will also give Dutchess County voters a chance to organize efforts to monitor their county's process which, alas, is controlled by the county legislature. Citizen pressure on those drawing the lines is essential.

Meanwhile in Ulster County a non-partisan Commission on Reapportionment was set in place by the new charter is underway for the first time ever and our president, Dare Thompson, is one of the 7 members. The Commission is due to present preliminary plans to the legislature on April 12 and intends to have a final map drawn by the end of April.

Keep an eye of the Commission's work at www.co.ulster.ny.us/reapportionment/index.html. Don't hesitate to email your thoughts to the Commission or go to the Planning Department in the County Office Building and try your own hand with the mapping software. Your input is welcome. (Aren't those lovely words?! Congrats to Ulster!)

Solid Waste

On March 29th a group of us (Cindy Lanzett, Emilie Hauser, Manna Jo Greene, Dare Thompson, and new LWV member, Jolanda Jansen) met to discuss solid waste issues. Some of you may not be aware of the important role the League of Women Voters had in shaping the Solid Waste Plan for Ulster County. It is now been some 20 years and these Solid Waste Plans need to be revisited.

Add to that the fact that Dutchess and Ulster County are both wrestling with public solid waste authorities that are falling deeper and deeper into debt. We decided there was a lot to look into and the League can play an important role.

We have an experienced solid core group already and are excited to have representation from Dutchess County in Jolanda! We hope other League members will consider joining this proposed Study Group. We will be offering more details at the Annual Meeting.

Cindy Lanzett

Climate Change

- YES, THERE'S HOPE!

Frustrated and depressed about the general lack of concern about climate change? Well, here's an "upper" for you.

The League, along with Clearwater and others, is hosting a viewing of Peter Byck's 80 minute film, "Carbon Nation," provided by the Kingston Library. A discussion will follow.

This "optimistic, solutions-based, non-preachy, non-partisan big tent film" will show that convincing people about the reality of climate change isn't even necessary. More and more people are seeing that tackling climate change "boosts the economy, increases national and energy security and promotes health and a clean environment."

So be of good cheer and high hopes and come see what we can all do together to support the revolution. There's no charge, so bring friends!

Tues., April 19, 7:30 pm, Back Stage Productions, 323 Wall Street, Kingston

"Justice and our Justice Courts"

The UC Judicial Conference was held at SUNY, New Paltz on March 23, 2011 from 8:30AM to 12:30 PM. Note: this was the date to which the January 12 session had been postponed to due to a snow storm. The session was adjourned at 12:10.

The session was convened by Dr. Gerry Benjamin of CRREO, which was the sponsor of the event along with co-sponsors League of Women Voters of the Mid-Hudson Region and the UC Bar Association.

Initially Dr. Benjamin explained the background to how the work that was done on municipal courts was arranged. The study was part of the over all work initiated by the UC Executive Michael Hein and conducted through Pattern for Progress which is headed by Jonathan Drapkin. In addition to municipal courts, the study included highway departments and planning and economic development.

Dr. Benjamin further commented that the above study was about collaboration. Specifically as it applied to this part of the study how collaboration could be achieved as well as efficiencies through the justice court system. He noted that SUNY, New Paltz was a neutral center at which an exchange of ideas could more easily be achieved.

The agenda for the morning session was divided into three parts which were each followed by time allotted for Q & A. As each part was completed the group was provided with break time. Refreshments were available throughout the session.

The first portion of the session was handled by Professor Sydney Cresswell, Director of the Intergovernmental Studies Program of the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy, SUNY, Albany. Dr. Cresswell's talk centered on an explanation of the methods used by the group at the Institute in developing the material on the justice courts.

The next two items on the agenda were two panels:

Panel 1 made up of former Justice Cox, Justice Hunt, Justice Bacon and Dr. Benjamin as moderator.

Justice Cox reviewed the study and mentioned several aspects with which he did not agree and with which he took exception:

- emphasized that the business of the Town Justice Courts (tjc) was to administer justice;
- no separation of the branches of government is recognized in the report;
- no other branch of government is subject to costs;
- town justice's salaries can not be reduced during their tenure per state law;
- not the town court's job to pay for any of the groups that appear in town court, i.e., sheriff, DA, etc.
- it is the voters job to elect the most qualified candidate as town justice;
- to develop a regional court would require an amendment to Article 9 of the NYS Constitution.

Justice Hunt of Shawangunk noted that he like the report:

- very little of town budget spent on town justice court;
- the Office of Court Administration should stop telling the town justices to stay away from the town boards, they are part of the town;
- town justice courts can be more user friendly;
- should ignore all the technology stuff;
- town justice courts can share space with other divisions of town government;
- "sure, look at efficiencies": examples: video conferencing for inmates like the state does; plea bargaining by mail: it's done elsewhere; integrate into municipal work, i.e., be involved in the budget process.

Justice Bacon of New Paltz noted that town justice courts are established by the NYS Constitution. His other observations:

- agreed with Justice Cox that business of the town justice court is to administer justice;
- communication between the T/Board and TJC could be improved as to what the latter does and what its needs are;
- danger of viewing TJC as source of revenue against role of what TJC is there for which is to provide justice;
- more dollars should to municipalities;
- avoid adversarial roles between the T/Board and TJC.

He also commented on the large number of cases that the two TJC in New Paltz have due to the closeness to the NYS Thruway and SUNY, New Paltz: 740,000 collections in 2009; 750,000 collections in 2010, of which more than half goes to the state in the form of surcharges. He was not sure of what the dollars were spent on.

As far as the suggestion to develop a regional court: he said a constitutional change would be needed. He is against creating such a court as it would concentrate more power in one person that advisable; the concept could lead to the development of cronyism.

During the Q & A, Justice Lamb of Saugerties commented that originally when he read the report he was not a "happy camper", but he now thanked Dr. Cresswell, et al for the work done recognizing that the data collection was difficult. However, he said what was missing was acknowledging that the justices are constitutional officers which position deserves respect.

Dr. Lester noted that there had been a recent article in the NY Times on town justice courts which should be noted.

Edward Van Der Water of the NYS Magistrates Association noted that the association had a report, Action Plan-Judicial Courts-suggesting how the justice courts could be improved.

Jeff Moran, T/Woodstock Supervisor asked why there had to be two justices. The answer given: a matter of law, but depending upon need and work load, the number could be reduced from 2 to 1.

Dr. Benjamin's conclusion for the first panel: he did not feel the separation of powers is the issue but rather collaboration among those involved. His observations: that in the absence of measuring then one can't get performance; that coices must be made to better deliver our priorities; these are concerns that exist in an environment of constrained resources. His final comment here: can the constitutional requirements that justice courts must follow in anyway be subjected to budgetary considerations.

Panel 2 made up of Robert Sudlow, Deputy County Executive, representing Probation and serving as moderator, Holley Carnright, UC DA, Andrew Kossover, Public Defender and Captain Freer of the UC Sheriff's Department

Mr. Carnright made the following comments and observations:

- the justice system was set up for one purpose only, to provide justice
- he does not think that because one is not an attorney that that would disqualify the person from being a good judge or for that matter just because a person is an attorney that that will make the person a good judge; but all who run for the office should go through an evaluation process and that should be made public prior to the election;
- regional court v. local court: supports local justice system; local knowledge a must. UC is a very large county: he would like to see larger justice courts; additional drug courts and domestic violence courts, particularly the latter in order to bring the services to the victims;
- efficiencies and collaboration: believes how speeding tickets handled could be better and since the goal of the system is justice should be able to collaborate.

Andy Kossover the Public Defender spoke next: he thanked Dr. Cresswell for the report, noting that Appendix A was very important. He emphasized two points: justice and the quality of just that is dispensed; and efficiency and the cost of dispensing justice without effecting the justice.

While he agreed with the DA about the need to have an evaluation process for all individuals who run for town justice, it si hard in small towns to remain impartial. His concern: there are justices who don't dispense quality justice. Lawyers get gormal training with regards to peoples' rights; can't be sure that lay justices do.

Captain Freer of the UC Sheriff's Department commented that he felt the report was steering the reader towards the idea that dollars had too much to do with the justice system; and that justice is handed out at the local level so that with a regional court he believes such would not be the case.

He suggested that one method to improve the handling of arraignments would be if the justices got together and agreed to have defendants kept at the UC jail over night and then in the morning do the arraignments there....ample number of holding cells and there is a court room as well.

Robert Sudlow was the last speaker. While he emphasized the importance of justice being dispensed, he raised a variety of questions, but generally with how was such to be paid for. Where are the new revenues coming from? How can existing services be shared?

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ulster County Shared Services Study

DOCUMENTS ONLINE: <http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/municipal.html>.

- [Ulster Intergovernmental Summary Report](#)
- [Economic Study](#)
- [Judicial Study](#)
- [Highway Study](#)
- [Action Plan](#)

Additional 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 lwvmidhudson.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>

Best Practices page of the NYS Association of Counties.

www.nysac.org/County_Corner.php/

LWV GHCC Study Group 2

League Consensus Report to the Ulster County Legislature.

Summary: http://lwvmidhudson.org/files/GHHC_Consensus_Summary.pdf

Statement: http://lwvmidhudson.org/files/GHHC_Consensus_Statement.pdf

Pros & Cons: http://lwvmidhudson.org/files/GHHC_Study-Pros_and_Cons_10-19-10.pdf

Materials and resources used by the League in formulating its consensus
http://lwvmidhudson.org/Action_Study.html.

OBSERVER CORPS - ULSTER COUNTY**Reapportionment
Commission**

There have been three meetings of the Reapportionment Commission during the month of March: March 9, 16, and 30. The meeting on the 23rd was cancelled due to weather.

The members of the Commission are usually present with only one being absent at any of these meetings: Catalinotto (9th), Messina (16th) and West (30th). Other usual attendees at each of the meetings were Vicki Fabello, Commission Secretary, Rob Leibowitz, Senior Planner of Planning Department. Frequent attendees: County Attorney, Bea Havranek, Tom Kadgen of the League of Women Voters, and Victor Work, Democratic Elections Commissioner and various members of the public.

Serving as facilitator at the meetings above were Cynthia Lowe, Paul Benkert and Vernon Benjamin.

The commissioners have continued to attend T/Board meetings to advise the members and the public who attend those meetings how matters are progressing as well as to hear what observations/suggestions the towns and public may have. Both the town board members and the public continue to have comments and are actively engaged in these discussions.

While the 9th and 30th meetings were held at the UCOB, the 16th was held at Information Services, the intent being to commence training. Instead, as the software had not been downloaded for use (though it had been received) the group was shown a demo to introduce what the software might look like.

As of the 30th the software had been downloaded so the commission had a one hour public meeting and then adjourned to a training session to get started with its work. The members expect to work on their own computers (software was purchased for them to be able to do this) wherever they are (two will be away), e-mail each other, and conference call during the time prior to the next meeting (April 6). The County Attorney reminded the group that while they could communicate about various matters via e-mail and conference call via telephone, the person who was not present physically with the others, could participate in discussion but could not vote per Public Officers Law.

The commissioners have expressed concerns at these meetings regarding being able to perform their duties in a timely manner so that whatever draft plan or plans could be developed, shown to the legislature in order to get feed back and suggestions, as well as to hear from the public and eventually present to the legislature for a vote.

The idea of an all day meeting on Saturday, April 9 was dispensed with given the additional costs that would be incurred for the county due to having to have staff in to open the building and security personnel available.

Public meetings have been established for April 12, UCOB 7 PM, April 13 at the New Paltz Community Center and a 3rd one possibly on April 20 at the library in T/Olive.

The majority of the public meeting on March 30 was devoted to a discussion with the County Attorney regarding the following:

-Voting Rights Act: UC is not subject to this acts enforcement policy;

-Saturday, April 9 all day session, see above; she also reminded the group that if there are four of them in the room, then they will be talking about the public's business, therefore it must be an open meeting;

-Prison Population: census does include the prison population. There are four prisons in UC, 3 of which have provided the population numbers for each: Shawangunk Correctional (530), Wallkill Correctional (571), Ulster (704); nothing has been heard from Eastern Correctional as yet. The numbers represented here are as of April, 2010; the figures for Eastern, 1002, represent those from the 2000 census. Further, there has been no breakdown of the prison population as to where these inmates actually come from.

Ms. Havranek advised: the Legislature or Commission must make the final decision; but the Commission must proceed as though it is its responsibility. It must make the best decision it can. Apparently, whatever the Commission decides to do, it is nevertheless challengeable.

Mr. Doyle of the Planning Department noted that the last time there was reapportionment the total population figure of 177,000 (2000) in UC had been used. The Commission decided to follow Ms. Havranek's recommendation.

-update on the lawsuit: Ms. Havranek summarized what had taken place Monday, March 28, 2011, at the court hearing on the suit brought by John Parete and Tom Kadgen. She has asked the judge, Judge O'Connor, to look at the Charter: the Charter Revision

**Golden Hill Health
Care Center –
Informational Forum**

Committee and been given a lot of power; whereas the Reapportionment Commission had not been given as much. What was the intent of the Charter Commission-the Reapportionment Commission was to be independent. That was her view. The judge will decide and Ms. Havranek felt that it would be soon.

Mr. Catalinotto suggested that how the Commission deals with the prison population be a topic to be added to the Commission's list of recommendations that it is planning to produce following completion of its work.

Prior to adjourning there was some discussion about the reapportionment work that the Commission had ahead of it:

- 7934 appears to be the whole number to consider;

- some of the possible districts mentioned: Esopus/Rosendale (2), Saugerties/Ulster (4), City of Kingston (3); the Church Communities with sites in Rifton and Ulster Park requested their communities both be in one district; Legislator Hochberg requested that Hurley be kept Hurley, the citizens there do work at it; that would also include Glenford being kept in Hurley; a resident of T/Rochester noted that T/Denning has more in common with T/Wawarsing/T/Rochester, pointing out the area in the mountain portion.

- the 5% give or take aspect suggests that this spread is between the highest/lowest districts (7537-8331);

- overall goal: maintain keeping a town whole;

- the Commission must consider the natural barriers like the reservoir and mountains as well as town boundary lines and census blocks;

- for those of the public wishing to look at the soft ware or try it out, can reserve time on the computer in the Planning Board office. County Attorney advised that the soft ware can not be given away due to the licensing issues.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

On March 11, 2011 the UC Legislature hosted a meeting to which Mark Kissinger, Deputy Commissioner of the NYS Department of Health Long Term Care Division and staff personnel had been invited. The purpose of the meeting was to provide a forum for the legislators to discuss with Mr. Kissinger questions that they had regarding the county nursing home.

Commencing at 1:07, the meeting was convened by Legislative Chairman Wadnola. The session was adjourned at 2:35.

Initially Mr. Kissinger provided some background on county nursing homes generally, the place of the Berger Commission to right size Long Term Care (LTC), and enabled each county to determine how to handle its own nursing home. Many have, but many are struggling. He said that the state health department LTC section is "agnostic" about who operates the nursing home, as SDOH treats all: profit, not for profit, county managed alike. Its major concern is the quality of care that is provided to the residents of the nursing home.

His second item dealt with the financial aspect of managing nursing homes. As he pointed out it is a particularly complex topic. The original year that was the basis for reimbursement dollars is 1983. In 2006 the state legislature passed a law which through the rebasing process updated the rate year to 2002. Eventually in the years that followed, the state worked on these rates and in 2009 the law passed was to raise the rates to 2007. However, as of 2011, the federal government has not approved the plan developed by the NYS Legislature, so there has not been the money extended to the nursing home. With the election of Mr. Cuomo, the Medicaid Redesign Team was appointed by him to evaluate that program. He has proposed a 4% cap on Medicaid. Can the state live within that figure. Mr. Kissinger said he believes the Director of MA would say no. He went on to note that the state wants to downsize nursing homes to community service; to move to non-institutional settings and mentioned the Olmstead Decision.

Following the above, for about 1 ½ hours there was a Q & A session.

Major cuts in home health care : Mr. Kissinger noted that between 2003-2009 the costs per patient rose 89%, while the number of patients decreased; apparently as a result of increases in costs from the six counties in the metro NYC area. He acknowledged that he hears daily from people involved in the health care industry regarding the rate of reimbursement.

Should the county legislature decide to privatize the Center the SDOH would have to approve the sale.

It was suggested that the quality of care provided by the public nursing homes was

superior to the care provided by the private homes. He said that he does not see the data that suggests that.

As to the process referred to as "cherry picking", i.e. selection by private nursing homes of those patients with fewer problems of a long term type. Mr. Kissinger stated this typically happens when a patient is being discharged from a hospital to a nursing home. His section does not actively monitor the discharging process; and that the state legislature has resisted having the NYS DOH act as a gate keeper to prevent "cherry picking."

Question with regards to other sources of funding like HEAL, New York. He noted that in 2005 HEAL, New York had been started with about \$1 billion. Those monies have been stretched to 2011 and most of that original allocation has been expended. As to funds from the Dormitory Authority, he has nothing to do with so he can't; there are not a lot of other monies available.

As to the use of the beds: It is possible to reduce the number of nursing home beds in order to have assisted living plan beds (ALPB) as that program is still operational: the county trades in nursing home beds for lesser beds.

The question on partial sale was raised more than once. The nursing home beds may only be sold as a block; it is not possible to sell 80 beds for example. Can reduce the present 280 beds to say 200 with 80 ALP beds.

It has been said that 120 beds are needed to break even. Not necessarily; may depend upon the mix of beds and financial support. More information will be provided to the county regarding the question on which county nursing homes have been sold in the last 5-10 years.

To increase the number of nursing home beds, it must be shown that there is 97% occupancy and therefore the county needs more. A citation to 709.3 Planning was given as a reference.

Mr. Kissinger reiterated that the quality of care is of major concern to the SDOH.

As to the time frame involved depends on the option selected. A CON ...a certificate of need application would need to be filed with the state DOH. The process takes about 18 months, depending upon the CON requirements.

A closing is very involved, taking 3-9 months. A Public Benefit Corporation procedure is very lengthy as it involved securing legislation passed by the NYS Legislature.

To the statement that UC has been told the Center was not in compliance with the various state rules on health and safety Mr. Kissinger responded that the Center has met safety code requirements, was in compliance.

He advised that he has seen no trends regarding building a new nursing home among the 57 NY counties (outside NYC); if anything he has seen 40 different approaches....more information on this point was to be provided..

Mr. Kissinger advised that NYS does not have a top down LTC plan but rather supports a bottom up plan. This method allows for more flexibility for the localities.

He pointed out that the direction moving from nursing home care to community based services acknowledges that those aging now are different in their needs, demands, what their families are looking for than those in previous generations. Furthermore, there is the added group of individuals under 65 who are disabled who need services who must be added to the equation and planning.

It was noted that the RFPs received by the county have not been made public as yet. The question was whether the SDOH advised on such. Mr. Kissinger advised that no, usually NYSDOH did not; it is the CON process which the SDOH is involved with.

He was not familiar with the term Enterprise Fund, which refers to the Center, thought it a local term.

If the Center was privatized, the new owner would not be mandated to take all residents and employees; SDOH would be concerned about the health and safety of the residents.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

Golden Hill Health Care Center – Legislature Public Hearings

The last of the public hearings, numbers 5, 6, and 7 sponsored by the UC Legislature on the future of the Golden Hill Health Care Center (the Center) have been held.

The public has been again provided with the opportunity to advise the legislators how it felt regarding the Center and to enable the legislators to answer such questions that might arise. These three sessions and the number of people (estimate) who attended: Saugerties (80), Kingston (UCOB) (190) and Marlboro (26). (Note: the session in Marlboro had been

rescheduled from a previous date. However it is possible that the severe rain storm may have caused the small attendance)

Each of these sessions was handled in the same manner that the previous four had been: Chairman Wadnola introduced the legislative panel: Legislators Frey, Provenzano, Hochberg, Lomita, and Maio; and DCE Beckman, representing County Executive Hein, and then explained the initial part of the process was to have Legislators Provenzano and Frey review the nine options (see March, 2011 issue for details). Following that, DCE Beckman would provide a financial summary in Saugerties and Kingston. As Mr. Beckman was unable to attend the Marlboro session there was no financial overview provided at that session. He did note at the two sessions he attended that while Mr. Hein had no position on the Center as such, he has said the beds must stay in UC which will need them as the senior population is expected to double; that it is a policy decision that the county legislature must make. It must also consider how whatever decision it makes will impact the tax payer first.

The pre-public speaking period was very short with the public section occupying the major period of time that the sessions were scheduled for; the one in Kingston lasting 40 minutes longer.

As with the first four sessions the majority of the speakers, many of whom had also spoken at the first four sessions, have now or had family or friends at the Center. There were also other members of the public who spoke and a representative of the League of Women Voters.

The opinions or positions expressed in these three sessions reinforced those expressed at the first four:

-Support for the continued existence of the Center, which should continue to be owned and operated by the County.

-the care that is provided for the residents is of the highest quality.

-the Center is considered "home" to the residents

-there is a moral responsibility to care for the seniors

-if the Center does not remain open under county leadership where will the 280 residents go

There is no question that the session in Kingston had the largest number of attendees and largest number of speakers (30), many of whom spoke much longer than the usual 5 minutes.

It has previously been noted that the general tenor of the sessions was generally calm, even tempered, even though dealing with what for most was an emotional and personnel matters. This changed with the Saugerties session: voices were raised, comments seeking to lay blame, demanding an explanation as to why over the years the Center has not been properly maintained, annoyance.

The point about the lack of access to nursing home beds in the south western areas was again reiterated both by officials from there and residents from that area. These speakers asked that their area not be left out; possibility of moving some of the beds there; that the area should be part of any decision made.

The observation about whether the Center meets standards, is in need of repairs, the costs, etc. were referenced at these three sessions as well. Added to that were comments regarding the subsidies or large sums being paid out for other items in the annual county budget: the \$6 million subsidy for UCCC (yet not one was suggesting the college be closed); the \$6 million to be paid annually for the jail construction for the next 30 years (why should those in the jail be better cared for than those at the Center)

There appeared to be a definite shift by many of the speakers at these three sessions to the concept of yes, a new county facility should be built.....that option seemed to be gaining in support.

With respects to taxes: Not until the last three meetings did this subject receive more than a cursory view. One speaker noted that the audience was most partisan in favor of supporting the continuance of the Center under county management. His concern was that the suggested financial shortfalls during the next 5-10 years are not sustainable. He doesn't care to see another jail project. He pointed out that a large portion of the county budget is mandated, but the Center is not one of the mandated areas.

The union representatives both noted during the three meetings that regardless of their union positions, they supported the continuation of the Center and believe that regardless what decision is made taxes will never the less go up.

Two other subjects that were raised during the last three hearings were Community Based Services and economic development. Both were referenced by speakers at the Saugerties session.

With respects to Community Based Services (CBS) those who spoke about it felt the emphasis on what funds were directed to should be changed to include more to CBS. While the quality of care at the Center was acknowledged as good, directing funds to CBS was important. So many people now wish to stay at home whether disabled or not, the change in outlook of people needs to be addressed. Care through CBS is less expensive than that handled in a LTC facility. Services such as those associated with CBS also provide jobs in a local area. Certainly an important point in the present economy. This point was re enforced by another speaker noting that in developing jobs in the area money for taxes is made available.

The League of Women Voters again voiced its view on privatizing the Center. Dare Thompson, the League president, explained the League's position. She explained the background to the consensus decision in this the second study on the Center. While the League acknowledges and agrees with the good things that have been said about the Center, it concluded that the only way to save the Center was to sell it in order to see the Center remain as is with regard to the care provided; the need for the number of beds; and even acceptance of building a new facility; but it does not believe the county can afford to pay for the Center, can't do it as profitably as a private organization can. Who buys the Center is as important to the League as everyone else; that the problems are real is recognized; there is a definite need to work with the NYSDOH to stop the selection of patients known as "cherry picking."

At the Marlboro session, Legislator Gerentine spoke to the observation that the Center was going to be closed. He said deciding what to do was a tough decision. He did not think any legislator would say that UC isn't going to provide a nursing home. The question is how to provide such. He said that "we aren't closing the nursing home; we will provide the service; the question is how."

Mr. Hyatt, a resident at the Center, who was in attendance, was given an opportunity to address the attendees prior to adjournment. He stated that before the Legislature made its decision, the members need to visit the residents, to listen to what they have to say, to learn how they feel.

Mr. Frye noted that that was why the task force meetings had been held at the Center so that members could see the Center, why Mr. Hyatt was asked to serve on the task force. Legislator Provenzano made the observation that she felt that some legislators had never been to the Center and that they should go.

During the Q & A, co-chairman Frye said the next steps would involve a report of the task force to the Health and Human Services Committee which would then send a report to the full Legislature following committee discussion. He and Legislator Provenzano thought this would most likely be accomplished in about two months.

However, an immediate step would occur 3-11-11 when the county legislators meet with representatives of the NYSDOH LTC Division to discuss the situation as well as for the state personnel to explain where the dollars are that UC has been told it would receive and has not yet received. Then the legislators will meet with elected state officials at the end of March for further discussion.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

**Governmental
Services &
Administrative
Committee**

Date: March 1, 2011 Start Time: 5:35 p.m. Finish Time: 6:29 p.m.

Chairman Roberts called the meeting to order.

This Special Meeting is for the committee to receive, discuss and take action on the final report of County Comptroller Elliot Auerback on the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency (UCRRA). Chairman Roberts is looking for a new level of cooperation between the Ulster County Legislature and the County Comptroller.

County Comptroller Auerbach acknowledged the efforts of his staff and the staff of the UCRRA. The County Comptroller report made four recommendations: an audit by the New York State Comptroller, an empowerment effort, appropriate oversight, and to depoliticize the relationships.

The main recommendation was the proposed audit by the NY State Comptroller: the County Comptroller stated the State Comptroller has the resources to do a deeper audit and clear the way for a new beginning for the agency and everyone involved. The County

Comptroller recommended the County Legislature join his office in a request to the NY State Comptroller, and following a discussion in the committee to involve the County District Attorney and possibly the New York State Attorney General.

Document prepared by Vic Melville, 3/28/11

Date: March 14, 2011 Start Time: 6:00 p.m. Finish Time: 7:05 p.m.

Chairman Kevin Roberts called the meeting to order, followed by approving minutes from February 12, 2011.

Mr. Roberts introduced Mr. Steven Wing, Esq., Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency to discuss Flow Control. Mr. Wing reviewed the long history of legal and policy decisions that have affected operational and economic issues. An important report by Mr. Mike Cahill, an expert on the issues, is to submit a proposed legal document on March 25, followed at some date by a public hearing.

Mr. Tim Rose, P.E., UCRRA acting Executive Director briefly discussed the Materials Recovery Facilities (MRF) report, Flow Control, single stream and landfills. The town, except Ulster and New Paltz, contracts are expiring in late 2012 and early 2013 [not in late 2011 and early 2012 as stated in previous Observer Notes].

All proposed resolutions, except a resolution appointing and reappointing members to the Ulster County Industrial Development Agency (no action), were adopted.

Document prepared by Vic Melville, 3/28/11

**Governmental
Operations &
Environmental
Services Committee**

Date: March 2, 2011 Start Time: 6:00 p.m. Finish Time: 7:17 p.m.

Mr. Brian Shapiro, Chairperson, called the meeting to order.

Mr. Shapiro introduced Mr. Marshall Beckman, Deputy County Executive, to lead a discussion on state funded mandates: What is and what isn't mandated. A careful reading of "mandates" is needed to distinguish "mandates" vs. "conditional" and "optional" to determine what is actually mandated and county funded. Mr. Beckman is trying to stimulate discussion by navigating and analyzing the county's budget data base with the legislators and county department representatives. The data base is to be distributed to the legislators for them to explore and analyze toward making changes.

The data is to be explored and discussed at the next Ulster County Ways and Means Committee jointly with this committee to allow for a "What if?" evaluation of alternatives. At future meetings, department heads will be invited discuss their programs and budget lines items. Legislators have expressed much concern about resolving the issues of mandate reform.

Ms. Amanda LaValle, Coordinator of the UC Department of the Environment, discussed four program areas: collaboration of departments related to the Environmental Management Council and Creek Week, storm water DEC compliance and MCMs, a sustainability grant from the USDOE and NYSERTA money (an energy policy was adopted), and the on-going issue of the lower Esopus water discharge

[At the February 3, 2011, committee meeting, Ms. LaValle distributed a report on the characteristics and effects of the turbid water as it flows the 32-35 miles to Saugerties, not distrusted a report as stated in the Observer Notes.]

On Hydraulic Fracturing, Mr. Shapiro proposed a public forum, sponsored by the committee, to be held in May or later (maybe in July). The proposal was OK with the committee. A possible resolution on hydraulic fracturing using county lands was discussed.

Global Warming was discussed. The county Climate Change committee no longer meets. The terminology is now Climate Smart Community. A proposed resolution is in the works.

A proposed "Millionaire's Tax" letter from the committee or committee members was discussed.

The meeting concluded with the acceptance of the previous meeting minutes.

Document prepared by Vic Melville, 3/28/11

**Legislative
Programs,
Education &
Community Services**

Date: March 28, 2011 Start Time: 5:00 p.m. Finish Time: 6:04 p.m.

Mr. Wayne Harris, Chairman, called the meeting to order followed by approval of the minutes of February 8, 2011 meeting.

Mr. Mark Komdat, Dean of Administration, SUNY Ulster, presented an overview of the Collegian Program.

Committee

Mr. Komdat introduced Mr. Chris Marx, Director of Continuing & Professional Education, for him to present an overview of Green Training at SUNY Ulster. Mr. Marx's presentation was an extensive overview of the program that discussed many of the programs for students and local businesses that emphasized training and job opportunities. SUNY Ulster is considered a leader in green programs. Several of the legislators asked about successful outcomes and synergy with other programs

A proposed resolution regarding requesting New York State to maintain funding streams of the Youth Bureau and further eliminating of competitive bid funding resulted in no action by the committee.

A resolution appointing members to the Ulster County Community Action Committee, Inc., Board of Directors was approved.

A subcommittee on home delivered meals programs was discussed concerning policy vs. operational issues. The quality of meals is a concern – hot meals are to continue for now (2011). A report is coming in April and a RFP is coming for 2012.

A Cornell Cooperative Extension open house is planned for March 21.

An Ag Vehicle Safety program is planned for March 23.

Document prepared by Vic Melville, 3/28/11

**Economic
Development and
Tourism Committee**

Ulster County Legislature: Economic Development and Tourism Committee held in Library Conference room, 6th Floor, County Office Building

Date: March 7, 2011 Start Time: 4:47 p.m. Finish Time: 6:46 p.m.

Mr. James F. Maloney, Chairman, called the meeting to order, followed by roll call and approval of the minutes of the prior meeting.

Mr. Rick Remsnyder, Director Tourism, discussed media programs focusing on the next travel guide, radio and TV, and the Kingston Classic race.

Mr. Bob DiBella, Director of Public Transportation, reported successful changes in vehicles and routes. Recent Federal reports on the department have been good.

Mr. Dennis Doyle, Director of Planning, updated the committee on comprehensive plans and activities in transportation, worker and family housing, and reapportion planning. There was a discussion of the economic development response in communities regarding a Smart Growth Initiative from New York State. Mr. Doyle received compliments for the planning department work.

Mr. Carl Meyer, Co-CEO of the Solar Energy Consortium (TSEC) briefed the committee on the 2010 report and recent activities. He reviewed successes and failures of several companies. Following his report, Legislator Bob Aiello questioned the effectiveness of TechCity, UCDC and TSEC.

Mr. Lance Matteson, President, Ulster County Development Corporation (UCDC), then reviewed the 2010 performance where the jobs outcome was considered good for a recession year. He also discussed business retention, shovel ready, and ready to build efforts. Mr. Matteson suggested a meeting with Mr. Aiello to discuss his concerns.

All proposed resolutions were adopted.

IDA resumes were distributed. A motion on the appointments was not approved.

Document prepared by Vic Melville, 3/28/11

**Health and Human
Services**

The Legislative Health and Human Services Committee meeting was convened by Chairman Walter Frye at 6:03 on March 3, 2011 and adjourned at 6:58. All members of the committee were present. Midway through Legislator Ronk was excused to attend another meeting. Other attendees: DCE Beckman, Dr. Hasbrouck.

Initially the committee dealt with three resolutions, each of which was passed:

#0309: amended the 2011 UC Budget dealing with Mental Health to reflect changes brought about by state initiated changes.

#0311: confirmed appointment of Dr. Hasbrouck, the Director of the UC Department of Health as Commissioner of Mental Health. During the discussion prior to passage it was determined that County Executive Hein is considering changing the Director title to that of Commissioner; that Dr. Hasbrouck will be paid \$180,000 to serve as the head of the two agencies; that during the next 6-8 months Dr. Hasbrouck will be working on developing efficiencies for Mental Health that will utilize staff in the best possible way which can also help financially. As part of the process present middle management and staff will have the opportunity to contribute comment, ideas, etc.

It is Dr. Hasbrouck's intent to have recommendations to make by the end of September, 2011. At that point Chairman Frye suggested that a work group would be created to assess the recommendations and whatever regulatory and financial aspects would be involved.

Legislator Petit asked whether the merger of the two agencies would impact any mandates that may be involved. Mr. Beckman suggested such would not be the situation.

Legislator Rob Parete inquired of Dr. Hasbrouck whether he had the required Mental Health experience as indicated in the Charter. Dr. Hasbrouck advised that he does. He had worked with individuals who had such problems and has a master's degree in public health with an emphasis in Behavioral Science. His appointment by UC Legislature and is pending confirmation by the NYS Department of Mental Health Inter-Office Coordinating Council.

#0314: confirmed the appointment of Mary Ann Hildebrandt and Virna Little to the UC Board of Health replacing Dr. McFadden and David Clegg. Appointment pending UC Legislature approval.

The remainder of the meeting dealt with two presentations:

One by Erison Rodriguez on a new dental program. The NYS Association of Counties is offering a dental plan available to any individual wishing to avail themselves of such at an annual cost of \$36.50 for an individual and \$52.00 for a family. The only involvement for UC is to advise the public of the availability of such a service. No cost to UC. A resolution to that effect will be presented at the next committee meeting.

The second presentation was made by Diane Reeder of Queens Galley Kingston. Ms. Reeder, a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America (CIA) and Director of the Queens Galley explained what the Galley was about: opened in 2006; it exists to connect people with food, particularly good food.

Generally it serves on average 9500 meals per month; yet in February, 2011, it served 10,352 meals. They serve real food on real plates so that participants can dine with dignity. Much of the food served comes from a farm that the Galley owns in the local area.

They will be partnering with Family of Woodstock and RUPCO. Will be opening two restaurants in the RUPCO building in fall, 2011 with staff trained by professionals to perform professional jobs:

Rosemarie's Restaurant on the first floor is an avant garde restaurant and Rosemarie's Bistro downstairs where the Rathskellar was located.

The money earned from both will be used to support the soup kitchen....Queens Galley on Washington Avenue. That is also the location of a homeless shelter that she operates. For those who might be interested in volunteering at the soup kitchen, the number to call is 845-901-2782. To give a donation the number is 845-338-3468. A brochure on the Queens Galley, etc. was distributed.

Chairman Frye advised the committee that the RFP responses re Golden Hill Health Care Center would hopefully be released the week of March 7 to the committee so that it could begin its discussion the next step in the process of determining the future of the Center.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

The special meeting of the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee was convened at 5:30 on March 29, 2011 by Deputy Chair Legislator Rob Parete and adjourned at 6:30. Committee members present: Parete, Harris, Ronk, Briggs, Stoeckeler. Absent: Frey and Petit.

The purpose of this committee meeting was to provide a venue for a discussion on the Golden Hill Health Care Center.

It should be noted that the committee meeting was originally scheduled to be held in the library conference room of the UCOB. However, due to the substantial number of people who came to the session, the meeting was moved to the Legislative Chambers.

Initially, 15 minutes was devoted to public comment. Those who spoke were supportive of building a new center, of the county retaining ownership, of providing a sound facility for the seniors for the residents presently living there, of retaining the beds under county control. Additionally, the desire to have nursing home beds in the Wawarsing area so that those who live there would have access to such services, as well as their families and friends being able to more easily visit them. Generally there appeared to be two options emphasized: privatize or build new. Acknowledgement was made that the UC Legislature would in the final consideration have a difficult decision to make. Chairman of the Legislature Wadnola commented that the legislature had two options in his opinion:

privatize or build a new facility; further it was this committee's responsibility to make a decision, submit such to the full legislature, which had the responsibility to make a final decision.

The remainder of the time was devoted to determining how the committee would proceed as well as the thinking of the committee members. Legislator Harris explained that there had been more than one group within the last year that had been dealing with the problem of the Center: the task force had met for about 8 months; the four member legislative panel that had dealt with the 7 public hearings; and the committee which must now make a decision and submit a recommendation to the full legislature to vote on.

Legislator Parete wanted a process established for this committee to follow in order to move forward. Come April 15, they expect to have all comments/recommendations from all the legislators. Committee will then review and make recommendation to the full legislature. An up or down vote will follow.

The group noted again what Legislator Gregorius had previously noted: the state budget has not yet been passed, the Medicaid Redesign Plan is not yet in place, apparently a need for more information and an examination of the RFPs submitted regarding the Center.

Following further discussion the committee decided that the tentative deadline to finalize its recommendation would be June 30/July 1. However, Mr. Parete suggested that there were other committee members not present who he felt should have the opportunity to contribute; so it was decided that the aim of the committee would be to have the work in place by the July, 2011 meeting of the Health and Human Services Committee. The April 15 date above appeared to be firm.

Before adjourning, Mr. Parete recognized Legislator Provenzano who commented on some of the items from the meeting with SDOH personnel two weeks ago: she had been surprised that Deputy Commissioner Kissinger had never heard of an Enterprise Fund. This is the fund from which all monies for the Center are found and its bills are paid from. That the Home Health Care sector will be face with the biggest cuts from the state Medicaid program; that the phrase safety net is not the safety net assistance program associated with social services.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

Board of Health

The meeting of the UC Board of Health was convened at 7:12 on March 14, 2011 by Vice-Chair Joan Authenreich (Dr. Tack, Chairman was not present) and adjourned at 7:45. Attendees: Drs. Stelleto and Godfrey, Maryann Hilderbrand (new member), Dr. Delma (arrived late). It was noted that the other new board member's name had been withdrawn as the person was not a resident of UC. Dr. Heller (Medical Examiner) Dr. Hasbrouck, Director of the Board of Health, Kevin DuMond, Mrs. Veytia and Katrina Kouhout, Board secretary.

Prior to the formal portion of the meeting, the group watched a short educational video on calories and eating. Primarily geared to children, the content could be used for adults as well. The video is in its preliminary stage. A major point was a 2,000 calorie a day diet or three 600 calorie meals and two 100 calorie snacks. Fresh fruits, vegetables are a must.

Once the meeting was convened, the minutes of the February meeting were approved.

Dr. Hasbrouck reported on the merger process of the UCDOH and UC DMH. He will become Commissioner of the latter, pending approval of the county legislature (County Executive Hein is considering changing his title to that of Commissioner of UCDOH as well). During the next 3-6 months there will be an evaluation of the feasibility of merging these two departments as well as providing a report and recommendations on how this merger will be done and when it will occur. To assist in this matter a committee comprised of Legislator Walter Frey, DCE Beckman, the Community Services Board, senior management group from UCMH, Mrs. Veytia and Dr. Hasbrouck will be addressing such matters. There has been some cost saving of about \$60,000, salary portion of retiring Commissioner Brown.

Dr. Heller, Medical Examiner, reported that there had been 19 calls in February (9 autopsies, 4 site visits). The plane crash that occurred recently in the Hudson River involved a variety of agencies (he received his call from the state police), i.e., state police, Hasmut, fire department, etc. apparently the various groups worked very cooperatively during this situation.

Mrs. Veytia updated the board on the status of the sale of the LTHHC/CHHA. She indicated that it is the DOH's hope to have the April 1 goal of transferring the visiting of the

**The Ulster County
Association of Town
Supervisors**

25 clients involved to Will Care.

Kevin DuMond of the Environmental Health Services Division advised the board that there would be three formal hearings coming up in March, each for failure to perform water sampling for their businesses (Rainbow Diner, Hobo Deli, Cherries on Top). The 4th hearing will involve Scandinavian Grace, located on Rt. 28 which was found to have had a complete lack of water disinfectant. A Commissioner's directive had been issued, a closure sign posted, which the owners took down. A settlement has been negotiated with 30 days to comply. Additionally a \$5,000 fine has been imposed, to be paid in five \$1,000 increments, starting May 1, 2011

This division has 600-650 food service sites to provide which need to have their requests for permits in by February 28. This year of that number only 36 had failed to comply; and of that number while 10-15 had eventually submitted their applications and fees, they each still owed the \$75 fine. He noted that in 2010 there had been over 200 such failures to comply, which was the reason for the \$75 fine being instituted. Mr. DuMond said he feels that the fine works given the high reduction in the failure number.

Mr. DuMond then announced that he would retire at the end of April. Board members and Dr. Hasbrouck each complimented Mr. DuMond for his work and his efforts. He advised the board that when the state representative was last in UC he complimented the environmental division, that it had vastly improved to the point that it could be viewed as a model for others.

Additionally, the letter that Dr. Stellato had sent to the County Executive complimentary to the DOH on its "exemplary performance and the turn around under Dr. Hasbrouck was noted. Further, Mr. Hein's positive response was noted as well (Note: such had also appeared in the local newspaper).

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

The meeting of the UC T/Supervisors Association was convened by President, Supervisor Valk at 8:39 on March 15, 2011 at the Olympic Diner. Eleven towns were represented.

Initially, County Executive Hein commented on the tremendous response of the towns, fire departments, people in UC generally to the recent problems created by the weather....flooding...He noted that Art Snyder, Director of Emergency Department joined in this assessment. Absolutely amazing.

He reviewed the recent court problem with NYC, DEP and the "turbulent waters," the release of which has negatively impacted the surrounding areas. He has also involved the NYS Attorney General. Additionally, he mentioned that he is attempting to have a fund set up to help those residents who have been so hurt by this problem which he said was created by NYC.

It is important that the county and the towns work together to deal with the problems that have arisen recently.

Other items in his review: County nursing home: feels the Legislature has struggled with its role under the Charter as policy maker. His office is open to discussion....what do you want to do? How do you want to pay for it? Legislature needs the political will to move ahead. Applies to the sheriff's department as well....is police protection being provided in the best possible way.

Mr. Hein was advised about a letter the supervisors have received from the Board of Elections re the lever machines: they can still be used through 2012 for school and fire department elections. Where to store appears to be the problem. He pointed out that the Board of Elections is not one of his responsibilities. (Later the supervisors commented about notifying those able to continue using...to come and get...or consideration given to possibly junking.). He introduced Ms. Gallagher who explained that the county would appreciate a letter of support from the town supervisors in its application for brown fields money. The county will examine those areas under used parcels. The supervisors agreed to provide such a letter.

Next on the agenda was DSS Commissioner Rodriguez who updated the supervisors on some of the developments in his agency: definite increase in those enrolled in the HEAP Program (about 6144 households), 31 replacements tanks, and 21 repair situations (an increase in both of the latter). HEAP, MA, FS (SNAP) have seen about a 10% increase in each program area. Believes that it is important for the agency and towns to work together not only with regards to HEAP but also the Safety Net Program.

The last part of the agenda was a report by Lance Matteson, president of the UCDC on its "Ready to Go" program. In reporting on this program, Ms. Gallagher also contributed to the discussion. Handouts of the program were also passed out. Mr. Matteson noted the following: UCDC considers the towns primary partners, but recognize that each is different; economic development is basic to preserve and grow good jobs, and increase the tax base. The old concept was that research shows that the gap is not having "a product" to sell, i.e. property ready to go; whereas the new concept is having infrastructure and green field properties which businesses are looking for.

The shovel ready idea to help communities to work with the county (bond fund up to 25% of infrastructure developed: road, sewer, water...must be public ownership. This apparently is an underutilized program. Application is obtained from the UCDC.

The new concept "ready to go": getting sites as close as possible to "ready to go" by having infrastructure (road, sewer, water), zoning, some kind of scale (up to 80,000sq. ft.) ready to go. UC is doing this project on its own...it was suggested that while NYS was not directly involved, any advancements that might be made, the state would appear.

Apparently through the efforts of Mr. Hein and Ms. Gallagher the county has acquired a number of grants to utilize. The county does not have enough of this type of site. They asked that the towns assist the county in finding such sites.

This observer had to leave prior to adjournment.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp.