



Commentator

DECEMBER 2015-JANUARY 2016

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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2015	Check our online calendar (http://lwvmidhudson.org/calendar.html) for updates.	
December		
15	1:30-3:00 PM	Membership committee 1:30pm-3:00pm at Shirley Kobran's
18	2:00 – 4:00 PM	Raise the Age Concurrence Meeting 2:00pm – 4:00pm at Jacki Moriarty's.
21	8:30-9:00 AM	Kingston Community Radio, WGHQ 920 AM LWV On Air. Go to http://www.mykcr.org to listen on your computer. Call 845-331-9255 to ask a question or make a comment.
2016		
January		
12	5:30 PM	Materials Management, Gateway Diner, 379 U.S. 9W Highland, NY 12528
12	1:45 PM	Book Club Meeting Club at Enzo's Pizzeria, Boices Lane, Lake Katrine - <i>The End of Your Life Book Club</i> by Will Schwalbe)
14	4:00-6:00 PM	Board Meeting at Jacki Moriarty's, 167 Apple Hill Rd, Hurley, NY 12443.
18	8:30-9:00 AM	Kingston Community Radio, WGHQ 920 AM LWV On Air. Go to http://www.mykcr.org to listen on your computer. Call 845-331-9255 to ask a question or make a comment. Kathy OConnor, league member and chair of Materials Management will be guest.
March		
1	---	Student Registrations for Students Inside Albany Due
May		
TBA		May Day Party
TBA		Annual Meeting
22-25		Students Inside Albany

Our general meetings are open to all. Family and friends welcome!

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845-334-3874, www.ml.com, frederick_woods@ml.com

Prez Sez

My travel to New Zealand was for personal reasons, to connect with my siblings and process the recent deaths of our parents.

However, international travel always gives access to new perspectives.

El Niño is warming the Pacific, the temperature of the ocean as measured by my niece Melissa, was 18 degrees Celcius, 4 months earlier than normal. Fires have already started in the Blenheim Region, also much earlier than usual. (It is spring down under).

The former Prime Minister of New Zealand, Helen Clarke, is now Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme. In that role she is able to speak on behalf of poor countries on the front line of climate change.

My relatives were all voting by mail while I was there. It was a referendum on the question; "If the New Zealand flag changes, which of five would you prefer?" Another step in distancing themselves from the United Kingdom and establish their own identity. (A more peaceful and drawn out process than the US War of Independence?)

The television above the baggage claim returned me to the US with a Trump, I mean thump, and a country grieving two more mass shootings. I'm glad to be home, but happy to belong to an organization that works to make a difference, it makes me feel less powerless.

Jolanda

Monthly Board meeting minutes and more can be found at: <http://lwvmidhudson.org/Committees.html>

**MEMBERSHIP
NEWS****Dear League Member**

The Mid Hudson League's concurrence meeting on Raising the Age (for criminal court prosecution of 16 and 17 year olds) will be held Friday, December 18th. 2 -5 pm.

Place: Jacki Moriarty's, 167 Apple Hill Road, Hurley.

Please come! We want to have a position by the 2016 opening of the legislature. There was a bill on the floor last year and NYS League members need to have a say when it is debated again next session.

Anne Needham

League Day at the United Nations

League Day at the United Nations was once again a success! After arriving at the UN by way of the LWVNYS bus from Albany (which included a stop at New Paltz to pick up passengers), League members were treated to a day full of speakers, tours, and conversation.

The day began with two briefings from UN officials. The first, delivered by speechwriter and communications adviser La Niece Collins, addressed UN efforts to empower women and girls around the world. While the talk was wide-ranging, a major theme was the need to involve local communities in these efforts rather than imposing values and visions from outside.

The second briefing, delivered by experienced peacekeeper Jean-Victor Nkolo, focused on UN peacekeeping operations and counter-terrorism efforts. The timely discussion focused on the UN's role in facilitating – not imposing – peace, and on the long-term nature of much of the work done in this area.

These briefings were followed by lunch in the Delegates' Dining Room, a lovely affair which also provided an opportunity to talk with members of other New York Leagues. The day then concluded with a tour of the United Nations building.

Kristen Faughnan

A Member Speaks Out: One of our members has taken the time to express her opinion to a public official . We thought you would be interested in what she had to say. Democracy is *always* well served when citizens participate.

Anne Needham
86 Downs Street
Kingston, NY 12401
anne.e.needham@gmail.com

P.J. Van Blarcum
Sheriff
Ulster County Law Enforcement
380 Boulevard
Kingston, NY

Sheriff Blarcum,

I believe encouraging licensed owners to carry their weapons is extremely dangerous to our community.

It also has an unpleasant aura of grandstanding.

You may not be aware that several people – Kingston neighbors -- who are otherwise protective of what they consider Second Amendment rights found your announcement downright scary.

It is the role of Ulster County officials to keep us safe and calm. Your stand does neither. When I read your statement I was reminded of the verse:

“When in danger and in doubt,
Run in circles – scream and shout...”

Anne Needham

CC: Michael Hein
Ulster County Executive

VOTER SERVICE

Moderating Guidelines

Guidelines for moderating and sponsorship of candidates' events by the League are on our website at <http://lwvmidhudson.org/Moderating.html> or from the [Home](#) page and the [Elections](#) page.

What Voter Service has done and What We're Doing

Now that the moderating forums are behind us, it's time for some reflection on the very busy pre-Election Day season. Perhaps the most curious of all events was the "Meet the Candidates" forum that our league sponsored on October 26th for the office of Ulster County Executive. We haven't served as a sponsor for a candidates' night in many years so this proved to be somewhat of a learning curve.

On August 17th our league received a call suggesting we sponsor a candidates' night for the county executive position since the Chamber of Commerce would not be holding one. It seemed like the public deserved to hear from all the candidates so, stepping out of our usual role as moderator, we decided to not only moderate but to sponsor and organize this forum. And that is where the "fun" began. Miscommunications, busy schedules, whatever, resulted in over six weeks of trying to nail down the forum date.

Then there was the question of Hunter Downie, the Green Party candidate. Why were we allowing him to participate in this conversation? Some might suggest this eighteen year old with absolutely no political experience didn't belong at the grown-up table. Well, yes, he did according to the Ulster Board of Elections since he met all the filing requirements of a candidate. Certainly an organization that promotes the democratic process would be viewed hypocritical and untrustworthy if we were to decide who was worthy of being heard and who wasn't.

Finally settling on a date, new concerns arose such as where the candidates would be positioned on the stage and how they would address the public, sitting or standing. In the end, they all stood behind podiums

which did look very professional (or congressional).

Arriving at George Washington School, it was obvious that each of the major contenders had brought their contingencies. Outside, Terry Bernardo's supporters waved "Save the Rail" signs. Inside, the Hein Camp sat en masse wearing their Hein badges. As everyone gathered in the auditorium with their campaign propaganda, the first order of business was to inform the audience that no campaigning was allowed in the forum area. Thankfully, everyone graciously complied and our moderator, Jolanda Jansen and our timekeeper, Kim McEvoy were ready to go.

Just one more snag. While each of the candidates had a mic, the moderator's mic was missing and despite efforts to find another one, we had no luck. Thankfully our president, Jolanda, has a booming voice when duty calls and while the situation was not ideal, there were few complaints from the 100 plus constituents.

In the October Commentator, this column explained the difference between a debate and a forum (non-debate) format. Our league participated in nine non-debate events and it is our hope that the community was served well by this format. Would our constituents be better served if we went to the strictly debate forum? We are open to suggestions after the presidential primaries are behind us. Are we learning more in these presidential debates as opposed to a controlled forum? Something to think about.

Jean McGarry

Naturalization Ceremony

Thanks to Daisy Tyler and Linda Hackett for representing the league at the December 4th Naturalization Ceremony held at the Ulster County Court House in Kingston. They welcomed 51 new citizens and all went away with voter registration forms and the league publication, *First Vote*. It is truly amazing how many individuals become citizens at each of the four ceremonies held yearly in Ulster County. This is a far cry from what it had been in the past when no ceremonies were held here and the alternative was participating in Manhattan. Thanks to league member and Ulster County Clerk, Nina Postupack, who was instrumental in bringing this moving event back to Ulster County.

Jean McGarry

Vote 411

With Election Day over, the Vote 411 Project concludes a successful 2015 run. Over a third of candidates running in contested races filled out their profiles, answering important questions to help voters make their choice at the polls. We also succeeded in raising awareness of the program, both among the countless candidates we spoke with and among the Dutchess and Ulster County populations at large. With this foundation, we expect Vote 411 to grow stronger still in years to come.

Kristen Faughnan

Moderating for a Neighbor

Town of Monroe, Orange County, 10/27/15

Dare and I got a request for the LWV to assist from the Chamber of Commerce in a debate in the Town of Monroe in Orange County where there is no local League. We agreed to assist at the local middle school in really 2 debates. The first was among candidates for election in the Town of Monroe and the second was among candidates for election in the Village of Monroe. There were a total of 15 candidates on stage which led to some logistical problems as well as a long program.

There were slightly more than 100 in attendance and most stayed until the end. The largest issue for the Town is the impending attempt by the village of Kiryas Joel to annex additional parts of the Town to increase the village size as well as its population. All the candidates seemed opposed to this annexation and it will probably end up in court. One issue that came up repeatedly by both sets of candidates was the increasing traffic problems in Monroe associated with the Monroe-Woodbury Mall and the increasing number of strip malls south of the Thruway entrance. No one seemed to have a solution to what seems to be a large and growing problem.

The debate went well despite the Chamber wanting to do things in a non-LWV fashion but we persevered.

Doug Thompson

STUDY AND ADVOCACY**Book Club**

The next meeting of our book club will be held on January 12, 1216 (no, I can't believe it!), 1:45 at Enzos. It is called *THE END OF YOUR LIFE BOOK CLUB* by Will Schwalbe. It is the story of a mother and son taking a journey together through the wonderful world of books. It is a bit of a change for us which I think you will all enjoy. It is available in hard cover, paperback, on Amazon & the library. Hope to see you there!

Jacki Moriarty (845 331-3418) jackim@hvc.rr.com

ULSTER COUNTY OBSERVER CORP

Audio recordings, addenda and minutes of Legislative Committee meetings can be found at <http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/legislature/committeesinfo/index.html>

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**Materials
Management
Committee****UCRRA 11-24-15**

Previously thought that the number of Towns participating in an Agreement with UCRAA for service was finalized, the Board agreed to extend the opportunity to both Marlborough and Saugerties.

On the recycling front, Recycling Coordinator Merlyn Akhtar (who was sick) sent in a report stating the following:

1. She attended the NYSAR3 Annual Conference whose theme was "Approaches for Reducing Waste and Conserving Resources via Sustainable Materials Management.
2. She's making a concerted effort for Public Outreach via Social Media, Radio and Web (has worked out a 2016 plan with Marisa Rogers of Radio Woodstock to promote recycling, composting and their yearly HHW events).
3. Presented a one-hour public workshop at Esopus Public Library on Nov 12, covering how to recycle in Ulster Co, electronics recycling, plastic bags recycling and composting.
4. Planning to participate in SUNY Ulster's event Dec 3rd to promote awareness of the UN Climate Talks and sustainable living.
5. They continue to have steady stream of incoming food waste, and are waiting for results of biannual lab tests to confirm quality of output.
6. On 11-18-15, Ms. Akhtar took a field trip with local DEC staff to Delaware County's Solid Waste Facility. Toured their MSW co-composting operations as well as their new MRF.

Kathleen OConnor

Ulster Co Solid Waste Management Improvement Commission

The Commission met Monday December 7th. Members reviewed a matrix of the sites they had visited. Assignments were made to complete comparative data on each site. Also, Commissioners reviewed the background section of a draft recommendation of their findings. They noted future sections to be completed, and assigned specific Commissioners to cover the various topics noted. Much has been accomplished. Much yet to do

Kathleen OConnor

Energy and Environment Committee

December 9, 2015, 8:22 PM – 8:42PM

Committee Members: Peter Loughran, Chairman, Kenneth J. Ronk, Jr., Deputy Chairman, Richard A. Parete (absent), Hector Rodriguez, Mary Wawro

Peter Loughran, Chairman, called the meeting to order.

Minutes of the November 10, 2015 meeting were approved. Highlights of that meeting were: Resolution No. 437 pertaining to a capital project for lighting that was moved to Public Works Committee; and a discussion of charging stations on Ulster County property in which legal counsel is raising legal and ethical issues.

Guest Presentation:

Resource Recovery Agency Report – Tim Rose, Executive Director: The finances look good; 14 towns are under contract, 5 are not, 1 maybe and the City of Kingston will be discussed. The Solid Waste Management Plan is yet to be received back from the DEC – 4 years after it was submitted. Legislator Hector Rodriguez reported the Solid Waste Disposal Improvement Commission has also not received a response to their SWMP inquiry.

Resolutions:

Resolution No. 457 pertaining to adopting a proposed local law regarding prohibiting the sale of products containing microbeads in Ulster County: Approved, over the objection of Deputy Chairman Ken Ronk that the timing is bad policy.

Resolution No. 471 and Resolution No. 472 pertaining to confirming re-appointments to fish and Wildlife Board: Approved.

Resolution No. 481 pertaining to establishing the Ulster County Legislature a lead agency under SEQRA for a solar project on a closed landfill in the town of Ulster: Approved.

LATE Resolution No. 485 pertaining to urging the NYS DEC to assume lead agency for the SEQRA process for the Pilgrim Pipeline Project: Approved. Following this vote, Legislator Peter Loughran announced he will have a resolution next year (2016) to authorize only a crude oil train or a pipeline, sighting safety reasons.

Vic Melville, LWV Observer Corps, 12-16-15

Laws and Rules, Governmental Services Committee

December 14, 2015, 6:31 PM – 8:28 PM

Committee Members: Richard A. Parete, Chairman, Kevin A. Roberts, Deputy Chairman, David B. Donaldson, Kenneth J. Ronk, Manna Jo Greene

Other Legislators: John Parete, Legislature Chairman, Hector Rodriguez

Meeting called to order by Richard Parete, Chairman

Minutes from November 16, 2015 meeting approved.

Resolutions

Resolution No. 456 - Adopting Proposed Local Law No. 13 of 2015 (A Local Law Regarding Campaign Finance Reform in Ulster County): Moved to 2016, as amended, to also apply to those running for county office. This move followed a lengthy discussion: Chairman John Parete said he had requested comments on the resolution by "good gov" groups and had received no replies; he did not name names [LWV Board to take note]. Legislator Ken Ronk emphasized the need for fundamental fairness in the local law and he wants to create model legislation.

Resolution No. 457 - Adopting **Proposed** Local Law No. 14 of 2015 (A Local Law Prohibiting The Sale Of Personal Care Products Containing Microbeads In Ulster County):

Passed, as amended, to the 2016 legislature and new committee - one amendment clarified the definition of microbeads and their use, and a second amendment changed the penalties (the second amendment was deemed substantial by Legislative Counsel Chris Ragucci, Esq., therefore requiring another public hearing and vote in 2016.)

The vote followed a lengthy discussion of the committee of concerns heard at the recent public hearing,

and comments and concerns from representatives of the industry and public interest groups that attended the committee meeting. The comments and concerns included clarification of definition of microbeads and their use, and environmental issues.

[After Adjournment of the committee meeting, legal counsel apparently reconsidered the opinion on the substantial change and its effect. The consequence to the vote of the committee was left TBD. The LWV Board to take note.]

Resolution No. 458 - Adopting Proposed Local Law No. 19 of 2015 (A Local Law Applying Salary Revisions for Certain Elected Ulster County Officials Serving For Fixed Terms):

Approved following lengthy discussion on the salary raises, the timing of the legislative process and the raises, and issues concerning the health care benefits. Legislator Richard Parete did not vote in favor of the resolution and he announced he intended to pursue the permissive referendum provision to petition protesting this proposed local law.

Resolution No. 459 - Calling Organizational Meeting Of 2016: Approved.

Resolution No. 470 - Confirming Re-Appointment Of A Member To The Ulster County Board Of Ethics: Approved.

Late Resolution No. 485 - Urging The New York State Department Of Environmental Conservation To Assume Lead Agency Status For The State Environmental Quality Review Process For The Pilgrim Pipeline Project: Approved, following discussion of the previously passed resolution on the proposed pipeline.

Late Resolution No. 486 - Approving The Execution Of A Contract Amendment In Excess Of \$50,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Multi County Community Development Corp – Department of Social Services: Approved, following a discussion and concerns about the process for LATE resolutions. The chairman of the committee had not been advised about the resolution and he is to send a letter to the County Executive about the concerns of the committee.

Late Resolution No. 487 - Declaring Certain County-Owned Real Property Located In The Town of Wawarsing, Acquired by the County Through the Greater Catskill Flood Remediation Program To Be Surplus Property And Authorizing The Commissioner Of Finance To Sell Said Real Property To The Highest Bidder Pursuant to Section 215 (6) Of New York State County Law: Approved, following clarification by Budget Director, Burton Gulnick, Jr.

Old Business: Legislator Kevin Roberts is concerned about the false alarm application fee.

Comment: Legislator Manna Jo Greene expressed thanks to the committee and for the effort made to serve.

Vic Melville, LWV Observer Corps, 12-16-15

December 1, 2015, 6:02 – 6:40 PM

Committee Members:

Thomas J. Briggs, Chairman, James F. Maloney, Deputy Chairman, Chris Allen, Lynn Archer, Tracey Bartels, Herbert Litts, III, Mary Beth Maio (absent)

Meeting called to order by Chairman Thomas Briggs, and approval of November 4, 2015 meeting minutes.

Guest Presentation:

Ulster County Broadband Plan - Chris White, Ulster County Economic Development Alliance & Dennis Doyle, Department of Planning: Mr. White discussed the guidelines of the working group (in the county executive's office) that is focused on a gaps analysis and a government grant program in 2016 including business case scenarios. He expects to come back in Jan. or Feb. 2016 with a report from the stakeholders. Legislator Lynn Archer has focused on broad band and she received compliments for her effort, and other legislators joined in the discussion of the issues and opportunities of new technologies.

Resolutions for December 15, 2015 Meeting in Annual Session:

Resolution No. 461 and Resolution No. 466 pertaining to contracts – Department of Information Services: Approved, following discussion with Sylvia Wohlfahat, Director of IS, about the changing of software and licenses for the mini-computers.

**Economic
Development,
Tourism, Housing,
Planning & Transit
Committee**

Resolution No. 480 pertaining to establishing a capital project for the “Ashokan Rail Trail” : Approved following a discussion that the report was just received and more time was needed, and a scope of services is needed (comment of Legislator Herbert Litts III) before voting. Chris White wants a vote to move the resolution along.

Resolution No. 481 pertaining to establishing the Ulster County Legislature as lead agency of a solar project on a closed landfill in the town of Ulster: Approved.

Comments:

Regarding the ‘Do Business Differently in Ulster County’, the campaign targeting New York City technology entrepreneurs to relocate, expand or start up businesses in Ulster County: some settlements are in the works.

Vic Melville, LWV Observer Corps, 12-16-15

**UC Legislative
Public Health and
Social Services**

The UC Legislative Public Health and Social Services Committee meeting was convened by Chairman, Legislator Lopez at 6:35 on November 2, 2015 and adjourned at 7:43. The next meeting will be November 30, 2015.

Present: Lopez, Provenzano, Belgiglio, Litts, Allen

Others: Nettie Tomshaw, Secretary to the Committee, Erica Guerin, Legislative Counsel

Following the call to order, the first item on the agenda was the approval of the October 5, 2015 meeting minutes.

The committee had 34 resolutions on its agenda to address. The resolutions dealt with contracts, 33 of which were in excess of \$50,000. Under the county charter the county legislature has the authority to approve any contract or contract amendment in the amount of \$50,000 or in excess of \$50,000.

While the resolutions were approved, there was specific discussion/comment involving concerns held by committee members.

Many of the contracts were with Family of Woodstock, but by and large the contracts were executed with individual groups like United Way of UC, YMCA of UC, the ARC of Ulster-Greene, Inc., Devereux Foundation, Family Services, etc.

The contracts involved arrangements to assist clients associated primarily with DSS and Mental Health.

Funding for the contracts varied. Fourteen of the contracts had funding divided between Federal, State and County; five between Federal and state and state and county; four had funding from state dollars only; two from the county alone; and two from federal and county dollars. One depended upon the eligibility of clients served.

The 34th and last resolution dealt with amending the 2015 county budget to accept additional funding from the NYS Office of Mental Health to cover the cost of 20 additional supported housing beds. There is to be no increase in county contributions. This too was passed. This resolution involved \$100,800.00 dollars.

The subjects of the contracts dealt with a variety of concerns, some of which were: counseling and training services, homeless shelters, related case management services, state mandated foster care services, state mandated per diem foster care and related services, Family House Shelter and related respite services for runaway and homeless youth within UC (this is the only agency approved, certified and/or licensed with NYS to provide such services in UC), Family Education Program.

Resolution 401 dealt with a contract concerning the services provided at the Washbourne House, an 11 bed Domestic Violence Shelter. Family of Woodstock is involved as is DSS.

The concern that Legislator Belgiglio raised referred to how security is being handled at this shelter. He referenced a civil law suit that has involved a situation where an individual who was under an order of protection was not stopped from entering the shelter. Legislator Belgiglio indicated his concern was over how security was handled and not about not approving the contract. He suggested that having a representative from Family explain how security is handled would be helpful. Legislator Provenzano suggested Michael Berg, Director of Family be invited to come to a meeting and explain such. The contract

goes into effect January 1, 2016. The committee members decided to have Michael Berg involved to attend the December meeting to explain how security is handled at the Washbourne House.

Resolution 408 dealt with the methadone program that is conducted at the Health Alliance Hospital-Broadway Campus and is 100% county funded.

Note: "this hospital is the only local entity in UC licensed and certified by NYS to run this program".

The committee spent some time in discussing this resolution:

-it was noted that at the committee's previous month's meeting that it had approved the policy from the county executive's office of enabling those receiving such treatment would be able to receive it 7 days per week rather than 6 (up to then had received 2 doses on 6th day). What the committee now was being presented with was a contract which apparently did not have the 7 day coverage included. It was suggested at that point that the contract would then need to be rewritten. Given that this is a contract and what the subject matter is, there is a requirement to have NYS OASIS and the federal government to approve the change. It was suggested that this could take some time, which caused committee members concern.

As a consequence, following further discussion, the committee voted to pass the resolution contingent on receiving more information within a week...Tuesday, November 9, 2015, at which time the committee would have a special meeting to vote on the resolution as it was then written.

Resolution 412: Dealing with aid from NYSOASIS to provide 18 bed half way house and related case management services. Funded by Federal and State dollars. In the contract the phrase "in various places" led to discussion. While the resolution passed, it was felt by Legislator Belfiglio (cast a no vote) it was not specific enough as there was no indication as to where, geographically, the money is being spent.

Resolutions 427, 428 and 429: All 3 resolutions increase funding for foster care services. Funding is Federal, State and County dollars.

#427: St. Catherine's Center for Children(\$700,000)

#428: The Children's Home of Poughkeepsie, NY, Inc.(\$500,000)

#429: Devereux Foundation(\$150,000)

The discussion concerning all three noted that there are more children in the program than when originally started, many who have deep, emotional problems which apparently are not usually seen in foster care children. As a result the suggestion was made to have the Commissioner of DSS invited to attend the committee meeting to speak on the various program s as well as

- how many children are being serviced and
- how much does it cost per child to do so.

The last item on the agenda concerned the request made by the committee to the county executive to have a representative from his office attend committee meetings (previously members had indicated their concerns that they had questions about what they were being asked to vote on and needed someone to answer such). The committee was advised that Deputy County Executive Crannell had said he could not attend the November 2 meeting.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

UC Board of Health

The December 14, 2015 meeting of the UC Board of Health was convened at 6:36 by Chairman Dr. Tack and adjourned at 7:28.

Present: Tack, Woodley, Graham, Delma, Cardinale

Absent: Hilderbrandt, Kelly

Others: Shelley Mertens, Director of Environmental Services, Nereida Veytia, Director of Patient Services, Katrina Kouhout, Secretary to the Commissioner and Board Secretary.

Following the call to order the first piece of business was approval of the September minutes: accepted.

Under new business the board addressed the amendments to the Sanitary Code initially.

Based on the report provided by Shelley Mertens, Environmental Health Director there does not appear to be many changes. Such amendments or work appears to have covered water well construction (must

be drilled, can't be dug); the Board of Health does handle complaints and the amount of land space that a homeowner must set aside to enable the property owner to have a septic plant is 12,500 square feet per lot. The Board passed the motion to accept the changes. The changes will be submitted to the county attorney for review; a public hearing must be scheduled as well.

The next item to be dealt with concerned the selection of officers for 2016: Dr. Woodley was elected to the position of Chairman and Dr. Delma was elected as Vice-Chairman. Marianne Hilderbrandt was nominated for the position of Secretary. As she was not present, the board secretary will e-mail her with this information. Election will apparently be handled via e-mail.

The Board then reviewed the meeting schedule developed for 2016. Meetings will be held on the second Monday of the month at 6:30 at the Mental Health building located at 239 Golden Hill Lane on Golden Hill. The exception to the schedule will be the October meeting, which will be held the first Monday on October 3, 2016 (October 10 is Columbus Day).

The Medical Examiner's report was the next item to be addressed by the Board. The report covered a comparison of 2014 and 2015 (Jan-Dec 2014 and Jan-Oct 2015). While it is possible to see changes Jan-Oct for both years, the entire year for 2015 cannot be compared without the Nov-Dec figures for 2015.

There was discussion regarding the number of suicides which appear to be resulting from overdoses. Suggestion made to involve Director of Mental Health which could address this topic more specifically. It was noted how easily it is to acquire heroin and how available it apparently is on college campuses and high schools across the country.

Nereida Veytia, Director of Patient Services reported on:

-Influenza surveillance as conducted by the NYS Department of Health during the week ending 12-5-15: Geographically sporadic (small number of lab confirmed cases reported)

21 counties reported cases during this week; there were 63 lab confirmed cases, a 7% increase over the previous week; there were 29 individuals vaccinated locally and 5 were pending. Those not vaccinated must wear a mask.

There was discussion about a case of an individual who refused to accept vaccination for non-influenza related condition: doesn't believe in such. Is it legal to refuse to continue to employ the individual? Locally the person in question was not allowed to continue employment where the person was employed.

The final item on the agenda dealt with the credentialing of Dr. Montera. Apparently there is a process covered by Article 28 that requires such a review of the person's license. This was done, there is no document indicating any negative situation. He is employed at Clinical Services which handles STD and HIV testing. Ms. Veytia noted that there is a 28 page document that the individual must complete. Re-credentialing the person involves the same process as engaged in initially. The Board passed the motion accepting Dr. Montera's credential process.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

UC Association of Town Supervisors and Mayors

The November 17, 2015 meeting of the UC Association of Town Supervisors and Mayors was convened by President, T/Rochester Supervisor Carl Chipman at 8:35 and adjourned at 9:34. The next business meeting will be January, 2016.

Present: Hardenburgh, Rosendale, Ulster, Olive, Marbletown, Shawangunk, Warwarsing, Rochester, Plattekill, Marlboro (Lanzetta), Denning, Esopus(McCord)

Others: Deputy County Executive Ken Crannell, DSS Commissioner Michael Iapoce

Following the call to order Supervisor Chipman congratulated newly elected Supervisor Lanzetta and Supervisor McCord, noted that Commissioner Iapoce would be late (he arrived as this was said), and that Tom Scaglione representing the Government Office had cancelled due to jury duty (4th time that Mr. Scaglione had cancelled per Mr. Chipman). Further, Mr. Chipman said he wished to comment on a letter written by Charles Landi re site selection for landfill: Mr. Chipman said that he is a member of the committee involved with trying to select a landfill, that a list of some 90 potential sites had been developed, and by process of elimination had been reduced to 17, and that a decision of where the landfill would be had not been made.

Commissioner Iapoco was then introduced. He distributed a fact sheet on the HEAP program, which was the subject of his talk to the supervisors. While the program opening date was noted as November 15, 2015, he noted that any emergency needs costs at this time would not be met under the program but would be borne by the county as emergency benefits will not be available under HEAP until January 4, 2016.

He noted that the present program was essentially the same as 2014-15; that there had been a reduction in the price of fuel which was to the benefit of the program. He was very positive regarding the support received from the towns to take care of getting delivery/repair particularly in remote areas of the individual towns; and to those who are older. There was discussion and Q & A regarding the program. The Commissioner did suggest that if T/Supervisors know those needing emergency deliveries from prior situations that possibly reaching out to them ahead of time and encouraging them not to wait till it is an emergency might be helpful.

He explained that HEAP pays for fuel/repairs. DSS asks fuel companies to participate in the program, it does not ask companies to bid to be selected to participate. DSS meets with companies to determine if willing to participate in the program.

Commissioner Iapoco commented several times that if there was any problem or any questions not to hesitate to contact him. He provided his phone number and cell phone number

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The next item on the agenda was a health insurance update. Mr. Chipman provided the information update. Apparently it has been determined that there are possible means to extend such but to do so the group would need about 2000 employees. The suggestion was made that possibly joining with another county to be able to do so and develop a regional group would be a direction to take.

Ulster County itself has its own self-insurance plan and is satisfied with it.

Mr. Chipman indicated that he will make contact with adjacent counties and report back to the group.

The next agenda item dealt with the holiday luncheon.

The group will not have a regular business meeting in December but will meet for its annual holiday luncheon. Following discussion the group decided to hold its luncheon December 15 at 12 noon at the Reservoir Inn. Mr. Chipman indicated that he would acquire the menu and forward such to the members.

The remaining items on the agenda dealt with:

A report from Supervisor Quigley regarding the CD valued at \$13,000 that the group recently was advised it had. He reported that he had requested Key Bank to provide a history of the CD and advise whose signature appears as treasurer when it was initiated. Its value in September, 2015 was now over \$13,000.

The treasurer's report noted the group's regular account balance was \$2, 437.40 and was accepted.

Minutes of the September and October meetings were accepted.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp



ADENDA

RAISE THE AGE COMMUNITY MEETING AT THE KINGSTON LIBRARY

A group of about 40 people gathered at the Kingston Public Library on Saturday November 21st to hear a panel discuss raising the age for criminal prosecution as adults.

This is a concurrence study based on the Ohio position on youthful offenders. New York State League has decided to be less specific than Ohio -- offering a set of general principles rather than a recipe. Local leagues need to get their positions up to Albany by January 1 when the new legislative session begins.

Community members shared experiences and asked questions of the expert panel. Our panelists were:

Cheryl DePaolo, Director, Ulster Prevention Council;

Kevin Dean, Pastoral Assistant, Clinton Avenue United Methodist Church and Community Life Chaplain at Bard College;

Willie Johnson, Senior Probation Officer, Ulster County Probation Department;

Odell Winfield, founder of ENJAN, End the New Jim Crow Action Network and Director of the Sadie Peterson Delaney African Roots Library.

Cheryl DePaolo opened with an overview of the brain research which has been published during the last few years. She cited the studies that show the human brain is not fully formed until the age of 26 and that the developing adolescent brain can respond well to interventions. These findings caused 48 out of 50 states to change their laws.

Willie Johnson noted that along with changes in the law there needs to be proper funding for Family Court and the Probation Department. New York's youthful offender status allows criminal court judges to divert young offenders to these alternative systems but reductions in recidivism have been less than satisfactory. Mr. Johnson noted that this could be the result of underfunding.

Kevin Dean said that several cities in Connecticut have created roundtables consisting of criminal justice officials and community groups which meet regularly. His work with local churches and community groups led him to support the proposed changes in the youthful offender laws.

Odell Winfield emphasized the need to restore people, whatever their ages, to full citizenship with jobs and a place to live. These are, he said, "returning citizens, not freed convicts. There is a big difference in perception." He spoke of the recent meetings with Kingston police and noted that elected officials including the mayor have been part of these meetings.

New York State government is starting to move on this issue. In January 2014 a Commission on Youth, Public Safety and Justice appointed by Governor Cuomo recommended that the age of criminal responsibility should be raised. The Governor then pushed for legislation during the 2015 session. While the lawmakers were willing to allocate funds to implement certain proposals, they adjourned without actually changing the law. The matter will be reintroduced in the 2016 session.

There are challenges inherent in changing a major law. The Mid-Hudson League will study the facts and opinions garnered during the November 21st informational meeting and hold a concurrence meeting for members December 18th. The results will be forwarded to the New York State League which will formulate a statewide position.

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Editor's Note: At a Concurrence Meeting held on December 18th, our local league agreed to have the League of Women Voters of New York State lobby the New York State Legislature to enact a law that will cover the following general principles:

1. Children under the age of 18 are not adults and their treatment within the juvenile justice and criminal court system should relate to their stage of development.
2. Children should not be held in adult jails.
3. Rehabilitation is the purpose of the juvenile justice system.
4. The legal rights of children should be protected.