



# Commentator

JUNE 2013

*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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**Membership:**

## CALENDAR

2013

JUNE

6	Thurs. 2 pm	<b>Resource Development Committee meeting</b> , home of Margaret Sellers, 80 Ringtop Road, Kingston, 845-339-3180, <a href="mailto:mcsellers@aol.com">mcsellers@aol.com</a> Time, date and location tentative; please confirm with Margaret.
7	Fri. 9:30 AM	<b>Dutchess County Shared Services Study Committee</b> , 7 Creek Bend Rd, Poughkeepsie, home of Ellie Charwat, 845-462-7061, <a href="mailto:echarwat@yahoo.com">echarwat@yahoo.com</a>
11	Tues. 5:30 pm	<b>Solid Waste Study Committee</b> , Gateway Diner, Rt 9W just north of Mid-Hudson Bridge, Highland. For more info and to confirm, contact Cindy Lanzetta, 845-236-7288, <a href="mailto:packback56@yahoo.com">packback56@yahoo.com</a>
14		<b>FLAG DAY</b>
14	Fri. Assemble at 11:20	<b>Naturalization Ceremony</b> at noon, Ulster County Court House, 285 Wall Street, Kingston. Help welcome new citizens and distribute voter registration information (and remind yourself how precious citizenship is!)
18	Tue. 6:30 p.m	<b>Catskill Mountain Railroad and Rail Trail Study Group</b> at Olympic Diner, 620 Washington Avenue (closest to the Thruway). CMRR/RT study group meets regularly on the 3rd Tues of the month at 6:30 p.m. For more info: <a href="mailto:jgjansen@jansen-engineering.com">jgjansen@jansen-engineering.com</a>
19	Wed. 5:30 pm	<b>Vote 411 organizational meeting</b> , Gateway Diner, Rt 9W just north of Mid-Hudson Bridge, Highland. For more info and to confirm, contact Jean McGarry, 845-336-6622, <a href="mailto:jfmcg@hvc.rr.com">jfmcg@hvc.rr.com</a>
25	Tues. 4-8 pm	<b>LWV MHR Board Planning Meeting</b> , location TBA. Please confirm by calling 340-2003 or asking a board member.

For updates, check our Calendar on-line at  
<http://lwvmidhudson.org/calendar.html>

**Prez Sez...**

What a happy and enlightening experience we just had at our annual meeting! I extend a huge thanks to all those who helped make it so, including the good crowd of attendees!

I know we all especially thank **Liz and Gerald (Jerry) Benjamin** for sharing their insights and experience in such an engaging way. We delighted in the give and take and occasional disagreement between daughter and father, but above all we appreciated how much we learned from their richly informed and thoughtful observations

Highlights included the revelation that New York is not in fact one of the most corrupt states in the U.S.! (Jerry has the stats to prove it.) It's "up there," but not as high as you'd think. We were also riveted by their views on the Vito Lopez scandal and the political future of Speaker Shelly Silver. Both agreed that Silver's stepping down would create chaos, and Jerry (a Republican) praised the ability of Silver (a Democrat) to provide the House with great stability in unstable times and to secure his party's power. Liz commented that as a woman in a world still dominated by men, she was less forgiving of Silver for covering up Lopez's truly outrageous, "nasty" behavior. We also fully appreciated their lively discussion of campaign finance reform and Jerry's support of public financing of campaigns as the "ultimate price" we must pay to secure our democracy.

We all also thank **Dr. Charles Khoury** and his team at **Ulster BOCES** for providing us with a comfortable and convenient meeting space and we are grateful to **Main Street Bistro** for making lunch arrangements so effortless!

I personally thank **Irene McInnis**, chief logistics coordinator, and the *many* other League volunteers who helped before and during the event. It was a great team effort that seemed to leave everyone feeling good, especially since a weekday lunch-time annual meeting was a new thing for us. I like to think this bodes very well for the whole year ahead.

Please note elsewhere in this Commentator the program and voter service opportunities for those of you who want to help make a difference in our region. Please jump right in! Every additional person magnifies our impact.

Dare

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

**ANNUAL  
MEETING  
May 23, 2013**

In addition to approving the previously publicized 2013-14 budget, members elected a few new board and nominating committee members and approved an ambitious program of study and action for the upcoming year.

**ELECTIONS**

We welcome to the board three new members: **Shirley Kobran** of Lake Katrine, **Evelyn Ness** of Kingston, and **Soyal Smalls** of Poughkeepsie.

The remaining or re-elected board members are Dare Thompson, President, Jolanda Jansen, Vice President, Jean McGarry, Secretary, Dorothy Winrow, Treasurer, and Cindy Lanzetta, Irene McInnis, Anne Needham, Lee Ridgway, Margaret Sellers, and Esther Stickley.

Because Shirley had been selected by the Nominating Committee to be a *non-board* member on next year's Nominating Committee, her election to the board left an open seat on that committee. **Cindy Bell** of Ruby was elected to replace her. She joins **Cynthia Lowe** and **Renee Sachs**. The board will appoint two additional members at its June 25<sup>th</sup> meeting.

We regret that Cindy, **Jim Mahoney**, and **Betty Chin** are leaving the board, and we thank them for their years of good service. Fortunately Cindy is continuing to be involved through the Nominating Committee and by helping with moderators for candidate events. We hope Jim and Betty will stay active as well.

**LEAGUE PROGRAM for 2013 – 14**

The following areas of study and action were approved for the coming year. Contact the people indicated in each area to get involved. Your interest will be warmly welcomed!

**SHARED SERVICES in Dutchess County**

The committee is continuing to explore ways in which efficiency can be improved by cooperation between communities. Meetings are usually on a weekday morning. Chair: **Ellie Charwat**, 845-462-7061,

[echarwat@yahoo.com](mailto:echarwat@yahoo.com)

### **SOLID WASTE / MATERIALS MANAGEMENT in Dutchess and Ulster Counties**

The committee is continuing to establish efficient and economical ways to recycle and reuse materials and to dispose of waste in an environmentally sound way. Meetings are usually at 5:30 on 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays at the Gateway Diner in Highland. Chair: **Cindy Lanzetta**, 845-236-7288, [packback56@yahoo.com](mailto:packback56@yahoo.com)

### **COUNTY BUDGETS in Dutchess and Ulster**

The committee expects to look into major financial issues in each county as well as review how the two counties handle expenses in comparable areas.

Co-Coordinators: **Margaret Sellers**, 845-339-3180, [mcsellers@aol.com](mailto:mcsellers@aol.com) for Ulster and **Diane Jablonski**, 845-485-6228, [dianejablonski@gmail.com](mailto:dianejablonski@gmail.com)

### **FINANCING LOCAL PUBLIC EDUCATION**

With health care, pension and other expenses continuing to rise, and with school districts now facing the restrictions of a tax cap, how can citizens help guarantee *all* students the education they need and deserve? Contact: **Margaret Sellers**, 845-339-3180, [mcsellers@aol.com](mailto:mcsellers@aol.com)

### **UPDATE OF LWVUS AGRICULTURE POSITION**

Our League's national position on agriculture was adopted in 1988 and now needs updating. The update will focus narrowly on: 1) current technology issues in agriculture including genetically modified organisms (GMOs), herbicides, pesticides, agriculture water pollution, aquifer depletion, antibiotics in livestock, and accurate food labeling; and 2) current agriculture finance issues including consolidation in agriculture industries, crop subsidies and the federal agricultural regulatory process. Interested? Contact: **Dare Thompson**, 845-236-3074, [darethompson@gmail.com](mailto:darethompson@gmail.com).

### **ULSTER COUNTY RAIL TRAIL**

A committee is forming to gather information about the issues surrounding Ulster County's proposed Rail Trail and to help educate the public. Contact: **Jolanda Jansen**. 845-505-0324, [jjjansen@verizon.net](mailto:jjjansen@verizon.net)

**NOTE:** Our Voter Service activities (and opportunities to serve!) are described separately.

**NOTE:** Annual Report and Minutes of the will be posted on-line within the next two weeks

## **New Members**

### **NANCY BEARD**

Nancy has a B.S. in environmental science from Cornell University and has worked for the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's Hudson River Estuary Program since 1988. Prior to that she worked for the Ulster County Environmental Management Council "where I met Shirley Kobran and caught the composting and recycling bug!" She is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Catskills, where she taught religious exploration for many years, and she enjoys swimming, kayaking, writing, and making audio recordings for Librivox.org and other websites.

Nancy grew up in Troy, NY and moved to Ulster County in 1980 where she lives in the Town of Ulster with her husband, Karl, and their 2 children (when they're not away at college). She has recently discovered that her ancestors came to Dutchess County in the 1700s and her maternal great-grandparents lived in Kingston. She finds inspiration in the scenic beauty of the Hudson River Valley and in its rich natural, cultural and historic resources. Her favorite Hudson River fish is the Hogchoker.

### **ETHEL LITTLE**

Ethel has supported environmental issues for a long time and belongs to Permaculture in Marbletown. Her activism in the environmental area led her to support the NY Citizens for Clean Elections which supported full funding of elections. This organization was made part of Citizen Action, which supports the Fair Elections bill currently before the NYS Legislature (which LWVNYS also supports.) She thinks it is very important to try to pass this bill this year even if it only supports partial funding for elections.

Ethel has attended many environmental rallies as "a body." She says that she shows up, but does not speak out. She has a son and daughter and three grandsons.

**HERB STOLLER**

Herb grew up in New York City where he attended public schools and City College of NY. It was at CCNY that he met what he calls his "first (and only) Trophy Wife, the beautiful Suzi Stoller." (Suzi is also an LWV member and active on the Shared Services Committee.)

After graduate work at Rutgers University, the Stollers moved to Dutchess County where Herb worked for IBM for over 36 years.

In addition to helping Suzi raise three children, he has served on many boards including the Jewish Community Center, Harding Club, and the Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse. He has also been very active in political party work.

**VOTER SERVICE****VOTER SERVICE NEEDS YOU!****Vote 411 organizational meeting to compile an electronic voter guide for both Ulster and Dutchess Counties**

**Date:** Wednesday, June 19

**Time:** 5:30pm

**Place:** Gateway Diner, Rt. 9W just north of the Mid-Hudson Bridge

**Naturalization Ceremonies**

**Dates:** June 14, September (TBA), November 8

**Time:** Assemble at 11:20; ceremony begins at noon.

**Place:** Ulster County Court House, 285 Wall St., Kingston

**Duties:** Welcome new citizens and distribute voter registration information

**National Voter Registration Day**

**Date:** Wednesday, September 25

**Place:** Various locales throughout Dutchess and Ulster Counties

**Time:** flexible

Contact person for all of the above: Jean McGarry, [jfmcg@hvc.rr.com](mailto:jfmcg@hvc.rr.com) or 336-6622

**Interested in moderating or timekeeping?**

Contacts: Cindy Bell, [cbell1000@aol.com](mailto:cbell1000@aol.com) or 336-5763

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

**How We Serve  
Our Voters**

Jean and Jim McGarry recently cashed in on their silent auction win from the Tea and Trash event last fall. On May 20, we spent an afternoon shadowing Barbara Bartoletti through the halls of the capitol. Prior to meeting up with us, Barbara had already held two media conferences and had given testimony before the **Independent Democratic Conference of the New York State Senate on Reforming New York State's Campaign Finance and Election Laws**. Walking the halls of the capitol one becomes acutely aware of the esteem in which lawmakers, regardless of party affiliation, hold Barbara. After lobbying tirelessly to pass legislation important to the league for over 30 years, her knowledge of the issues is beyond impressive, making us who regard ourselves as informed citizens wondering if we actually have read a newspaper in the last year. Barbara is a walking encyclopedia on all that has happened in Albany and all that should happen. Bottom line, if you want to be immersed in "Albany World" in one afternoon, walk the halls of the capitol with Barbara. If the politics tend to get you down, the renovated capitol building with its beautiful architecture will leave you in awe.

For the full text of Barbara's testimony you can find it at <http://www.lwvny.org/> or by clicking [HERE](#)

**VOTE 411**

Please try to attend our first **Organizational meeting**, Gateway Diner, Rt 9W just north of Mid-Hudson Bridge, Highland. For more info and to confirm, contact Jean McGarry, 845-336-6622, [jfmcg@hvc.rr.com](mailto:jfmcg@hvc.rr.com)

**Moderating Guidelines**

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

**PROGRAM NEWS****ALERT re possible concurrence on the issue of Human Trafficking**

At state Convention on June 1 - 2 delegates are quite likely to vote to support a position statement opposing human trafficking. If so, we will be circulating that statement to all our members along with a detailed explanation of how it was developed and why LWVNYS needs a quick response from all local leagues as to whether they concur with the statement or not.

Please **watch for an email (or mailing) about this issue in early June and respond promptly** if you care at all about this issue (and we're guessing you do).

In the meantime, don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

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

**ADVOCACY & STUDY COMMITTEE REPORTS****Senator Cecilia Tkaczyk – A Thumbnail Sketch Of Her Positions**

On May 20, Jim and Jean McGarry lobbied NYS Senator Cecilia Tkaczyk who represents the 46th district that includes much of Ulster County. The 2013 LWVNYS Lobby Report form focuses on three specific questions to ascertain how our representatives feel. These include their stand on comprehensive campaign finance reform (public funding of elections along the lines of the New York City matching system), election reform (revising the paper ballot and early voting in New York), and the Women's Equality Agenda. In short, on all three issues, Senator Tkaczyk is in line with the league positions. For each, she is committed to supporting and working on legislation that will result in a more equitable and democratic New York State. An extra tidbit we learned during our visit, Senator Tkaczyk was a former member of the LWV Schenectady. For more information about her biography, activities and sponsored legislation, visit her NYS Senate web pages at <http://www.nysenate.gov/senator/cecilia-tkaczyk>

**Solid Waste Committee**

**NEW DOCUMENTS ONLINE:** [The Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency Press Release and Flow Control FAQ](#) and the [Dutchess County Solid Waste Management Plan 2013](#) and the [Study Committee's Comments](#). Links to these and an extensive "library" of related materials can be found on our website at: [http://www.lwvnet.org/lwv/ny/midhudson/Action\\_Study.html#Trash](http://www.lwvnet.org/lwv/ny/midhudson/Action_Study.html#Trash)

**Dutchess County Shared Services Study**

The Shared Services Committee of Dutchess County works to encourage government efficiency. It monitors grant opportunities for local governments to study and implement consolidation of services or sharing services between municipalities. This year, in addition to the state program which has been in place for several years, there is opportunity for grants through a Dutchess County program for municipalities to show how they are sharing or consolidating services

We meet with elected officials to provide examples of consolidation and sharing that have been implemented across New York State. We try to provide a balanced view of both the opportunities and the challenges facing local government in sharing and consolidation. There are many studies, but moving from a study to implementation requires persistence, political leadership and a willingness to compromise.

We have completed a PowerPoint and printed presentation of our work to date that we can take to the general public as well as to elected officials. We encourage voters to put pressure on their elected representatives to look for opportunities to improve government efficiency, and we've posted our work at <http://www.lwvmidhudson.org/> where it can be of help.

Our committee currently has eight active participants. Please join in our efforts, particularly if you live outside Poughkeepsie, and help us spread our message throughout the County. Our next meeting is on Friday, June 7, 9:30 AM at my home, 7 Creek Bend Road, Poughkeepsie.

Ellie Charwat, Committee Chair

Jail Fact Sheet Version 4-1	Highway Departments in Ulster County
Fire Districts in Dutchess County	Purchasing in Dutchess County Municipalities
Justice Courts in Ulster County	Bus Transportation

You can find links to these materials at [http://lwvmidhudson.org/Action\\_Study.html#s02](http://lwvmidhudson.org/Action_Study.html#s02)



**ULSTER COUNTY OBSERVER CORP****Economic  
Development and  
Tourism  
Committee**

Date: May 1, 2013      Start Time: 6:00 p.m.      Adjourn Time: 6:50 p.m.

Chairman James F. Maloney called the meeting to order and took attendance.

The Apr. 3, 2013, meeting minutes were approved.

Draft Resolution No. 0236 authorizing the chairman of the county legislature to execute a license agreement with James and Andrea Demosthenes for usage of county owned property for a patio project, was approved following a discussion of the project and the public process to review (the county planning department supports the project) and approve it.

Draft Resolution No. 0237 rescinding Resolution No. 30 of 2013 and appointing and re-appointing members to the Ulster County Railroad Advisory Committee – Ulster County Legislature was voted to hold pending further information regarding the organization, its shareholders and the findings of an ethics committee.

Chris White, Planning Deputy Director – Catskill Mountain Rail Trail addressed the committee on the County Executive Michael Hein's budget proposal for the rail trail. Mr. White discussed the project vision, scope, economic factors and the financing.

Regarding video lottery terminals in Ulster County, Legislator Kevin Roberts requested the proponents are invited back to address the committee.

Vic Melville, LWV Observer Corp, 5/24/13

**Legislative  
Programs,  
Education &  
Community  
Services  
Committee**

Date: May 8, 2013 Start Time: 5:08 p.m. Adjourn Time: 6:28 p.m.

Chairman Wayne Harris called the meeting to order, attendance taken and the meeting minutes from Apr. 10, 2013, were approved.

Mark Komdat, Ulster County Community College Dean discussed highlights of their upcoming events and current enrollment and budget items: a tuition increase of \$50 is expected, enrollment is OK, Sophie Finn project proceeding toward a referendum and RFP. A budget meeting is scheduled for June 11.

Lydia Reidy, Executive Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension Ulster County, reviewed their current activities and programs. The activities include celebrating the 100 years anniversary of the extension on June 1 and celebrating the 150 years anniversary of the land grant (college) act. A bus tour of local farms is being planned.

Cornell Cooperative Extension Associate Director Marie Raymond introduced Melinda Herzog and Stacey Craft to present "Creating Healthy Places" including a discussion of the program and a demonstration, with participation, of an exercise program.

Steve Masee, Director, Veteran's Service Agency, discussed highlights of their local projects including the housing of homeless vets, the activities and projects of the advisory committee. Discussed was relocating the Flatbush Memorial and providing burial plots, that involves county funding.

Eve Madalengoitia, Director Dutchess County Arts Council, discussed the annual Ulster County awards: the awardees have been determined and are to be announced. A Pride of Ulster County recognition was discussed. Capacity building was discussed.

In conclusion of the meeting, Mr. Harris welcomed comments from anyone else attending the meeting. This LWV observer spoke of the meeting held on Apr. 23 on Food Insecurity in Ulster County and encouraged the county government to pursue this issue, and that the league is pursuing the issue.

Vic Melville, LWV Observer Corp, 4/26/13

**Ulster County  
Legislature: Laws  
and Rules,  
Governmental  
Services  
Committee****Special Meeting**

Date: May 21, 2013      Start Time: 6:04 p.m.      Adjourn Time: 7:50 p.m. (approx.)

Chairman Kevin Roberts called the meeting to order.

Chairman Roberts opened the discussion of this special meeting on a draft of proposed revision of the Ulster County Legislature's Rules of Order. Legislators Tracey and Hector Rodriguez and Counsel to Legislature Langdon Chapman joined the discussion.

This is the continuation of special meetings on the subject. One more meeting was discussed.

Vic Melville, LWV Observer Corp, 5/24/13

**Ulster County  
Legislature:  
Environmental  
Energy &  
Technology  
Committee**

Date: May 2, 2013 Start Time: 5:50 p.m. Adjourn Time: 7:38 p.m.  
Chairman Carl Belfiglio, called the meeting to order and took attendance. The meeting minutes of Apr. 4, 2013, were approved.

Guest presenter Mr. Tony Ramos – Rural Technologies Strategies (RTS) discussed an initiative to provide rural broadband services. He described the project as self-funded (thru hospitals, etc.) with county support, where RTS provides the infrastructure (towers). He has met with some possible participants and with March Gallagher, Director, Office of Business Services.

All proposed resolutions were approved.

Old Business: Flow Control SEQRA Determination - the documentation of the SEQRA Type 2 negative determination was received from county attorney Beatrice Havranek, Esq. The committee is considering what falls under the committee.

New Business: Members of the committee and the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency board toured the Oneida-Herkimer facility and reported on positive findings that may apply to Ulster County and the region. Correspondence is to continue between the counties.

Legislator John Parete asked the UCRRA to provide estimated tipping fees for various tonnage levels (120, 125 and 130,000 tons).

Vic Melville, LWV Observer Corp,

**Legislative Health  
and Personnel  
Committee**

Convened at 5:30 by Chairman, Legislator Aiello on April 29, 2013 and adjourned at 5:54.

Present: Aiello, Provenzano, Belfiglio, Parete (arrived late)

Absent: Ronk

Other attendees: Deputy County Executive Ken Crannell, Krista Barringer, Deputy Clerk; and Erica Guerin, Legislative Counsel

Following the approval of the April 8 meeting minutes, the first order of business was the monthly Personnel Report. A question was raised by Legislator Belfiglio as to the monthly personnel report regarding the temporary hire of an attorney at the Golden Hill Health Care Center (GHHCC). The answer was provided by DCE Crannell: the county is creating a 6 member transition team made up of current administrative employees from GHHCC who will not be laid off. These positions are funded through the remainder of 2013. Apparently that financial support is to be extended through 2014. This transition group will be responsible for closing out accounts, the Enterprise Fund, medical records and related matters associated with the facility sale. The attorney will be part of this transition group. He also noted that the last county to proceed in this manner was Fulton County. Further, he noted as well that the new buyer will hire the presently employed nursing group.

The next order of business dealt with 3 resolutions. Each of the 3 resolutions concerned the appointment of an individual to The Community Services Board. The committee took the resolutions under one motion and passed such.

While there was no new business listed on the agenda, time was allowed for questions from Legislator Belfiglio regarding the status of the sale of the GHHCC. The questions were directed to DCE Crannell. Mr. Crannell's response noted the following:

-the Certificate of Need (CON) has been approved by NYS

-he believes that the sale/purchase will be completed sometime during the summer;

-not all the details involved in the closing and matters related to labor items have been finalized, working through the items.

There was further comment from Legislator Belfiglio that it had been brought to his attention by the labor union and nurses/lpns that nurses/lpns were mandated to work a second shift if there are not enough people to cover the shift; and people are getting burned out. During the ensuing discussion comment was made that staff has been using time they are eligible to take, but Mr. Crannell noted that staff will be paid for the time they have earned.

Apparently the county has arranged to hire temporary staff who are employed elsewhere locally and are willing to work a shift, but this option has been just about exhausted.

Other comments noted: of 280 beds at GHHCC, occupancy presently at 245 and other neighboring facilities apparently also have noted their bed occupancy is also down; it is public knowledge that the new buyer is seeking to develop 200 assisted living beds.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

**Board of Health**

The Ulster County Board of Health meeting was convened by Chairman Dr. Tack on May 13, 2013 at 6:33 and adjourned at 6:56.

Present: Tack, Graham, Hilderbrandt, Delma, Kelly, Woodley

Others: UCDOH Commissioner Smith, Richard Parrish, Emerg. Medical Services, Cheryl Qamar, Deputy Commissioner of Mental Health, Dr. Heller, UC Medical Examiner, Shelley Mertens, Environmental Health Director, press

The first order of business was the approval of the April, 2013 minutes. Following the approval of the minutes, Dr. Smith reported on the status of the Community Health Assessment Stakeholders Summit meeting that is scheduled to take place May 21. The process for the gathering is moving ahead. There has been a good response from those contacted about attending. Dr. Smith noted that appropriate handling of matters will help the group obtain grants from state and federal governments.

The medical examiner's report was given by Dr. Heller: 21 calls received, 3 site visits made, 2 autopsies performed, no suicides, motor vehicle or homicide cases.

Under the Environmental Health Report, Shelley Mertens updated the group on the status of the Washington Avenue potential sewer by-pass. Apparently the DEC has approved the direction of the plan at this point. The city hopes to complete this repair work in a matter of days during the week of June 25.

Deputy Commissioner Qamar announced that she is retiring and that this would be her last meeting. She noted that mental health status locally has shown considerable improvement which she attributed to the leadership of Dr. Smith, Commissioner of Health. Dr. Smith was equally as positive re Deputy Commissioner Qamar in what she has done and her contributions to mental health locally.

Amy McCracken is slated to move into the deputy position.

Additional reporting was made under environmental matters: effort is being made to maximize the time and personnel available to do the inspections that they are responsible for with respects to the camps, some 60 are licensed by UCHD; the group continues to work on the financial aspects for UC to do the inspections and how such impacts other departments like the sheriff's department with regards to mass gatherings; and considerations are being pursued with respects to acknowledging those restaurants which excel with good inspections.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

**UC Association of  
Town Supervisors  
and Mayors**

The UC town Supervisors meeting was convened on 5-21-13 by President T/Supervisor Chipman at 8:37.

Present: T/Rochester, Marbletown, Rosendale, Ulster, Hardenburgh, New Paltz, Wawarsing, Shawangunk, Hurley, Saugerties

Others; Michael Hein, UC Executive, Dr. Gerald Benjamin, Director of CRREO (Center for Research, Regional Education and Outreach)

The first speaker for the meeting was Dr. Gerald Benjamin. His main reason for attending the meeting was to provide an up date on what the organization has been doing. He also distributed copies of the SUNY, New Paltz newspaper which carried a lengthy article dealing with CRREO.

Since CRREO was established in 2008, Dr. Benjamin noted the following items:

- 5 year best practices projects in intergovernmental groups throughout the Hudson Valley;
- CRREO is sponsored by state funds and foundations; assists in evaluating services in order to help such grants;
- CRREO is to do a study on tax rates in the city of Kingston (apparently it has different rates for business and for government projects);
- suggested that CRREO has expert knowledge, or such exists in Ulster County, so that it is not necessary to import such experts from other parts of the country and pay more at the same time;
- seeks to help in providing top notch service while helping to lower costs and help localities to save money;
- suggested that the studies CRREO engages in are to provide various alternatives for those who make the decisions;



-CRREO is interested in hearing what the problems, "beefs" are as it may know what has already been done on such in the form of a study.

Michael Hein, UC Executive, was the next speaker. Initially he noted that Dr. Benjamin says not what one wants to hear but rather what one needs to hear.

His comments dealt primarily with the county take over of Safety Net costs at 1/3 for each of 2013, 2014, 2015; and the costs of elections that the towns have. If the county is to assume the costs of both it was suggested that what are people willing to do without. That the county took over the election costs because it is a federal mandate, but it was the county's choice to move the costs to the towns to pay for ( apparently nothing in the federal mandate prohibiting that). It was suggested that the town supervisors suggest that the UC Comptroller review why costs of elections under these circumstances cost more. Observations made by some of the supervisors that the town costs to run the elections was less than now if the county administers such.

UC Legislature Chairman Terry Bernardo then spoke to the topics of Safety Net costs and election costs being assumed by the county as well. Initially she noted that Legislator Gerentine, Chairman of the Ways & Means Committee wants to put the Safety Net issue "to bed" before the budget work for 2014 begins. While the county has proposed assuming Safety Net costs 1/3 each year for 2013, 2014, 2015, she could not advise what percent Mr. Gerentine was suggesting. She went on to note that while county legislature had agreed to the initial 1/3 for 2013, the other 2/3 had not been agreed to by the county legislature. As to election costs she noted there was a \$4 million difference in costs with what the executive proposed.

T/Supervisor Walsh of T/Rosendale made the observation that the towns want the county to assume costs the towns have no control over like Safety New and elections.

There was discussion among the supervisors about attending the Ways & Means Committee meeting, the county legislative meeting and having Mr. Chipman speak at such indicating the supervisors position on these two topics.

Apparently the supervisors will discuss planning for a workshop on solid waste.

It was necessary for this observer to leave at 10:13 prior to adjournment.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp



**Flag Day, June 14<sup>th</sup>**