



Commentator

MARCH 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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2016	Check our online calendar (http://lwvmidhudson.org/calendar.html) for updates.	
<i>Our general meetings are open to all. Family and friends welcome!</i>		
March		
5	10:00am-4:00pm	LWNY Training Workshops at 4 West 43rd St., NYC. For details and a registration form use: http://www.lwvny.org/announcements/2016/Registration-For-%20LL-TrainingSpring_2016.pdf Need a ride to the train station from Kingston? Call Jean McGarry at 336-6622
8 & 15		Voter registration at SUNY Ulster. See "Voter Service" for details.
8	5:30 PM	LWV Materials Management (Solid Waste) Study Committee at the Main Course Restaurant (175 Main Street, New Paltz, NY 12561). For more info and to confirm, contact Kathy OConnor, (845) 757-2247 or oconnor.kraye@gmail.com .
10	4:00-6:00 PM	Board Meeting at Jacki Moriarty's, 167 Apple Hill Rd, Hurley, NY 12443.
15	1:45 PM	Book Club Meeting Club at Enzo's Pizzeria, Boices Lane, Lake Katrine – <i>The Fifties</i>
18	12:00 PM	Naturalization Ceremony, Ulster County Court House, 285 Wall St., Kingston. Volunteers should arrive at 10:45 .
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. Speaker – Sarah Womer
April		
19	POLLS OPEN AT 12 NOON and CLOSE AT 9 PM	Presidential Primary
SAVE THE DATE: National Voter Registration Day - September 27th		

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Prez Sez

It is February, the month of Valentine's Day, Mardi Gras, Black History Month and preliminary primaries leading up to Super Tuesday. My mind is full of red, gold, purple, green and black. Chocolate to chase away the winter blues, parties and music to initiate the period of lent, serious debates about the state of race relations in our country, and breathtaking voting results coming out of Iowa, New Hampshire, North Carolina and Nevada.

I was privileged to be on a debate panel at Dutchess Community College discussing "Black Lives Matter versus All Lives Matter." The audience of primarily DCC students asked searching questions, especially the students who identified as Latino, or Latino and Black, or American Indian and were wondering how this debate applied to them. Being the only person on the stage of North European descent (white?, Caucasian?, privileged class?) I was asked the questions about how white people can be allies in the ongoing struggle for racial equity in the United States.

This is a question I have been struggling with since I arrived in the United States in 1977. My understanding of race relations in the United States was minimal at that time. I knew Martin Luther King had been assassinated. I knew there had been riots in many American Cities. I knew that my marriage to an African American would have been illegal in some states not so long ago. But I had no idea how many white people did not really socialize with black people. Lives were lived in different worlds. My in-laws were from the Virgin Islands, but had moved to Flushing Queens. My husband and I lived in downtown Kingston, and later downtown Poughkeepsie, and my daughter started her educational life in the City of Poughkeepsie School district. The longer I lived in the United States, the more I became aware of how much I did not understand. I read books. I went to classes on American History. I listened to people. I watched TV. I went to the movies. I made myself sit through Amistad. I read more books. I learned more and kept feeling like I understood even less.

Eventually I went to law school hoping I would understand the legal history behind the systematic segregation that still exists. How had Federal Equal Housing Legislation been enforced? Equal Education Legislation? Voting Rights Legislation? We have passed many laws. But we are in the era of disparate implementation. There is nothing automatic about new legislation. Many law suits are needed to make Civil Rights Legislation a reality. And law suits are not enough, there needs to be a widespread change in awareness of past and present unfairness and a willingness to make our country more fair. The League of Women Voters has been and continues to be an active participant in achieving Equality of Opportunity for all. Please read the following <http://lwv.org/content/equality-opportunity> for a brief history of the League's on combating poverty and discrimination.

Jolanda

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

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

Voter Registration

Our league has been invited to participate at two events at SUNY Ulster to help encourage students/faculty/staff to register to vote. Who better to ask than us!. The first event is Tuesday, March 8. There will be a showing of the film, Selma, at 2:00pm and we have been asked to have voter registration beginning at noon. The second event is Tuesday, March 15. The college is hosting a Diversity Fair from 11:00am to 2:00pm and they would again like the league to have a voter registration table at this time.

Volunteers are needed. Please contact Jean McGarry at 336-6622 if you can lend a hand.

Voter Tools

Once again our League will be participating in the VOTE411 program, a nationwide League of Women Voters online service available since 2006. It answers common questions on candidate qualifications, the ballot, polling places and administrative rules. Look for more details as this year's elections get up and running.

Get Out The Vote

Our league has been invited by the national league to participate in a pilot program for the 2016 presidential primary on April 19. This is a non-partisan effort to get out the vote. Jean McGarry recently spoke to Cynthia Sebian-Lander who is the project specialist for LWVUS. They are working on a pilot voter contact program, where 3 leagues in different states will participate in direct voter contact with assistance from LWVUS and the PAVP (Public Advocacy for Voter Protection) team. They are hoping to work with two local leagues in NY (and one in Ohio) to test its program before expanding for the general election. They need a swing Assembly district and Didi Barrett's district 106 fits the bill. This district is comprised of parts of Dutchess and Columbia Counties. This is a Republican area where a Democrat edged out a victory in the last election.

The biggest challenge will be to organize phone banks. For the next three weeks, efforts will be made to engage other groups who may be interested in partnering with the league in this endeavor. Many volunteers will be required. After we have an idea of the feasibility of signing on to this pilot, Cynthia will provide training for our group.

Details will follow but in the meantime, consider signing on and giving recommendations for other organizations to be contacted. Some groups that definitely will be contacted are the LWV Saugerties and AAUW. Local colleges could also be another source to tap. Please contact Jean McGarry at jfmcg@hvc.rr.com if you are interested or have questions/concerns.

STUDY AND ADVOCACY

Book Club

The League of Women Voters Book Club will be meeting March 15th, 2016 at Enzo's Pizza, 207 Boices Lane, Lake Katrine, 1:45 PM.

We will discuss *The Fifties* which will be divided into three parts and discussed in the upcoming three months. Other books for later will be *Black Ethnicity* and *Dark Money*.

Dividing David Halberstam's "The Fifties" by chapters

There are three divisions: chapters 1-18;19-31;32-46

Division One: Chapters 1-18 pp 3 to 253

- 1 An overview of the climate that created the fifties
- 2 Shocking win by Truman over Dewey, Truman's background; "The buck stops here." Military issues; atomic development.
- 3 Joseph McCarthy "the accidental demagogue;" Mickey Spillane and stories of trigger happy justice;
- 4 "A place of little strategic value," --- Korea and the war that followed.
- 5 General Douglas MacArthur – underestimating the Chinese; Truman's misgivings
- 6: Edward Teller and the hydrogen bomb; the struggle to build the first computer (UNIVAC)
- 7 "Even as Douglas MacArthur promised Harry Truman that the Chinese would not enter the Korean War and that if they did, he would slaughter them, the Chinese Fourth Field Army was entering the country." MacArthur is recalled; U.S. citizens are half-mad, half-glad.
- 8 After WWII only America is left standing; selling to the rest of the world. Hungry American

consumers: “the market of abundance.”

- 9 Levittown and its sisters. “For literally nothing down you too can find a box of your own in one of the fresh-air slums...”
- 10 The big-box discount stores.
- 11 The brothers McDonald and Ray Kroc.
- 12 Kemmons Wilson gets mad and creates the Holiday Inn.
- 13 Move over radio; television is not just a fad! But TV audiences are fickle...
- 14 Television changes the political landscape; the Kefauver committee investigates organized crime in the American living room.
- 15 Lucille Ball “the queen of B movies” invades prime time.
- 16 MacArthur’s political decline. In 1952 Eisenhower wins the Republican nomination for president; Richard Nixon for vice-president. Adlai Stevenson is the Democratic candidate. Eisenhower will be president from January 1953 till January 1961.
- 17 Presidential politics. Eisenhower is terrible on television; a primitive teleprompter is born. Stevenson is “an elegant campaigner” caught by bitter anti-communist innuendo.
- 18 Eisenhower background; how he handled McCarthy.

Division 2: Chapters 19-31 pp 254 to 486

- 19 “A Streetcar Named Desire” signals a change in American theatre
- 20 Alfred Kinsey, “Sexual Behavior in the Human Male;” and later of the human female. Everybody read it! (It was very boring. Anne’s comment)
- 21 Margaret Sanger’s passion; Katharine McCormick’s money: The battle for birth control.
- 22 Fifties bohemia and the start of the counterculture; Alan Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac et al. “The Beats.”
- 23 Republican Party strives to look outward which leads to a rift. Nixon accuses rivals of being communists.
- 24 Oppenheimer, Hoover and the hydrogen bomb.
- 25 The world becomes more complicated. The French are tired of battles in Indo-China (aka Viet Nam) and would like U.S. help. Europe is fast losing its colonies. What’s the U.S. to do?
- 26 The CIA acts in Iran, Guatemala and around the world. The Dulles brothers, Alan and John Foster try to remake the world in America’s image.
- 27 John Foster Dulles owns the State Department and the Pentagon. Dien Bien Phu, the battle of and the consequences of...
- 28 The Supreme Court is divided. The atmosphere is “poisonous” but the court began piecemeal raids on segregation in 1950. In 1954 Earl Warren, following months of tactical maneuvering, read the unanimous opinion that separate was inherently unequal. (Brown vs. Board of Education)
- 29 Rage, violence and economic threats by the white southern establishment, mostly democrats (dixicrats.) The voting rights fight begins in earnest. The death of Emmett Till; the national media begins to pay attention.
- 30 Black citizens are boarding trains for Chicago (or New York or Detroit); the south continues to try to halt the loss of their abused labor force but the Great Migration, begun during WW1, continues.
- 31 Elvis Presley and the emerging culture, rock-a-billy, Memphis blues. Brando, Dean and the new Hollywood.

Division 3: Chapters 32-46 pp 487 to 733

- 32 Prosperity and GM; the automobile is king and every year the car gets get bigger.
- 33 Betty Furness opens refrigerator doors. Poppy Cannon says “the can opener...is the open sesame to wealth and freedom.” Home appliances become status symbols.
- 34 “Ozzie and Harriet” is what every American family should be? Only later is the real Nelson family seen to be dysfunctional. “Father Knows Best” is a snapshot of everyone (else’s) family. Many people feel cheated.
- 35 The cracks begin to show. The people who feel cheated begin to speak. “The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit” is a best seller, showing the price (both financially and emotionally) of conformity. The left and academia are criticized for backing U.S. cold war aggression.
- 36 Rosa Parks starts a revolution. The bus boycott and the rise of Martin Luther King, Jr.37 Marilyn Monroe, Hugh Hefner and ain’t sex fun...
- 38 There is “literature” and then there is “Peyton Place.”
- 39 As more families move into the middle class, there is the women’s magazines calls for “togetherness”. Betty Friedan finds her calling: “The Feminine Mystique” launches quiet then noisier subversion by women.
40. The Pill.
41. Werner Von Braun and the space race.
- 42 The salesman invades the living room; Madison Avenue comes of age. “See the USA in your Chevrolet...” but the little Volkswagen is stealthily gaining ground
43. The \$64,000 Question starts it all. Then there are many. The high stake television quiz shows reign until corruption brings them down.
- 44 Little Rock Central High photos are traveling the world, with American white hatred on front pages – and then on the TV screens.
- 45 Eisenhower is criticized for his defense policies from both left and right. America has become more hawkish than its president. Sputnik scares everybody. Then there is that embarrassing U-2 Flight.
- 46 Cuba. The fall of Batista; the U.S. struggles to find a policy about Castro. Hardliners gain and there is a tentative Bay of Pigs plan of attack. But there is no time to do it before the 1960 election. Therefore it will be handed off to the next president. Nixon assumes it will be him...

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ULSTER COUNTY OBSERVER CORP

Schedules, Audio recordings, agenda and minutes of Legislative Committee meetings and other information can be found at <http://ulstercountyny.gov/legislature>

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If you'd like to help but don't want to attend the meetings, you could prepare a summary of the meeting just by listening to audio recording, reviewing the agenda, minutes and resolutions considered, all of which can be found by going to <http://ulstercountyny.gov/legislature>. (Minutes are generally not available until after approval at the next monthly meeting.)

Guardians of the Charter

This past fall, league members became concerned about the possible movement in the County Legislature of passing resolutions that would serve to weaken the Ulster County Charter. The League of Women Voters of the Mid-Hudson Region was instrumental in the passage of the charter and believes that Ulster County citizens have been served well under this new form of government. It is for this reason that a committee was formed that subsequently became known as the Guardians of the Charter.

An organizational meeting was first held on October 28. A second meeting on November 19 developed a mission statement and formed a plan of action. Since that time the committee has sent a letter to each member of the legislature stating our concerns. Our members continue to observe the Laws and Rules Committee to monitor actions regarding the charter. The committee has also met with Chairman Ronk to voice our concerns and we have been invited to meet with the county executive.

It is our hope that further action by this committee will not be warranted but we will remain true to our mission statement.

The purpose of the Guardians of the Ulster County Charter is to monitor the elected officials in order to preserve the intent of the charter and to inform the public of an attempt by elected officials to compromise the spirit of the charter.

Jean McGarry

UC/DC Materials Management Committee

The Committee met for the first time at the Main Course restaurant in New Paltz February 9th. Everyone seemed pleased with the new location.

The Committee is working on a new mini-brochure to describe our activities and objectives.

We're working to assist passage of a Paint Stewardship program in the New York State Assembly (has already been passed in the NYS Senate).

We're cooperating with Arts Mid-Hudson, setting up a booth celebrating Earth Day in Poughkeepsie. We'll be presenting information on recycling and composting, and encouraging children to get involved.

LWVMHR served as the non-profit sponsor of TRASH FEST, an art project in Marbletown in Ulster County. The organizer, Margot R. Becker, recently sent us this update:

"Jolanda & Kathy! A huge thank you to LWV for sponsoring Trash Fest! I received notice today that I won a small grant from Arts Mid-Hudson for the project. So we are ON! You made this happen by taking a chance on a stranger. Very excited--and grateful to you."

TRASH FEST is a series of art pieces and events to take place in May and June, 2016 in Marbletown, to (1) engage the public in a range of art projects created out of trash by artists of various disciplines, (2) educate the public on reduce/reuse strategies for dealing with trash, and (3) generate a conversation about our trash in Ulster County and how we can better deal with it. TRASH FEST will explore the creative process of making art; the things we throw away, view as valueless, or do not notice; and where trash comes from, and where it goes, in Ulster County. Components will include visual arts, music made on instruments constructed out of trash, performances at trash-related sites, and educational workshops. Because TRASH FEST is a platform for many artists, it can expand or contract based on artist and educator enthusiasm.

TRASH FEST is the brain child of Ulster County resident Margot R. Becker, a writer, collage artist, community arts organizer, former dancer, and solid waste management activist living in Accord, NY. Margot is a member of the Marbletown Environmental Conservation Commission (ECC).

This project is made possible with funds from the Decentralization Program, a regrant

program of the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature and administered by Arts Mid-Hudson.

Additionally, Arts Mid-Hudson is planning an event, in Kingston, where seven sculptors are given seven identical bins of recyclable materials, and each asked to produce a work of art in a given amount of time. Should be fun.



For more information about Arts Mid-Hudson visit the website at <http://www.artsmidhudson.org/>

We videotaped Shirley Kobran at home February 19th, and she recounted some of her extensive experiences introducing recycling in Ulster County in the early 1970's. You can take a look at that video here <https://youtu.be/Zoaj7evWmAE>.

UCRRA

UCRRA has a new Board in place. Three new members include Chairman Fred Wadnola, along with Brian Devine and Jack Hayes, who join Charles Landi and David Gordon. The Board approved purchase of 82 new roll-off containers, to be delivered in a snappy "John Deere" green. Considerable comment was addressed February 24th to the languishing global economy, and, therefore, diminishing markets for recyclables.

Merlyn Akhtar, Recycling Coordinator, has been putting recycling radio spots on WDST, and has been instrumental in developing a new and improved website for UCRRA.

UCSWM_IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION

Deadline for the Commission presenting its finding to the County Legislature has been extended to May 1st. Our LWV representative to the Commission Kathie Beinkafner is not deterred from completing her part of the report, despite having recently endured two broken legs. Get well cards can be sent to her at Woodland Pond in New Paltz.

Kathy Oconnor

Monthly committee minutes can be found at: http://lwvmidhudson.org/Action_Study.html#Trash

UC Efficiency and Review Committee

Efficiency and Review is a newly formed committee in the Ulster County Legislature. Its purpose is to review past local laws and resolutions to see if they are being followed and/or enforced. According to newly elected legislative chairperson, Ken Ronk, in the ten years he has served in the legislature, thousands of resolutions, hundreds of local laws and countless policies have been enacted. Thanks to Tom Kadgen who provided the audio link of the committee's organizational meeting held on February 11. At this inaugural session, Chairman Ronk charged its members to consider the following questions:

Are we over legislating?

Are these enactments and policies a hindrance to business development?

Have we accomplished stated goals?

Can some laws be improved through amending?

Should some laws be rescinded?

Upon completion of this task, the chairman stated the result will be a more efficient and more responsible government..

Without a doubt, if this committee holds to its stated objective, the residents of Ulster County will be the beneficiaries. We look forward to monitoring their progress.

Jean McGarry

**Laws and Rules,
Governmental
Services
Committee****February 11, 2016, 6:04 PM – 6:12 PM**

Committee Members: Kevin A. Roberts, Chairman (absent), David B. Donaldson, Deputy Chairman (absent), Richard A. Parete, Hector S. Rodriguez, Kenneth J. Ronk, Legislature Chairman
Meeting called to order by Kenneth Ronk in the absence of Kevin Roberts.
Minutes from December 14, 2015 meeting approved.

Resolutions for February 16, 2016

Resolution No. 84 – pertaining to appointing Chairman Kenneth Ronk, Jr. as the Ulster County Legislature's Member to serve on the County Jury Board: Approved.

LATE Resolution No. 111 – pertaining to approving the execution of a contract with Family Services Inc. – Department of Mental Health: Approved, as amended.

Discussion of changing meeting time of the committee.

Vic Melville, LWV Observer Corps, 2-26-16

**UC Economic
Development,
Tourism, Housing,
Planning & Transit
Committee****February 4, 2016, 7:00 PM – 8:40 PM**

Committee Members: James F. Maloney, Chairman, Hector S. Rodriguez, Deputy Chairman, Ron G. Lapp, Herbert Litts III, Mary Beth Maio, Jennifer Schwartz Berky, James Delaune

Meeting called to Order by Chairman Maloney.

The minutes of the January 19, 2016 meeting were approved.

Guest Presentation: Targeted Industry Analysis and Existing Conditions Analysis – Suzanne

Holt: Ms. Holt discussed highlights of the history of the former UCDC, the Office of Economic Development and the Economic Development Alliance, and she discussed staff support to the IDA and current activities related to the EDA: Focus Media and Peter Fairweather, consultant, efforts.

Guest Presentation: Ulster Tourism/Focus Media – Rick Remsnyder, Ulster County

Department of Tourism: Mr. Remsnyder discussed the Tech Entrepreneur Campaign related to the initiative called 'Do Business Differently in Ulster County'.

Resolutions for February 16, 2016 Regular Legislative Session:

Legislator Jennifer Schwartz Berky called for an ED policy and strategy to be flushed out with more detail. Chairman James F. Maloney commented on Smart Growth effort, Greenway Planning, arts and tourism.

Resolution No. 13 – pertaining to approving the execution of a contract with Focus Media – Department of Tourism: Mr. Remsnyder introduced Josh Sommers of Focus Media. Mr. Sommers assisted by Tony Marino presented a detailed description of 2015 tourism program and some of the results, and a preview of the 2016 program. The committee focused on how the program works and how effective it is, mostly favorable. Approved, following the discussion.

Resolution No. 18 – pertaining to approving the execution of contract with the Ulster County Economic Alliance – Department of Planning: Approved, as amended. Reports from the UCEDA are requested after their regular meetings.

Resolution No. 93 – pertaining to approving the execution of a contract amendment with Next Step Digital LLC – Department of Information Services. Approved.

Old Business:

Ulster County Broadband Plan Update – Chairmen Maloney commented on the recent NYSAC conference and that broadband is now on the agenda of the NY Regional Economic Councils. Local concerns were discussed.

Vic Melville, LWV Observer Corps, 2-26-16

**UC Public Health
and Social
Services
Committee**

The January 20, 2016 meeting of the Public Health and Social Services committee was convened at 6:05 by Chairman, Legislator Craig Lopez and adjourned at 7:05.

All members of the committee were present: Lopez, Allen, Heppner, Belfiglio and Roberts

Others: Deputy County Executive(DCE) Ken Crannell, Nettie Tomshaw, Secretary to the Committee, John Parete, Legislator

Following the call to order the committee approved the minutes for the November 2015 meeting.

There were 12 resolutions for the committee to address. Initially, however, Resolution No. 19 was taken up first. The Resolution dealt with "establishing a policy to support the County's efforts to combat substance abuse, prevention and dedicate revenue received through the NYS Medical Marijuana tax for programs and services to further address narcotics addiction."

The resolution was discussed by the committee at length (it spent most the first hour of the meeting in doing this). DCE Crannell provided extensive background information on the topic throughout the discussion.

The resolution referenced:

- that heroin and Opioid abuse are a public health crisis in NYS and Ulster County (which has a substantial number of cases);

- that UC Department of Health and Mental Health (DOH &MH) spends \$1 million plus annually to support such services/prevention/treatment of alcohol & substance abuse;

- that Governor Cuomo signed into law, June, 2014, a legislative package to combat this epidemic; and the UC Legislature recognizing the need to deal with this problem passed Resolution 371 in 2014 creating the UC Coalition of Against Narcotics (UCAN);

- the 2016 annual budget allocated a 10% increase in dollars (\$100,000) available to address Opioid addiction in UC; these funds have been allocated to enhance a countywide prevention agenda based on UCAN's recommendations, funds a dedicated family advocate to assist individuals and families how to obtain alcohol & substance abuse treatment, navigate the complex insurance regulations and requirements and build community awareness;

- under the Law of 2014-the Compassionate Care Act (CCA) authorized the establishment of a medical marijuana program; authorized the NYSDOH to regulate and dispense medical marijuana, and the NYSDOH has approved a medical marijuana dispensary to be sited in UC; and the CCA authorized collection of a 7% excise tax to support the medical marijuana program and additional drug abuse prevention, counseling and treatment;

- the state excise tax levied against the gross receipts of the organizations licensed to manufacture and distribute the medical marijuana will result in an allocation of revenue to UC;

- resolved that the UC Legislature supports efforts to combat substance abuse and dedicates all revenue received as a result of the NYSDOH approved medical marijuana dispensary in UC to be used for the prevention and treatment of narcotics addiction;

- that the Commissioner of Finance shall establish an account to receive these funds and provide an annual report to the legislature detailing the receipt and disbursements of funds;

and Note: what is indicated here was the last resolve of the resolution as originally presented:

"Resolved that the funds shall be used to support evidence based programming and such other programs approved by the UC Legislature."

HOWEVER, as a result of the extensive discussion the committee voted to amend the above indicated last resolve to read as follows:

RESOLVED: that the funds shall be used to support programming consistent with NYS regulation and such programs approved by the UC Legislature. This amendment was approved by the committee.

The other 11 resolutions were all passed. Six of the resolutions dealt with matters involving the UC Department of Social Services: to assist in treatment of high risk children, to accept additional state dollars to support the salary and fringe benefits of Behavioral Health Clinician for a two year program, and to support program to prevent the exploitation of children.

Resolution #37 acknowledging that Gateway Community Industries has received increased funding from NYS Office of Mental Health which necessitated amending the local 2016 budget

Resolution #38 allows Commissioner of Health to sign annual renewal agreement to receive publicly funded vaccines for children at no additional cost to UC

Resolution #39 authorizes Chairman of the UC Legislature to sign execute memorandum of agreement with various UC school districts for the operation of Point of Dispensing sites to provide vaccinations and dispense medications in event of chemical, biological or radiological attack or accident

Resolution #66 annual maintenance of software program purchased in 2010-2016 maintenance and updates used by DSS

Resolution #83 Dr. Douglas Heller was reappointed as UC Medical Examiner to serve for a 4 year term.

The next meeting is Monday February 1, 2016 at 6PM.

Lee Cane Observer Corp

UC Board of Health

The UC Board of Health met on February 8, 2016. While there was no quorum, those present listened to Commissioner Smith's report. No votes were taken. Those present met from 6:35 to 7:05.

Present: Woodley, Graham, Hilderbrandt

Others: Commissioner Smith, Katrina Kouhout, Secretary to the Commissioner

Absent: Delmar, Kelly, Tack, Cardinale

Minutes of the December, 2015 and January, 2016 meetings will be addressed at the next meeting in March. On March 14 there will be a public hearing on the Sanitary Code.

Commissioner Smith's Report:

-Winchell's Pizza Update: the water supply at this restaurant had been found to have e coli. The UCDOH had cited the owner for various violations. The owner apparently was not receptive to cooperating for some time, even though advised he would face fines. However he is now boiling the water and will continue to do so until well remedied.

-the Zika virus: this is a rapidly evolving problem. Commissioner Smith has had a number of discussions via the telephone with the Center for Disease Control and the NYS DOH. She noted the following:

-the virus is caused by 2 types of mosquitoes which are very aggressive particularly during the day;

The source of the problem is South America, Caribbean area and it has been found in Florida;

She noted that the problem is moving northward. While there has been no documented case in Ulster County, there has been in Orange County'

The recommendation that has been made: if there is a pregnant woman who has traveled to any of the areas known to have the mosquito, then she should be checked;

-apparently only a few labs in the United States can actually perform the necessary testing. Wadsworth is one of them (Lab Corp cannot do this at this time);

The sample that is taken to be sent to the lab must be frozen and sent to the lab on dry ice;

-if the test comes out positive then the embryo must be tested as to the size of the skull and the related problems;

There is no treatment or any vaccine for this problem.

-Fire incident at Aaron Court: Apparently the problem that occurred at the WIC office involved the electrical connection which started smoking; the staff in that office was evacuated; it sounded from the way the Commissioner reported the matter that the event was not extensive; however, no one was allowed to return to the site until the Fire Department had approved the repairs.

MDR case update: this refers to multiple drug resistance, which a person living in UC had experienced; he went to NYC, was planning to attend a wedding; and he became ill; was treated and was found to have MDR-TB; he was in the hospital for some time; he returned to UC with a substantial amount of meds for his then condition; which NYC HD had failed to advise the local HD about; nevertheless, the local Health Department saw to it that the patient was supervised retaking his meds.

Prior to terminating the meeting, it was noted that there had been a definite increase in the number of autopsies performed in 2015; and that the dollars used to cover the related costs are county money. There is no reimbursement from New York State

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

UC Association of Town Supervisors and Mayors

The February 23, 2016 meeting of the UC Association of Town Supervisors and Mayors was convened at 8:33 by President, T/Rochester Supervisor Chipman and adjourned at 10:04.

Supervisors Present from Towns of Hardenburgh, Shandaken, Shawangunk, Marletown, Rochester, Wawarsing, Plattekill, T/Kingston, Olive, Esopus, New Paltz, Hurley

Others: Ken Ronk, Chairman of the UC Legislature, Jenifer Schwartz-Berky, County Legislator, District 7, Manna Jo Greene, County Legislator, District 19, Hector Rodriguez, County Legislator, District 20, Mayor Noble, City of Kingston, Mayor Tim Rogers, New Paltz.

Following the call to order, the first item on the agenda was a presentation by Ryan Trapani, Education Forester from Catskill Forest Associations, Inc. The principal point to this presentation dealt with the importance of taking care of the American chestnut trees that continue to live throughout Ulster County. For further information one can contact the association at 845-586-3054 or www.catskillforest.org.

The second item on the agenda dealt with Broadband services in Ulster County. Initially Lynn Archer reviewed the situation as it is presently. When Tom Scaglione from the Governor's office arrived somewhat later he also contributed to the discussion and answered questions.

The concern is that there are many residents who do not have access to Broadband or if they the service is not perfect. The attempts to collect the data on how many residents do not have access has not been completed, errors have been found in the actual percentage suggested...not 95% but 65% apparently is the figure of those who do have access.

Several attempts have been started to correct the situation but the attempts have not been completed, have been delayed or once started the initiative has been tabled. At one point it was indicated that a base line assessment must be done. It was noted that Time Warner and Charter are merging. Apparently \$500 million has been provided and matched by private investors which established a \$1 billion dollar fund to use in this effort. Part of the requirement of approving this merger is to provide the underserved with improved service. The merger affects all of UC except for Saugerties. There are apparently different phases to the process. While it was suggested that private concerns could be approached to engage in handling the assessment of service, during Phase 1 none of those affected by the merger in UC may apply for a RFP. The reason for this is that those areas, will be served by the merger and once the FCC approves the procedure then the 145,000 units who are not being served appropriately will be upgraded. Further, if the data needed as to who is without Broadband service is not provided by the Time-Warner-Charter group, those who are so involved may appeal to the state.

The next topic on the agenda dealt with a sales tax update. Mayor Noble indicated some observations:

- Kingston is not interested in having any discussion behind closed doors on this matter;
- feels that Kingston has done its changes (referencing remark made by County Executive Hein in his State of the county speech and talk at the Chamber breakfast earlier;
- Kingston apparently will submit a statement to the county that it expects to receive the same distribution procedure as previously to be followed.

Apparently county could give the towns everything, Kingston nothing. However, Kingston apparently could institute its own sales tax.

Mr. Chipman did pass out a sheet showing each of the 20 towns with figures representing the

individual general funds, the real estate tax levy for 2012-2016 and the total growth rate and annual growth rate.

The last item on the agenda dealt with the State of the County speech. Mr. Chipman did indicate that he and the county executive have had more than one discussion.

The group spent some time exchanging views, indicating various problems facing the towns, the idea of shared services and how that could be used to reduce costs. It was noted that the towns are not all the same, that "one size does not fit all", that there needs to be discussion among the towns as well as discussion with the county executive.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

**Dutchess County
External Advisory
Group (EAG):
Jail and
Transition Center
Project**

Tuesday February 16, 2016 at 6:30 pm the External Advisory Group (EAG) hosted the first of 6 meetings about the proposed Dutchess County Jail and Transition Center Project presented by County Executive Marcus Molinaro and Deputy County Executive William O'Neil.

The presentation lead concerned residence and stake holders through the Background, Analysis, Project Definition, Plan, and Cost Benefit Analysis of the proposed project.

The Dutchess County Jail and Transition Center's (DCJTC) speakers provided web links to its audience for further review of the power point itself, data presented during the presentation, and upcoming forums about the project. They encouraged an ongoing dialogue about this project and involvement of the community and stake holders. <http://www.dutchessny.gov/dcjtc>

The biggest concern for County Executive Molinaro, which was stressed during the meeting, was the inefficiency and anachronous state of the current County Jail. There is a New York State mandate, New York County Law § 217 which states that "Each county shall continue to maintain a county jail as prescribed by law."

The DCJTC Project was presented to its audience as the best possible option to fulfill this state mandate by offering Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) programs and alternative processing in the court system.

The presentation gave participants the chance to see what the existing structures look like, what the cost of the addition would be in comparison to a new facility, and construction designs for how to build a new facility which will increase safety for the inmates and employees. The inclusion of an infirmary and access to mental health services within the building was included in this plan.

The plan also included efforts to improve the environmental ambiance of the facility. County Executive Molinaro and his staff have started a dialog with residents about any possible parking and traffic concerns.

The cost of the project was discussed in two parts; first by facility; and secondly by cost area, for both the Law Enforcement Center and the Justice & Transition Center. Total costs included special population and youth funding, as well as bond issuing costs. A comparison was given between the cost of maintaining the current jail vs. the construction of the new Justice and Transition Center.

At the end of the presentation the members of the advisory group were given a chance to ask questions about the project and after a brief break the floor was opened to the public. For those interested in attending the DCJTC Town Hall Forums, it is helpful to come early and sign up so you will be able to ask questions related to the project and/or presentation.

Soyal Smalls
Secretary
League of Women Voters
Mid-Hudson Region