



Commentator

September 2010

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

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

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CALENDAR		
2010		
SEPTEMBER		
7	10:30am	Observer Corps meeting at Deisings, 111 North Front Street, Kingston
7	7:15pm-9:15pm	Board Meeting at Esther Stickley's, 147 Griffin Dr, Hurley
14		PRIMARY DAY
16	4:30-9pm	Salad Supper with LWVNYS lobbyist, Barbara Bartoletti. Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 320 Sawkill Road, Kingston (see note under Program News)
21	4:00pm	Shared Services Study Group meeting at Jacki Moriarty's, 167 Apple Hill Rd Hurley
28	7:00pm	Consensus meeting for the Golden Hill Study. Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 320 Sawkill Road, Kingston (only members can speak)
OCTOBER		
4	10:30am	Observer Corps meeting at Deisings, 111 North Front Street, Kingston
5	7:15pm-9:15pm	Board Meeting at Gloria Plasker's, 106 Park St, Hurley
13		POSTMARK DEADLINE FOR BY-MAIL VOTER REGISTRATION
16	10am-noon	REDISTRICTING - A Fundamental Democratic Process. Town of Esopus Town Hall, 174 Broadway (Route 9W), Port Ewen (see note under Program News)
22		LAST DAY TO REGISTER IN PERSON AT BOARD OF ELECTIONS
23	10am-noon	Candidate Forum for UC Sheriff & Comptroller at Kingston City Hall, 420 Broadway, Kingston
NOVEMBER		
2	6:00am-9:00pm	ELECTION DAY
9	7:15pm-9:15pm	Board Meeting at Gloria Plasker's, 106 Park St, Hurley

Check our Calendar on-line at
<http://lwvmidhudson.org/calendar.html>
 for updated information.

Prez Sez...

Fall is coming on fast and League activities will be heating up, but summer has been pretty busy too.

The LWV board, the Observer Corps, and the Resource Development Committee and two study committees (Golden Hill Health Care Facility chaired by Margaret Sellers and Jim Mahoney and Shared Services chaired by Jacki Moriary and Lee Cane) have all been meeting regularly. Thus many plans have been made for the next few months, as you will see by the calendar and by descriptions of events elsewhere in this newsletter.

We are especially eager to have you join us on September 16 for our Salad Supper when we welcome back our state League's energetic and long-time lobbyist, Barbara Bartoletti. We are so lucky to be so well-represented in Albany and it is always enlightening and gratifying to hear about Barbara's efforts - and that of other League advocates - as we try to bring some functionality to our famously dysfunctional state government. The budget crisis brings even greater urgency to these efforts. Even if you aren't a member, please know that you are most welcome. If you'd like to bring something for the supper, please email me with your offer.

We also urge Ulster LWV members to participate in a discussion on September 28 about the Golden Hill Health Care Facility (nursing home). We're about the only civic group around that has delved deeply into the issues concerning Golden Hill and there will be considerable public interest in what we decide.

As you are surely aware, the election season is already underway and we encourage you to go to the state League site (www.lwvny.org) or to our site (www.lwvmidhudson.org) or check out www.vote411.org if you have questions about getting registered, your polling place, an absentee ballot, etc. You can also call your county Board of Elections - 845-334-5470 in Ulster, 845-486-2473 in Dutchess.

As we keep saying, democracy is not a spectator sport!

*Dave***PROGRAM NEWS**

UPCOMING PROGRAM: Thursday, September 16, 6 - 9, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 320 Sawmill Road, Kingston, 12401. Salad Supper with LWVNYS lobbyist, Barbara Bartoletti. A great opportunity to socialize with your fellow League members and hear from our long-time volunteer LWV lobbyist in Albany as the political season really starts to heat up.

An advocacy workshop with Barbara will take place from 4:30 - 6. Our Ulster County volunteer lobbyist, Tom Kadgen, will also be on hand with tips about lobbying at the local level. This is valuable information for anyone who wield maximum influence on their elected officials.

Elected officials are also most welcome to join us and contribute THEIR tips!

SAVE THE DATE! Saturday, October 16, 10am-noon - Town of Esopus Town Hall, 174 Broadway Street (Route 9 W), Port Ewen, NY 12466

REDISTRICTING - a fundamental democratic process.

But just how democratic is it? Right now we are painfully aware that to a very great extent, legislators choose voters, voters don't choose them. There are few competitive districts, few competitive elections, and very little turnover.

You are probably also aware that as soon as the 2010 census data is in, we'll be drawing district lines again across the country. Ulster County's new charter allows for a non-partisan process here but can we also achieve the same at the state level? This is no time to sit back on our cynical haunches.

Join us on October 16th, 10 - noon, Town of Esopus Town Hall in Port Ewen, when we present a program on how this just might be done.

Watch for more details in the next Commentator, but meanwhile mark your calendar.

WEBMASTER'S NOTE

We have a new "domain name" that is an awful lot easier to remember. While the old one will continue to work our new site name has been changed to <http://lwvmidhudson.org>.

ACTION & STUDY**LWV GHCC Study Group 2**

NOTE: Because of the vast amount of material under consideration, reports and resources on this topic are now only available online at http://lwvmidhudson.org/Action_Study.html. We'll include a brief statement of the materials available and any links you'll need to access them. If you would like to request a printed copy, please contact one of the league officers noted above..

GOLDEN HILL HEALTH CARE CENTER: A LWVMHR STUDY**What is the Golden Hill Health Care Center (GHHCC)?**

Golden Hill Health Care Center is a 280 bed nursing home (RHCF) that is owned, operated and staffed by Ulster County. It has a very fine reputation for serving its residents well. GHHCC is open to everyone in need of nursing home care, whose care needs can be met by the facility.

What problems make the future of Golden Hill Health Care Center an issue?

GHHCC has three major issues, i.e. high operating costs, capital problems, and a facility configuration that does not meet current needs which threaten its viability. The County subsidy for operating costs varies from year to year, but estimates from \$2 to \$8 Million a year in the near future are not unrealistic. Since every \$750,000 of tax subsidy results in a county tax increase of 1%;

A \$2 Million subsidy will raise taxes by 2.7%.

A \$4 Million subsidy will raise taxes by 5.3%.

A \$8 Million subsidy will raise taxes by 10.7%.

On top of the need for operating subsidies, Golden Hill also has major capital deficiencies. According to engineering reports, the water pipes, sewer pipes, ventilation system, elevators, and nurse call systems are all in poor condition. It is not energy efficient. The costs for fixing these systems ranges from about \$10 Million for a sewer pipe project to about \$80 Million for a total rehabilitation of the building. It may be less expensive to build a new building than to totally rehabilitate the existing one. Breakdowns will limit the GHHCC resident capacity and reduce revenue, creating disruption and unplanned expense.

The LWVMHR is preparing to help our members reach consensus about what the county should do about Golden Hill so that we can speak out publicly on this issue.

The League has formed a new Study group to reopen and continue the Golden Hill Study begun two years ago. We are developing a list of consensus questions to put before the membership to address the pros and cons of both programmatic and fiscal, i.e. cost and revenue issues. The effects on the current residents and employees will also be part of the consideration.

We have tentatively scheduled a **consensus meeting for Sept. 28**, at the Unitarian Congregation in Kingston, Sept. 28 at 7:00 PM. **Posted resource content will be regularly updated!**

Margaret Sellers, LWVMHR GHHCC Study Group II Chair

LWVMHR STUDY GROUP:

1. Golden Hill Health Care Center: A LWVMHR Study
at http://lwvmidhudson.org/files/GHHC_-_A_LWVMHR_Study.pdf
2. LWVMHR Study Group meeting on July 16, 2010
at http://lwvmidhudson.org/files/GHHC_-_Study_Group_7-26-10.pdf
3. Interviews about GHHCC Marshall Beckman, Deputy County Executive of Ulster County
at http://lwvmidhudson.org/files/GHHC_LWVMHR_Study_-_Beckman_Interview.pdf

ULSTER COUNTY TASK FORCE:

1. Observer Corp: Golden Hill Task Force Committee Meetings 6/1/10-8/3/10
at http://lwvmidhudson.org/files/GHHC_Task_Force_Meetings-6-1-10_to_8-3-10.pdf
2. Long Term Care Financial Considerations: Golden Hill Health Care Center; David Bonk, CMA, CISA
at http://lwvmidhudson.org/files/Golden_Hill_Financial_Considerations_2010.pdf

Further items will be posted online at http://lwvmidhudson.org/Action_Study.html as they are available.

Additional links of interest:

NYS Department of Health - [Nursing Homes in New York State](http://www.nyhealth.gov/facilities/nursing/) at <http://www.nyhealth.gov/facilities/nursing/>

[Resolution No. 115](http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/resolutions/115-10.pdf) at <http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/resolutions/115-10.pdf> adopted on April 20, 2010 creating the Golden Hill Task Force.

Information on the May 25th summit on county-run nursing homes hosted by Ulster County reported in the Daily Freeman May 13th issue at <http://www.freemanonline.com/articles/2010/05/13/news/doc4beb815d9e160368704114.txt>

**Ulster County
Shared
Services Study**

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

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

- [Action Plan](#)

Additional links of interest include

- The Draft Report can be found on the County Website at www.co.ulster.ny.us/municipalities/FINAL%20DRAFT%20Highway%20DOC%20with%20charts%20and%20maps.pdf
- Frank Cassetta's concise summary is at our website at lwvmidhudson.org/files/Highway_Service_Cooperation_-_Summary.pdf
- the Shared Services Program within the NYS Department of State Division of Local Government Services <http://www.dos.state.ny.us/lgss/sharedservices/index.html>
- Best Practices page of the NYS Association of Counties. www.nysac.org/County_Corner.php/

OBSERVER CORP

Ulster County Legislature Meeting July 20, 2010

Chairman Wadnola called the meeting to order at 7pm with 29 members present. (Absent: Legislators Frey, Richard Parete and Provenzano. Legislator Petit left at 8:00pm)

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Tom Gallagher along with Kevin Kurtz, Sean Ennis and Nial Quigley. Each were presented by legislators from Districts 6 and 9 with a Pride of Ulster County Award for having attained the rank of Eagle Scout.

Having been granted Privilege of the Floor, Sam Magarelli, a Woodstock Volunteers' Day Committee board member, spoke on the Legislature's Proclamation declaring August 2010 as Volunteers' Month in Ulster County. He made a particular point to encourage all towns to host picnics, dinners or other such activities to honor the various volunteers and their families for the invaluable and essential service they give to the Community. Following Mr. Magarelli's remarks, legislators from Districts 8 and 10 presented Pride of Ulster County Awards to Scott Schulte, Christopher Rickard, Steve Greenfield and Roger Thorpe for their participation in training with the Emergency Volunteers Project in Israel.

The Public Comment segment of the meeting was lengthy with 12 or more speakers addressing the legislature. Recently, pursuant to authority under the County Charter, the County Executive consolidated management of the Youth Bureau and Consumer Affairs agencies under the current Consumer Affairs director, Janet Caffo, and terminated the Youth Bureau director, Krista Barringer. Most speakers addressed this matter and, of them, most opposed the loss of an experienced and talented youth advocate (as well as the manner in which the change had occurred) in favor of a director with no youth affairs training or experience.

After quickly enacting the legislation on the Consent Agenda, the first "hot topic" of the evening - Resolution 174 (to confirm the appointment of Janet Caffo as Director of the Youth Bureau) - was addressed. Many of the legislators who spoke in opposition cited the same reasons as the public speakers. Additionally, they pointed out issues of cost effectiveness and a generally agreed upon priority of "youth affairs". Those supporting the measure observed that consolidations such as had occurred were specifically contemplated in the Charter and that the salary and benefits savings would go directly into funding for youth programs that are threatened by continuing economic problems. The resolution was defeated with 12 ayes and 17 noes. It had been introduced by Legislator Richard A. Gerentine.

Chairman Wadnola's effort to amend the charter to reduce the legislature from 23 to 21 members again failed to gain purchase in the Legislature. Resolution 191 would have set a hearing on the local law but, having only garnered 16 of the majority party votes, it was defeated.

Resolution 192, under which specific elected and appointed officers would be required to provide budget details regarding "mandates" to the Legislature shortly after the Executive submits the county budget, sparked a measure of debate. Opponents pointed out that all of the information was readily available for the asking and that this legislation served no purpose. Proponents respectfully disagreed and the matter was approved by 20 in favor, 9 opposed. [NOTE: The County Executive approved the legislation on July 29th]

A resolution of note (#199): Ulster County is in the process of adopting a codification of all of the Local Laws that have been adopted over the years and a public hearing was set for August 10, 2010. For those having an interest, this codification will make research substantially easier.

The final item on the agenda involved adopting a retirement incentive program which permits the County Executive to identify specific job titles as eligible for an enhanced retirement provided any employee in the titles meets the retirement eligibility criteria. [NOTE: Although NYS law made enhancement available to most state workers, it made the "targeted" and "general" programs

Legislative Programs, Education and Community Services

optional to local governments. Ulster County chose to adopt only that portion of the program that permits the Executive to specify the job titles to be targeted. It declined to adopt that portion which would provide enhancements generally to those who meet the retirement criteria under the state law. **SEE http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?default_fld=&bn=S07909&Summary=Y&Text=Y**

The legislature adopted the resolution unanimously and without debate.

Jim McGarry

NOTE: Due to conflicts, no observer was available to report on the Legislature meeting on August 17th. Readers may wish to view the Webcast at <http://www.totalwebcasting.com/live/ulster/>

Date: August 3, 2010 Start Time: 5:02 p.m. Finish Time: 5:53 p.m.

Mr. Wayne Harris, Chairman, called the meeting to order. Attendance was taken and the minutes of the previous meeting (July 6, 2010) were adopted and distributed.

Mr. Mark Komdat, Dean of Administration, Ulster County Community College (SUNY Ulster) presented an UCCC Financial Update. A \$300,000 cut this year is in effect, even though the state budget is not yet settled. Some positions will not be filled.

The water acquisition system is moving forward. A kick-off is planned for next week with SUNY Ulster to lead the environment review.

A dedication of the new nursing labs is coming by the end of August. There was a question and discussion of a 4-year nursing program and Mr. Komdat is to report to the committee its status.

Ms. Lydia Reidy, Executive Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Ulster County, reported they are waiting for the full budget packet.

The Ulster County Fair began at 4 p.m. this day and the legislative opening is tomorrow at 6 p.m. The Ulster County fairgrounds are in good condition and safety actions have been taken.

Ms. Reidy reviewed current programs and activities, including: local growing conditions (tomato blight is in a local county), the Emerald Ash Borer [From Wikipedia: The emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis* or *Agrilus marcopoli* and EAB) is a green beetle native to Asia. In North America the borer is an invasive species, highly destructive to ash trees in its introduced range. The damage of this insect rivals that of Chestnut blight and Dutch Elm Disease.] is present in Saugerties and presents a major threat to the ash tree population, and restrictions on firewood transportation (50 miles) are being taken seriously. Also, rock snot is being taken seriously [From Wikipedia: *Didymosphenia geminata*, commonly known as didymo or rock snot, is a species of diatom that grows in warm and shallow water. If it overgrows, it can form large mats on the bottom of lakes, rivers and streams. It is not considered a significant human health risk, but it can affect stream habitats and sources of food for fish and make recreational activities unpleasant. It is considered a nuisance organism or invasive species. The microscopic algae can be spread in a single drop of water.] and the use of felt soled shoes are being reduced or replaced.

Members of CCE staff discussed several programs including: the Food and Nutrition Education in Communities program (the emphasis is on behavior change), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) replacing the Food Stamp program, the Eat Smart & Live Well program, the Plant a Row for the Hungry program and the Master Gardener Program. In the current economic situation and with the concerns about proper nutrition for children and adults, these programs are vital.

Document prepared by Vic Melville, 8/23/10

Budget and Finance

The Legislative Budget and Finance Committee was called to order at 5:04 on August 10, 2010 by Chairman Gerentine and adjourned at 5:46.

Members present. Legislators Sheeley and Lomita were absent. Other attendees DCE Robert Sudlow, Michael Berg, Executive Director of Family, Emily from Family's Domestic Violence group, Comptroller Auerbach, Board of Elections Commissioners Turco and Mihm.

Initially Legislator Gregorius spoke with regards to a late resolution #215. Apparently there had been cuts in the money allocated by the state for the Children's Services Program that is provided at the Domestic Violence (DV) shelter that is run by Family. To clarify the matter, Michael Berg of Family was asked to explain the details.

The \$30,000 grant that is involved is state money. The state cut \$4,000 from the allocation leaving \$26,000. This latter sum, while originally to be allocated to the Special Delinquency Program administered by the DV shelter, was then redirected by the UC Youth Board to a Youth Leadership Program. This change had apparently been approved by the county legislature.

The program that has been offered has been in operation since the early 1980s. Information was provided by Emily of Family regarding the specific types of programs and services (register for school, clothes, school supplies, food and gifts at holiday times) to the children who come with their mothers to the shelter. Additionally there are those who are helped who do not stay at the shelter.

**Governmental
Services,
Environmental
&
Administrative
Committee**

The number of children assisted in 2009 was 73, all of whom are very needy. Mr. Berg also noted that the Kingston School District was also very supportive of the program.

The committee did not take a vote at this time. Chairman Gerentine noted that this particular resolution all needs to be presented to two other committees. He thanked everyone for their input and said the resolution would be handled at the next meeting. Apparently the resolution as presented will require some changes.

The Commissioners of the Board of Elections explained that it had a late resolution that it was working on with regard to the need for \$35,000 in order to insure that there would be an appropriate budget line into which the \$142,000 from the state could be deposited. The reason for this is due to the increased publishing costs, printing of ballots, etc. associated with the primaries due to be held September 14. There are many, many primaries. The resolution will need to be dealt with next week.

There were 10 resolutions which the committee addressed. Nine were passed including three which, if passed by the Legislature, authorizes the Chairman of the Legislature to execute an inter-municipal shared services agreement with the towns of Saugerties, New Paltz, and Woodstock, for the maintenance of county roads. The resolution dealing with the hiring of an accounting firm (same one as last year, for same price) for analysis and review of the County Executive's proposed budget was presented by a decision was delayed until next week, apparently there was a need to have more information about the time when these procedures would take place.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

Environmental Subcommittee: Date: August 16, 2010 Start: 5:35 p.m. Finish: 6:30 p.m.

Legislator Laura Petit, co-chair, led the meeting.

Ms. Tracey Bartles, representing the Recycling Oversight Committee presented a report on the proposed law revisions that is to go before the county legislature. She reported needing committee people who can regularly attend the committee meetings.

There was a discussion of the subcommittee's organization and mission.

Regarding green purchasing, Legislator Robert Parete submitted a document entitled Executive Order No. 4: Establishing a State Green Procurement and Agency Sustainability Program. A review of the document will be done next month. An energy audit is to be presented in September to the legislature. Mr. Parete is on task force of the county executive. Several green topics were discussed and Mr. Parete agreed to prepare a list of key topics for consideration next month.

The Siemens Comprehensive Report was released July from Ms. Amanda LaValle, Coordinator, Department of the Environment.

Other topics of brief discussion: the county global warming task force has not met for a year, the status of the sustainable communities program, and the status of capital projects regarding LEED compliance.

Document prepared by Vic Melville, 8/23/10

Full Committee: Date: August 16, 2010 Start: 6:35 p.m. Finish: 7:22 p.m.

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

Ms Tracey Bartles, representing the Recycling Oversight Committee, reported on the proposed revision of county law. The committee approved calling a public hearing.

Mr. Gary Capella, Executive Director, Ulster County Soil & Water Conservation District, presented their 2011 budget as given previously to Legislative Programs committee. Minutes of the July 6, 2010 were extensive and covered all of the observations made by this observer and are available on the Legislative web site.

Ms. Kathleen Mihm, Commissioner of Elections, discussed a draft resolution requesting transfer of funds – amending the 2010 county budget – Board of Elections to cover a full blown primary (unexpected) at a cost of \$30,000 for printing and \$5,417.83 for miscellaneous contractual expenses. Adopted.

Mr. Michael Bemis, Executive Director, Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency (UCRRA), and Ms. Michelle Leggett, Recycling Coordinator, UCRRA: Ms. Leggett discussed the program for small businesses, and Mr. Bemis discussed reprocessing glass, briefly the proposed budget (flat) submitted on August 9, 2010, the debt service fee, expenses (\$4.5 M for transportation to Syracuse), conversion to single stream (re County Waste) where options are to be presented in 2-3 months, and flow control (now for trash only). A fall electronics recycling day is planned.

**Health and
Human
Services**

A late resolution to provide continued funding for the children's services program at Washbourne House – amending the 2010 Ulster County budget was presented and discussed by Legislator Donald Gregorious (he is not a committee member). After considerable discussion, including with Majority Leader Paul Hansut, the resolution for \$30,000 was replaced by a resolution for \$10,000 was adopted.

A resolution creating a special committee to update the Ulster County Administrative Code was adopted.

A resolution authorizing an agreement with the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services was adopted.

A late resolution authorizing a sixty day extension for reporting to the Legislature the full finding of the special task force on Golden Hill Health Care facility was adopted with some discussion of how the consultants were funded (by Golden Hill).

A late resolution confirming the County Executive's appointment of the director of the Youth Bureau of the County of Ulster was discussed extensively, then table approved. There was discussion about Youth Bureau committee's need of attendance at their meetings and maybe more reporting of their activity.

A late draft resolution opposing the Cordoba House (Ground Zero Mosque) was not adopted.

Document prepared by Vic Melville, 6/23/10

The Legislative Health and Human Services Committee was convened at 6:30, 7-1-10 by Deputy Chairman Rob Parete and adjourned at 7:40. Members present except for Chairman Frey. Minutes approved.

Richard Engnath of the HTLV National Registry spoke briefly about the other aspects of HIV. Deputy Chairman Parete noted that UC supported a data base for the program and legislation to such. Legislation has been developed by Mr. Engnath with Assemblyman Cahill and apparently is being worked on in the NYS Assembly. Deputy Chairman Parete indicated that a memorializing resolution would be developed to show support for the legislation before the NYS Legislature for this committee to address, and then present such to the UC Legislature for consideration.

Dr. Hasbrouck, the Public Health Director, agreed to prepare a written item as well.

The second item was a report by Dr. Hasbrouck on the recent audit of the UCDOH by the NYSDOH. This was performed in April, 2010 and the report of the results was received June 14. The main point was that there has been significant improvement in the quality of its operations. Any deficiencies were found to be minor and readily addressed by the local staff. The public water supply was also found to be up to date.

He further commented on the Health Summit that was recently convened. Involving about 100 community representatives, four planning councils were developed and will be meeting in the future.

The third item on the agenda was a presentation from DSS. Commissioner Rodriguez introduced Barbara Sorkin, Deputy Commissioner and Director of Children and Family Services.

Ms. Sorkin noted that the two ways an individual can enter the Services system: through Child Protective or Children and Family Services. The difference is that in the latter instance the calls come from the community to the intake unit. During 2009 there were 205 referrals. Ms. Sorkin noted that case loads had not risen in this area. The basis for the calls presumably is that there is a child in need. The idea is to protect the health and safety of the child and avoid removal from the home.

Another group is the NEXUS group. Caseworkers team with UCMH clinicians. The idea here is to reduce psychiatric hospital placement and out of home placement.

When all else fails, there is Foster Care. Prospective participants may come from CPS due to abuse and to provide protection; or PINS - Person in Need of Supervision: a youth who can't be maintained at home. This section must plan from day the child/family is brought to DSS. Must show the judge that DSS has done its due diligence to work out the situation. If not, then how to work out permanency: relative homes, guardianship to relative, Independent for adoption, and adoption: freed by judge: parent can't parent the child and termination of parental rights (hardest aspect for case worker to work out for). At present time there are 24 "freed" children, all of whom have adoptive resources (involved in the process of being adopted). There are 65 homes involved in Family Care (have 30 hours of very intensive training).

Adult Services: Adult Protective: no central registry; everything done by local referral; the Central Intake System works with the OFA; individuals are over 18 who can't provide for themselves. There were 271 referrals to APS in 2009.

Also, there is Personal Care, particularly the Consumer Directed Program, developed by the state, great increase in this as it allows clients to oversee those aides who are involved in their care.

Commissioner also has 33 guardianships representing people who can't make their own

decisions.

In 2009 the UC Adult Protective Service was awarded state recognition as local group that went the extra mile.

There were four resolutions, all were passed.

Two topics for discussion only:

Introductory Local Law no. x of 2010 dealing with the banning of the use of indoor tanning facilities by those under the age of 18. During the discussion some of the points/questions made: the county has rules regarding the use of tobacco, this is another item to show concern, care about relation to cancer; need to list who the health care providers referred to; why only under 18; why penalize the child and not the parents in this situation.

The second item for discussion only concerned the appointment of the Director of the Youth Bureau by the UC Executive. It was mentioned during discussion that this was to be achieved by making the Director of the Consumer Fraud Bureau, also Director of the Youth Bureau. DCE Beckman advised the committee that if the county wanted to be able to receive funding from NYS, the Director would need to spend 35 hours per week devoted to the Youth Bureau and 5 hours to the Consumer Fraud Bureau. Nothing else would change.

Janet Caffo, who is the person in question, was introduced to the committee. In her comments she noted that those in the Consumer Fraud Bureau would in fact be able to handle the additional work they would be expected to perform.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

The Legislative Health and Human Services committee was convened at 6:37 on August 12, 2010 by Chairman Frey.

Members present. Absent Legislators Petit, Briggs, and Parete (excused). Other attendees DCE Beckman, Youth Board Appointee Reynolds, Ralph Mitchell, HVCFI Ulster Coordinator, Paul Hansut, Legislative Majority Leader.

Minutes of the July 1 meeting were approved.

Next of the agenda was a brief comment on the CRREO Report dealing with the status of physician recruitment and retention in the Hudson Valley. Chairman Frey noted that among other points in the report the following: there is a growing senior population, doctors are older than the average age, there is a deficit of youth. Once members have read, time to be arranged at next meeting to review.

A monthly report on the local DOH by Dr. Hasbrouck, Public Health Director was distributed.

A report on the results of the Pro-Act Discount Card was noted. It began July 10, 2010. During the first two weeks (which was the last half of July) this program saved the county \$15,144.32. It was noted that in 2009 the sum saved for the entire year was about \$30,000. It appears 296 individuals used the card.

The next item on the agenda was a brief commentary and presentation by Ralph Mitchell HVCFI Ulster Coordinator. UC does not receive the same rate of reimbursement for Medicare as Dutchess County. As a consequence UC hospitals do not receive \$10 million dollars. Both UC and DC are equidistant from NYC. Congressman Hinchey has been working on this for some time on UC's behalf.

Mr. Mitchell requested that the committee provide a memorializing resolution in support of UC receiving the same rate of Medicare reimbursement. He noted that such an effort would receive note by Senators Schumer and Gillibrand, which would be important. The committee concurred about developing such a resolution for the meeting in September.

The resolution to confirm appointments to the UC Community Services Board and the MR/DD Subcommittee was passed.

The resolution authorizing a 60 day extension to the task force reporting its findings on the Golden Hill Health Care Center to the UC Legislature was passed.

The resolution #215 (late) to provide continued funding for the Children's Services Program at the Washbourne House (Domestic Violence Shelter) was tabled until a source for the money (\$30,000) can be found.

The last item of business on the agenda was the resolution dealing with the confirmation of the County Executive appointment of Arlene Foy Reynolds to be the Director of the Youth Bureau resulted in a motion to adjourn to executive session.

At that point this writer left the meeting.....6:47.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

Board of Health

The UC Board of Health was convened by President Dr. Stellato at 7:00PM on August 8, 2010 and adjourned at 8:30. Members present. Absent Delma and Ostrander. Other attendees: Dr. Hasbrouck, Neredin Veytia, Eleanor Troy, Vincent Martello, Katrina Kouhout and Denis from Environmental Health Services.

Minutes of June, 2010 meeting approved. There was no meeting in July.

Initially Dr. Hasbrouck reported on the Primary Lead Prevention Grant (value: \$265,000). It will be used in the Environmental section of the DOH. This grant will enable the DOH to evaluate areas in the county that would be considered as "hot zones", i.e., mid-town Kingston. The DOH will work with the Kingston Fire Department Buildings and Safety Team to identify the areas which have potential lead causing situations. The Landlord Association will also be involved. The intent is to have the proposal ready for Legislative action in September.

Dr. Tack suggested that a care with "Are You Concerned About Lead" on it distributed at pediatrician offices to bring awareness to this particular problem.

Mr. Clegg suggested that the legal requirements to taking paint samples, entering properties, etc. be evaluated.

It was noted that eight neighboring counties including Dutchess are already involved in this program (entering their 2nd year) so Ulster is in good company.

Partners in Public Health Councils had a meeting earlier in the week to which all four councils attended. They will meet quarterly commencing in October. They will follow the report work which is part of the program to make UC the healthiest county in NYS.

Report on the state audit, which had not been done since the 1980s dealt with the WIC program (Women, Infants and Children) and how the DOH handled state aid. Mrs. Veytia reported that this would be a very detailed report. Dr. Hasbrouck stated that the state auditors began August 8 and would continue for three weeks. The preliminary and final reports will be shared with the Board.

As Dr. Hell, the Medical Examiner, was not present, Dr. Hasbrouck provided the following: In June, there were 20 deaths reported of which 3 were suicides; only 1 site visitation was required; In July, 23 deaths were reported of which 2 were suicides and only 1 site visit was needed.

Eleanor Troy, preparedness supervisor, reported on the county's intent to respond to an RFP to develop a Medical Reserve Corps (MRC): to be in a better position to respond to any future emergency, disaster, that might occur in UC. She reviewed the background to this type of group (since 9/11 communities have sought to have such groups of volunteers, both trained doctors and nurses as well as non-medical personnel). Apparently a state audit on the county's ability to respond to a large scale disaster showed deficiencies such that it was felt this was an important step to take.

The proposal would include procedures for recruitment, registering, credentialing participants, training, retention...all to comply with existing Federal requirements. There are potential funds available, i.e. \$10,000 start up award and \$5,000 annually thereafter.

During discussion it was noted and agreed that coordinating with the hospitals, doctors and nurses was an important factor in developing this program.

September is National Preparedness month. Mrs. Veytia noted it will be well publicized through the newspapers and Public Access TV.

She also reported on the continued developments of the clinic consolidation in Saugerties, New Paltz and Kingston.

An update on the Certified Home Health Care license sale: such material as NYSDOH requires has been submitted in a detailed report.

Dr. Tack again committed on the point that there will be only 2 such agencies, Always There and Will Care, in UC rather than 3 or 4 as there have been; and his concerns about lack of potential care for those in need of involved home service.

The report from the Environmental Health Services group noted that there had been some instances of sewage failures. DOH responded by revoking permits, requiring that sites be cleaned up, holding informal hearings (and some formal ones) and making an effort to enforce the rules.

It was further reported that a variety of different animals have been tested for rabies.

The final presentation was made by Vince Martello who handles communications for DOH, particularly the website. He explained that the present county site tends to be text oriented, static, heavy; county executive would like to be redone, updated, more user friendly. However, county does not have the money to do this. At present work is being done on the County Executive's site; and he showed the group what was being done to enhance the DOH web site. Not yet ready to roll the later out.....a work in progress.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

**The Ulster
County
Association of
Town
Supervisors**

The Association of UC Town Supervisors was convened at 8:30 by President, T/Shawangunk Supervisor John Valk on July 20, 2010 and adjourned at 9:53.

First order of business was commentary from County Executive Michael Hein:

-he indicated that the remaining parts of the shared services report: Municipal Courts and Economic Development had been released and copies would be distributed to the T/Supervisors at the end of his report;

-Mr. Hein noted that in addition to the above the report on Highways was provided again, as well as a Summary Report on Intergovernmental Collaboration in UC and an Action Plan for Moving Forward (Jonathan Drapkin, President/CEO of Pattern for Progress).

-he noted that in the latter it was suggested that a shared services group be formed which would include among other representative groups, a representative of the LWV; and the usage of the Intermunicipal Council which is provided for in the UC Charter should be followed;

-Mr. Hein reminded the group that the county is presently involved in the budget process which is very serious;

-he noted that the task force dealing with the county nursing home, Golden Hill Health Care Center, is dealing with the question how to provide access to care for people without means and pay for it; this task force, established by the UC Legislature, is examining multiple options, the pros and cons of which will be provided to the Legislature. The question for the latter whether to raise taxes or should the county be in the nursing home business. A further point that Mr. Hein made was that the state does not reimburse the county nursing home in an equal manner as privately owned nursing homes.

-he note that as a result of the state's continually cutting funding for children's programs, the county was being negatively impacted. This resulted in removing the former department head which would save \$75,000 in salary and benefits. Then the Youth Bureau and Consumer Fraud Bureau would be placed under one Director, with the latter department head also head of the Youth Bureau.

President Walk commented that there was a new rule that the towns must take over handling dog licenses. He asked whether it would possible for the county to purchase all the dog licenses for a fee. Mr. Hein said he was open to discussing this.

Supervisor Katz requested that the county get the mortgage checks out for the second half of the year in December not in January. Mr. Hein responded that "He heard."

Supervisor Moran asked how many towns were involved in the shared services project dealing with the highways. Mr. Hein advised there were two with contracts, 4 pending; number of miles to be done at this point, he did not know.

Mr. Hein advised that the budget for 2011 would be released end of September or the very beginning of October.

A major port of the meeting was devoted to a presentation by the Commissioners of the Board of Elections (Turco and Mihm) on the process to be employed in using the new voting machines (scanning machines v. the lever machines)

Voters will still see the same inspectors and sign the voter books

The staff of the Board of Elections will have a full month of training in August for inspectors due to the primaries in September.

There are 89 poll sites (many of the sites have been consolidated), but 129 machines (includes disability machines with levers). The machines are stored at old jail. Those for towns are transported to and from the towns, the cost for such is bailed back to the towns.

Lever machines may be used by Boards of Education through 2011.

As to the process: the voter will fill out the ballot (copy provided to each of the those in attendance) in an area providing privacy; once ballot completed, voter will put into privacy sleeve, take to inspector, vote by putting ballot into scanner.

Ballots are kept in a bound book (similar to a check book) and numbered accordingly. The Board of Elections must account for every ballot whether used or not. Any referendums will be on the back of the ballot. The Board of Elections must retain custody of all ballots for two years and then they will be destroyed. Storage of these ballots will be worked on.

Tallying the results of the voting is not expected to take any longer then the process takes now.

During the Q & A and discussion session it was noted that it would be up to the county legislature to decided what to do with the old voting machines.

Question raised about what would happen if the power was lost since the new machines need electricity to operate. The machines have their own back up battery pack which automatically kicks in if power is lost. The battery pack has a 3 hour life.

If programming were to go bad, the machine must be replaced as it would not be possible to both

fix the machine and then properly test it, which state law requires. As a consequence the county has ordered sufficient extra machines to cover this type of problem should it arise. People would however be able to continue to vote and place a completed ballot in the emergency slot in the front of the machine.

The Board of Election representatives indicated that if there are 30 or more people in a group which would like to have demonstration, etc., it would be available to explain how the new machines work. They are doing regular road shows on this matter.

Another item brought up under new business dealt with a state law requiring that service workers be paid the prevailing wage of \$6 per hour. T/Supervisors voted not to support such.

Dare Thompson, president of the League of Women Voters of the Mid-Hudson Region spoke briefly regarding the League's plan to sponsor another program on energy in October, 2010 to be held at the new T/Esopus Town Hall. At this time the League plans to provide an update to the program held in March, 2010. She noted that that program had been attended by more than 300 people; and that the T/Supervisors had been very supportive.

She explained that she was hoping the T/Supervisors would again acknowledge the League's October program and support such. The supervisors voted to so support this program.

There will be not meeting of the supervisors in August.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

New Member Profile - Dorothy Winrow

When I left Dorothy Winrow's home after spending a delightful time getting to know her, I joked "I think you learned more about me than I did about about you". She smiled, probably because it was true. It also attests to her ability to build trust easily which can be attributed to the fact that she is a psychotherapist,

Dorothy was born in Danvers, MA and grew up in the Boston area. She was the second born in a family of six children, and the only daughter. By her own assessment she was like "a little mother" to her younger brothers. She graduated from local parochial schools and went on to Regis, a Catholic college in the Boston suburbs. There she majored in mathematics and physics.

Shortly after her graduation Dorothy married Robert Winrow who was her big brother's friend. Bob was a mechanical engineer working for IBM in Lexington, MA. He was soon transferred to Poughkeepsie, NY and in March, 1957 the Winrows became part of the Kingston IBM plant family. The Winrows produced five children in 10 years and Dorothy devoted herself to raising the youngsters. By the time the youngest was in high school she decided it was time to continue her own education and she began to take courses in education at what is now the State University at New Paltz. Subsequently she completed a master's degree in religious education at Mt St Alphonsus in Esopus. One of Dorothy's professors there encouraged her to pursue further study at the Blanton-Peale Graduate Institutes in the field of pastoral psychotherapy which also included work in marriage and family therapy. She completed this curriculum by studying three days a week in New York City.

After finishing this training which also encompassed supervision, Dorothy established a three day a week practice in NYC and saw patients in Kingston as well. After 21 years of this regimen she felt it was time to close her NYC office and since April of this year she sees people in her Kingston office exclusively. In talking with her it becomes obvious how passionate she is about her profession and how much she enjoys helping people.

Dorothy joined the Mid-Hudson League of Women Voters about 6-7 years ago under the irresistible blandishments of Jacki Moriarty whom she has known for many years. She also attends the same gym as Jacki, the late Emily Johnson and Lee Ridgway and with that redoubtable trio I can only guess that there was some lobbying for her to become more active. Of necessity during her commuting years her precious spare time was lavished on her husband and growing family of grandchildren, now numbering 13. Once the barriers of commutation were eliminated, Dorothy was invited to fill the vacant position of League Treasurer on the Board of Directors. She accepted and has characterized it as "fun". She confessed to liking the League and its goals. She perceives it as women and men working together to achieve something of value for ; the public. Welcome aboard, Dorothy! Nice to have you on the team.

- Renée Sachs

I/we wish to become members of the LWV of the Mid-Hudson Region through May 31, 2011

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: (day) _____ (eve) _____

Email: _____

I/We enclose: Individual Membership (\$50) _____ Household Membership (\$75) _____

Additional gift to the LWV Education Fund (*tax deductible*;) for our use
(Please send a separate check which **MUST** be payable to NYSLWV Ed Fund) \$ _____

If you are upgrading to a Household Membership, please
include the name and email address of new members _____

Will receive *Commentator* ____ online &/or will read it on website or ____ Please mail *Commentator*

**(Complete the above form and return it to us with your check at
PO Box 3564, Kingston, New York 12402)**

League of Women Voters
Mid-Hudson Region
PO Box 3564
Kingston, NY, 12402

*September 2010
Commentator*