

The meeting began with commendations. Recognition was given to the 50th anniversary of Mount Gulian Historic Site, and Pride Month along with several county organizations supporting LGBTQAI Plus residents -- the staff and leadership of the Dutchess County Pride Center, the organizers of Poughkeepsie Pride and Beacon Pride, the founders and members of the Queer Family Network, and the leaders of Stanford Pride and BeckHook Pride. Commendations were also presented to outstanding Eagle Scout siblings Hillary Williams and Joshua Williams. Both earned an astonishing number of merit badges and extra elective merit badges, and exemplified extraordinary leadership and community commitment.

After unanimous approval of the May minutes, Legislator Lawler described a moving graduation ceremony at Dutchess Community College and congratulated the graduates.

Thirteen Resolutions on the agenda were then passed unanimously and without discussion: eleven on the consent agenda¹ and two on the non-consent agenda.²

The other business was more contentious. First, Legislator Atkins expressed disappointment with both the repeated lack of timely response to requests for information from the County Executive's Office regarding homelessness, bail reform, the jail, the shelter to be located at 26 Oakley Street, SROs and ADUs, and the YOU [Youth Opportunity Union] at the former YMCA facility, as well as the refusal of Republican legislators to listen to the outcry from Poughkeepsie residents against the plan for transition housing on Oakley Street and for disregarding the plan negotiated between the County Executive and the stakeholders.

Legislator Polasek voiced irritation at Atkins' remarks, and faulted him for failing to ask his questions at committee meetings and in a timely manner. He also stated, "I'm not going to go along with a plan [regarding 26 Oakley St.] that I had nothing to do with." Legislator Atkins refuted Polasek's suggestion that he was grandstanding, explaining

¹ The consent agenda items involved: appointments and reappointments to the Dutchess County Environmental Management Council (#76), the Stop DWI Policy Planning Board (# 78), the Board of Trustees of Dutchess Community College (# 84), and the Citizens Advisory Committee on Domestic Violence (#88); amending the 2025 budget as it pertains to the District Attorney (#79), Department of Public Works (# 80) and salary adjustments for certain members of the Dutchess Staff Association and certain management attorneys (#87); authorizing amendments of funding under the Trade Adjustment Act (##s 89, 90), and amending a resolution authorizing a grant agreement relating to rehabilitation of a taxiway at Hudson Valley Department of Transportation (#80); setting and establishing public hearings to consider requests for inclusion within Dutchess County certified Agricultural District 21 (#77) and for Dutchess Community College (# 83); and granting sick leave at half pay to an employee of the Dutchess County Jail (# 86).

² The non-consent items were Resolution 85 (appointment and reappointments to the Dutchess County Local Development Corporations); and Resolution 91 (appointment to the Dutchess County Industrial Development Agency).

that he had asked his questions in leadership meetings, on the floor, and in emails a month before this meeting.

Legislator Kaul pointed out that the Democratic Caucus did not receive the agenda Resolutions before they were posted on the Legislature's website, thereby depriving the members of the time to read them and consider whether or not to co-sponsor them. She also warned of a crisis concerning the pods currently being used to house homeless people: they were on the verge of collapse; there was "no Plan B" for housing these individuals; and the County was going to be sued. With regard to the Oakley Street project and the suggestion by Legislator Polasek that the County Executive's negotiating with the City was *ultra vires*, she pointed to Resolution 2024132, which, she said, granted the County Executive the authority to make decisions regarding the project.

Legislator Munn stated his support for funding scatter sites throughout the County instead of centralizing homeless shelters in Poughkeepsie. He said there was a need for such a site in Red Hook, and that his constituents in Red Hook support housing the unhoused there.

The public comments portion of the meeting was, once again, dominated by opposition to the plans for the homeless shelter on Oakley Street. Some sixteen people, including three City of Poughkeepsie Common Council members and the Chairman of the Dutchess County Emergency Shelter Stakeholders group, raised concerns, many of which had been raised before, and some of which were new. Many supported scatter sites as the "only equitable way to approach our homeless crisis," urged against concentrating poverty in Poughkeepsie, and pointed out that homeless people were being sent to Poughkeepsie from all over the county and beyond. Others urged the prioritizing of permanent affordable housing over temporary or transitional housing, and thinking preventatively by providing support services throughout the county. Another made an economic argument by pointing out that the negative effects of placing the shelter on Oakley Street will work to defeat or cancel the potential economic development envisioned by a recent \$10 million Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant; as she put it, "the right hand giveth and the left hand taketh away". Still others complained of systemic racism and the assertion of power and control over a concern justice. And many expressed frustration that their questions about the project have gone unanswered (and asked how questions raised by the public at legislative sessions get answered), that local concerns have been ignored, and that the result was predetermined.

Apart from the shelter, County residents acknowledged National Gun Violence Awareness day and Pride Day. A Mother's Out Front member brought attention to the Dutchess County Resource and Recovery Agency's Put or Pay Solid Waste Disposal Service Agreement which, she urged, was not favorable to taxpayers; she also inveighed against the amount of waste being sent to incinerators and landfills, and urged county wide composting along with the need to know the economic impact of a new boiler or super incinerator.

Daniel Atonna, a union member and community organizer from Poughkeepsie who speaks frequently, brought up a number of issues. He expressed concern about proposed Central Hudson rate hikes, urged County officials to stop denying climate change, and promoted free fares on county busses. He echoed Legislator Atkin's complaints about the "broken promises" concerning the Youth Opportunity Union Committee, urged municipalities to participate in the state's new short-term rental registry which would give access to booking platforms such as Airbnb and allow them to receive sales tax revenue, promoted passage of good cause eviction tenant protections throughout the county; and services for homeless including mental health throughout the county. Laurie Sandow, another frequent public commenter, reiterated her concern that violations of the Open Meetings Law undermined the ability of the public to speak knowledgeably.

Finally, two people, one from Beacon one from Lagrange, complained about a program involving a private company and the use of cameras on school buses resulting the issuance of traffic tickets. They insisted that there was inadequate notice to alleged violators, inadequate opportunity to be heard to challenge the alleged violation, and inordinate financial benefit to the private company. The gentleman from Lagrange said he had investigated the company and begged the legislators to meet with him to discuss his findings. As he explained, "Almost all the money is going to a private company called Bus Patrol America LLC, who changed their name from Force Multiplier Solutions to Bus Patrol American LLC in order to hide the fact that their CEO was convicted in the largest domestic public corruption case in history."

The session concluded with condolences offered in the memory of Nancy Patricia Jacone and Charles R. Latin, Jr.