

**Legislative Programs, Education and Community Services Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes**

DATE & TIME: August 12, 2019 – 6:30 PM
LOCATION: Mohonk Preserve 3197 Route 44/55, Gardiner, New York 12525
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chairman James Delaune
RECORDER: Jamie Capuano, Vice President for Administrative Services, SUNY
Ulster
PRESENT: Legislators Collins, Donaldson, and Wawro
ABSENT: Legislator Haynes
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: David McNamara, Samadhi RCOC
Greg Howard, Community Action
Michael Berg, Family of Woodstock
Glen Hoagland, Mohonk Preserve
Gretchen Reed, Mohonk Preserve

Chairman Delaune called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM.

Motion No. 1: **Moved to Approve the Minutes of the July 8, 2019 meeting**

Motion By: Legislator Donaldson

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Wawro

Discussion:

None

Voting In Favor: Legislators Delaune, Collins, Donaldson, and Wawro

Voting Against: 0

Votes in Favor: 4

Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Minutes approved

Chairman Delaune asked Michael Berg to open the meeting with his presentation to the Board on the work of Family of Woodstock. Mr. Berg presented on the Supervised Visitation Program operated by Family of Woodstock. He explained that the program is currently being operated on the property of the Darmstadt Shelter. He indicated that Family of Woodstock has recently encountered some issues with having the program operated on the property of the Darmstadt Shelter due to the staffing levels at the Darmstadt Shelter and would like to look into an alternative location. They've identified the Hodge Center as a possible location for the program and Family of Woodstock would employ two individuals specifically for the Supervised Visitation program which would improve supervision and operation of the program, while also offering a better environment

for families. Family of Woodstock requested an additional \$5,000 to their current allocation of \$25,000 to make this move possible.

Chairman Delaune asked Mr. Berg if he had submitted a formal budget request yet. Mr. Berg indicated that no, he did not yet submit a formal budget request and that he wanted to have the support of the Committee prior to doing so. Legislator Donaldson summarized Mr. Berg's request for the additional \$5,000 for additional staffing needs for the program. Chairman Delaune asked if the Hodge Center is in Kingston. Mr. Berg stated that yes, the Hodge Center is in midtown Kingston and that Family of Woodstock has been working with the City of Kingston recently on a program serving underserved youth at the Hodge Center.

Chairman Delaune indicated that perhaps the Committee could do a tour or have a meeting at the Hodge Center to see the Center and learn more about its operations. Mr. Berg suggested a 4:00pm start to see the programs that are being offered. Mr. Berg stated that Family of Woodstock learned about five weeks before the end of the summer that the provider who provides summer programming, including summer meals programming wasn't going to be offering the program this summer, so Family of Woodstock stepped in and saved the program and began offering the services to children throughout Kingston at the Hodge Center. Chairman Delaune stated that he will poll the group to see if that time works.

Chairman Delaune opened the floor to David McNamara from Samadhi RCOC. Mr. McNamara summarized the work of the Samadhi group indicating, that they are a recovery community outreach center located in Kingston. He went on to explain that this program trains people who have lived through an experience with addiction how to help other people suffering from addiction. Chairman Delaune asked Mr. McNamara how the funding for the program works at this time and what Samadhi was requesting of the Ulster County Legislature. Mr. McNamara stated that they offer free scholarships for individuals to take the training and earn their SERPA credentials. Out of 17 people who took the courses last year, five of them were scholarship recipients. Mr. McNamara outlined that each scholarship is worth \$625 and that they would like to do 33 scholarships for a total of \$20,625. With this expansion, Mr. McNamara indicated that they could look to expand in the Ellenville area and explained that new State regulations are going into effect that will require all OASIS licensed treatment facilities to have SERPA's on staff. This change will result in new employment opportunities to these individuals who face barriers to employment. Legislator Donaldson asked how other treatment programs are training their staff. Mr. McNamara indicated that they mostly hire staff who are trained in the city, and they also might be sending staff to training in the city for these credentials. Chairman Delaune asked Mr. McNamara if he has targeted Ellenville as possible expansion. Mr. McNamara indicated that they would be looking to expand in the Ellenville area and have opened up discussions with Ellenville Regional Hospital. Legislator Collins requested to know who they are speaking to at Ellenville and stated that his is the Chairman of the Board for the hospital. Legislator Donaldson stated that the best way to learn something is to teach it and that this is an opportunity for those in recovery to teach others how to recover while using real-life experience. Mr. Berg stated that Family of Woodstock has been following the progress of the program. Mr. McNamara indicated that he would develop a formal proposal to be presented to the Committee and the County.

Chairman Delaune then opened the floor to Greg Howard from Community Action. Mr. Howard discussed the programs offered by Community Action, stating that they provide funding to assist

individuals in paying utilities and rental costs to help people stay in their homes. Mr. Howard stated that he is requesting the same level of funding that has been previously provided and that this funding helps Community Action provide support for individuals who are above the 125 percent of poverty. He explained that there is State block grant funding for individuals who fall below the 125 percent of poverty, but that those who are at or slightly above that threshold do not receive the same level of assistance from the block grant. The funding that is provided by the County enables Community Action to support these individuals and to help them stay in their homes. Legislator Donaldson asked if the County's funding was being used to draw down additional State resources. Mr. Howard indicated that the funding helps Community Action to show a local share and support for the program. Chairman Delaune indicated that this program is a huge help for families in our community. Mr. Berg discussed that annually the State determines fair market rents and that this allows landlords to increase rents to a higher level, but that the fair market rent calculation does not include utilities and other needs; often these needs are what drives families out of their homes. Discussion began regarding the impact of short term rentals on the rental communities and how this has lowered the inventory of affordable housing for needy families or low-income individuals. Mr. Howard stated that during an Ellenville workgroup, a major part of the conversation surrounded the availability of affordable housing. Legislator Donaldson discussed a possible Tenant Rights local law, and he requested that if anyone has any ideas or sample language, he would like to review it.

Chairman Delaune then introduced Glen Hoagland from the Mohonk Preserve to present. Glen began by stating how lucky he is that he has been able to spend the past 26 years working in a place that he loves and impacting lives. He then turned it over to Gretchen Reed, Director of Marketing and Communications. Gretchen played a promotional video that summarized the work that the Preserve has been doing and played an I Love New York commercial that featured the Preserve. She went on to outline the Preserve as an economic booster for the County in that it brings in a lot of tourism. Mr. Hoagland summarized the history of the Preserve and how the Smiley family entrusted the land to the Preserve as a way to offer the land for more people to enjoy and to explore their individual relationship with nature. He stated that the Preserve is home to one of the world's best rock climbing parks and that they have individuals from all over the world traveling to the Preserve for their rock climbing. Mr. Hoagland also explained the programs offered to area school districts. Under these programs, a grade would be able to come to the Preserve and learn about the outdoors, the environment and science with hands-on exhibits and in nature. They currently run this program with New Paltz Central School District and several other districts including Kingston City School District. Chairman Delaune asked if this program could be expanded to include other Ulster County school districts, such as Ellenville and Saugerties. Mr. Hoagland indicated that yes, they would look into expansion opportunities and work with the area school districts to see what is possible. Mr. Berg requested a conversation regarding their programming and the potential to include the Hodge Center. They both agreed to connect on this issue. Legislator Donaldson asked Mr. Hoagland who they should contact regarding these opportunities and Mr. Hoagland said they should reach out to Kathy Ambrosini, the Director of the Education program. Discussion continued regarding the level of programming and open space initiatives that the Preserve is currently engaged in. These programs include a new Foothills Project and the recently completed campground project that was completed in conjunction with the State of New York. He also indicated that the Preserve will begin offering the two month free passes to Ulster County residents and that this program was initiated by former County Executive Mike Hein.

Chairman Delaune requested that Mr. Hoagland work with the three organizations that were present to see if any additional programming could be done for their populations that are served.

Resolutions for August 12, 2019, Session:

Resolution No. 357 – Approving The New York State Office of Children and Family Services 2019 Resource Allocation Plan – Youth Bureau

Resolution Summary: This resolution approves the County’s resource allocation plan for the Youth Bureau. This plan is necessary for the County to receive State funding for these programs.

Motion No. 2 Moved to adopt Resolution No. 354

Motion By: Legislator Wawro
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Donaldson

Discussion:

Chairman Delaune stated that he had a conversation with Deputy County Executive Marc Rider and that this allocation plan is required by the State in order to receive funding for these programs.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Delaune, Collins, Donaldson, and Wawro
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 4
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolution adopted

Old Business – None

New Business- Chairman Delaune suggested that perhaps the Committee meeting in Saugerties and asked if Legislator Wawro could recommend a location for the next meeting in Saugerties.

Chairman Delaune asked if there was any other business, and hearing none;

Adjournment

Motion Made By: Legislator Donaldson
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Wawro
No. of Votes in Favor: 4
No. of Votes Against: 0

TIME: 8:20 PM

Respectfully Submitted: Jamie Capuano, Vice President for Administrative Services, SUNY Ulster
Minutes Approved: September 9, 2019