



## UNION COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

**THURSDAY, MARCH 03, 2022  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Williams presided over the meeting and called the meeting to order at 6:23 P.M.

### **ROLL CALL**

Roll call showed Chair Rebecca Williams, Vice Chair Christopher Hudak, Commissioner James E. Baker Jr., Commissioner Angela R. Garretson, Commissioner Sergio Granados, Commissioner Bette Jane Kowalski, and Commissioner Lourdes M. Leon, Commissioner Alexander Mirabella, and Commissioner Palmieri-Mouded were present.

Also present were County Manager Edward T. Oatman, County Counsel Bruce H. Bergen, Esq., and Clerk of the Board James E. Pellettiere.

### **PRAYER AND SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

The prayer and salute to the flag were led by Clerk of the Board Pellettiere.

### **STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT**

The statement of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act was read by Clerk of the Board Pellettiere.

### **APPROVAL OF COMMUNICATIONS**

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#### Note and File

Chair Williams called for a motion to approve the Communications. On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Palmieri-Mouded roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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**2019 Executive Session Minutes** (March 7, 2019, April 11, 2019, May 16, 2019, June 27, 2019, August 22, 2019, November 7, 2019, December 5, 2019, December 19, 2019)

Chair Williams called for a motion to approve the 2019 Executive Session Minutes. On a motion made by Commissioner Kowalski and seconded by Commissioner Garretson, roll call showed seven votes in the affirmative for Executive Session Minutes of March 7<sup>th</sup>, April 11<sup>th</sup>, June 27<sup>th</sup>, and December 5<sup>th</sup>; six votes in the affirmative for the Executive Session Minutes of August 22, with Commissioner Mirabella abstaining; six votes in the affirmative for the Executive Session Minutes of November 7<sup>th</sup>, with Commissioner Garretson abstaining; and five votes in the affirmative for the 2019 Executive Session Minutes of May 16<sup>th</sup>,

with Vice Chair Hudak and Commissioner Mirabella abstaining; and five votes in the affirmative for the Executive Session Minutes of December 19<sup>th</sup>, with Vice Chair Hudak and Commissioner Palmieri-Mouded abstaining.

**2020 Executive Session Minutes** (March 5, 2020, April 23, 2020, June 4, 2020, July 23, 2020, September 10, 2020, October 1, 2020, October 15, 2020, November 5, 2020)

Chair Williams called for a motion to approve the 2020 Executive Session Minutes. On a motion made Commissioner Kowalski and seconded by Commissioner Palmieri-Mouded, roll call showed seven votes in the affirmative for the Executive Session Minutes of March 5<sup>th</sup>, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, June 4<sup>th</sup>, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, and September 10<sup>th</sup>; six votes in the affirmative for the Executive Session Minutes of October 1<sup>st</sup>, with Chair Williams abstaining; four votes in the affirmative for the Executive Session Minutes of October 15<sup>th</sup>, with Chair Williams and Commissioners Granados and Palmieri-Mouded abstaining; and six votes in the affirmative for the Executive Session Minutes of November 5<sup>th</sup>, with Commissioner Palmieri-Mouded abstaining.

**2021 Executive Session Minutes** (January 21, 2021, May 6, 2021, July 22, 2021, October 7, 2021, November 4, 2021)

Chair Williams called for a motion to approve the 2021 Executive Session Minutes. On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Leon, roll call showed eight votes in the affirmative for the Executive Session Minutes of January 21<sup>st</sup>, May 6<sup>th</sup>, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, and November 4<sup>th</sup>; and six votes in the affirmative for the Executive Session Minutes of October 7<sup>th</sup>, with Chair Williams and Commissioner Palmieri-Mouded abstaining.

#### **ORDINANCE FOR ADOPTION**

**836-2022 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND “THE LAWS OF UNION COUNTY: ADMINISTRATIVE CODE AND POLICIES AND GENERAL LEGISLATION” BY ADOPTING THE 2022 DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION FEES FOR RECREATION FACILITIES AND THE UNION COUNTY OFFICE OF HEALTH MANAGEMENT FOOD AND BEVERAGE FEE SCHEDULE.**

**BE IT ORDAINED** by the Board of County Commissioners of the County of Union as follows:

1. That the schedule of fees attached hereto, hereby amends the official fees for the Department of Parks and Recreation Facilities for 2022. All fees not included herein will remain as previously adopted.
2. That the schedule of fees attached hereto, hereby amends the official fees for the Union County Office of Health Management Food and Beverage for 2022. All fees not included herein will remain as previously adopted.

3. That this Ordinance shall take effect at the time and manner provided by law.
4. That the Clerk of the Board be and is hereby authorized and directed to publish the required notice in the appropriate newspaper of such introduction and of a public hearing on March 3, 2022 and shall forward one certified copy, upon final passage, to each Clerk of all Municipalities located within the County of Union.
5. That the fee schedules pertinent to this Ordinance are on file in the Clerk of the Board's Office.

**FIRST READING STATEMENT**

Vice Chair Christopher Hudak, Policy Committee Chair, moved Ordinance Number 836-2022 for First Reading and authorized the Clerk of the Board to advertise same in accordance with the law. The public hearing was scheduled to be held on March 3, 2022.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PORTION**

The meeting was opened to the public for the purpose of commenting on Ordinance No. 836-2022 being offered for adoption only.

There were no comments or questions from the public related to Ordinance No. 836-2022.

Chair Williams called for a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 836-2020. On a motion made by Vice Chair Hudak and seconded by Commissioner Kowalski, roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PORTION**

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The meeting was opened to the public for the purpose of commenting on Resolutions being offered for adoption and any governmental issue that a member of the public feels may be of concern to the residents of the county.

John Bury, of Kenilworth, asked questions related to the budget. He also asked why group health insurance costs had increased by 20%. Regarding the Department of Corrections, he asked if jail costs were now included under another department's budget. Regarding the Union County Improvement Authority, he inquired about the amount being allocated to the UCIA and why it was substantially less than years prior.

Related to group health insurance, County Manager Oatman advised that health insurance costs had increased as did hospital visit costs, adding that some of the increase was due to COVID-19.

Related to the Department of Corrections, County Manager Oatman advised that the remnants of the Correction's Department budget, which included various costs and salaries was now included under the Sheriff's Office.

Regarding the UCIA, County Manager Oatman confirmed that aid to that organization had gone down.

Dan Smith, of Clark, spoke relative to Mohawk Park and thanked the County and Board for the continued improvements to the County Park Systems. He inquired about additional improvements as some of the areas of the cited park seemed incomplete, noting an issue with parking. He also noted that there was no identifying signage on one side of the park and inquired about future plans for the structure currently on site. On another note, he spoke about construction being done throughout the County and inquired about damage being done to County roads and who would be responsible for those repairs. To close, he thanked Lamar Mackson, Director of Video Services, for providing the Commissioner meetings to be aired on Clark TV 36.

Relative to the construction on County roads, Director Graziano advised that the Bureau of Inspections was responsible for overseeing permit projects on County roads. He noted that patches were used as a temporary repair and the vendor was responsible for returning to the site at a later time and bringing the road repair up-to-grade. He added that he was willing to talk to the resident to address immediate areas of concern. Regarding the parks system, Director Graziano advised that he would work with the Parks Department to remedy the signage issue at Mohawk Park.

Regarding Homestead Farm, County Manager Oatman advised that the structure would be addressed under an agreement with the UCIA and the State to rehabilitate the area and build a field at that location. He added that he expected the project to move forward sometime this year.

Director Zuber advised that parking was an ongoing issue at Mohawk Park, adding that he would work with Director Graziano relative to signage.

There were no additional questions or comments from the public.

#### **RESOLUTIONS FOR ADOPTION**

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The following Resolutions were offered for adoption:

**2022-204 COMMISSIONER JAMES BAKER JR:** Re-appointing Lauren Kaplan-Sagal (Medical Society), Morgan Thompson (At-Large), Michelle Cislo (Family Member) and S. Mira Vanjari (County Resident) as members to the Mental Health Advisory Board for a term beginning January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2024.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-205 COMMISSIONER JAMES BAKER JR:** Re-appointing Carol Berger (Unfunded Provider Agency) and Nadina Baskerville Thomas (Criminal Justice) to the Local Advisory Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (LACADA) for a term beginning January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2024.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-206 COMMISSIONER SERGIO GRANADOS:** Authorizing the County Manager to enter into a contract with Geneva Worldwide Interpretation Service, New York, NY to provide interpretation services to the non-English speaking clients of the UC Department of Human Services, Division of Social Services for the period of January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022 in an amount not to exceed \$15,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-207 COMMISSIONER SERGIO GRANADOS:** Amending Resolution Number 2021-764, to reflect a change in appropriations accounts from FFY2021 TO FFY2020 for one subcontract award only within the 2021-22 HEARTH Emergency Solutions (HES) Grant Spending plan; with no other changes to the grant terms or conditions of the agreement.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-208 COMMISSIONER SERGIO GRANADOS:** Authorizing the County Manager to enter into a contract with Lehrer-Gibilsco Funeral Home, Inc., Rahway, New Jersey, to provide livery services for the Union County Medical Examiner's Office for the period of January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022, in a total amount not to exceed \$200,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-209 COMMISSIONER BETTE JANE KOWALSKI:** Authorizing Change Order #1 (Final) to the contract awarded to Murray Paving and Concrete, LLC, Hackensack, NJ through the State of New Jersey Educational Services Commission of NJ (ESCNJ) #65MCESCCPS Contract No: ESCNJ 16/17GCI for additional construction service for renovations to Walter E Ulrich Pool, Rahway, NJ in the amount of \$114,307.22 for a new contract amount not to exceed \$2,985,768.98.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-210 COMMISSIONER BETTE JANE KOWALSKI:** Authorizing the County Manager through the Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, to reallocate funds received from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts to the following 38 Union County agencies and organizations as recommended by the Art Grant Committee of the Cultural and Heritage Programs Advisory Board and subsequently approved by the entire Advisory Board in an amount not to exceed \$200,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-211 COMMISSIONER BETTE JANE KOWALSKI:** Authorizing Change Order #1A to the contract awarded to Paragon Restoration Corp., Kenilworth, NJ through the public bidding process (BA#25-2021) for additional electrical restoration service for the rehabilitation of House #7 At Historic Deserted Village, Berkeley Heights in the

amount of \$48,545.00, for a new contract amount not to exceed \$901,045.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-212 COMMISSIONER LOURDES M. LEON:** Authorizing the County Manager to award a contract obtained through advertised public bidding (BA #9-2022) in accordance with the Local Public Contracts Law, NJSA 40A:11-1 et seq: Magic Touch Construction Co., Inc., Keyport, NJ, for the purpose of providing plumbing services for twenty-four (24) consecutive months upon full execution of the contract, with the provision for one (1) twenty-four (24) month optional extension, in an amount not to exceed \$126,297.50.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-213 COMMISSIONER LOURDES M. LEON:** Resolution granting permission to the Township of Berkeley Heights to hang a banner across Springfield Avenue and Plainfield Avenue from May 2, 2022 to June 6, 2022 advertising the 2022 Berkeley Heights Downtown Summer Block Party.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-214 COMMISSIONER LOURDES M. LEON:** Authorizing the County Manager to take all actions necessary and execute any and all documents necessary to complete the acquisition of various properties from the New Jersey Department of Transportation, designated as excess land, for the purposes of parking for state and county employees at 921 Elizabeth Avenue, Elizabeth.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-215 COMMISSIONER LOURDES M. LEON:** Resolution re-appointing the following members to the Union County Advisory Council on Aging: Ellen Staunton, Elaine Haith, Eugene Rosner and Leonora M. Zacarias for a term beginning on January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2024.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-216 COMMISSIONER KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUEDE:** Authorizing Payment of County Requested/Court Appointed Receiver for the Briant Park Olmstead Conservancy matter to Lawrence N. Lavigne, Esq., LLC, Union, New Jersey, for services rendered in the collection of previously awarded grant funds from the Green Acres Program, Department of Environmental Protection, State of New Jersey. Payment is made from and through the Open Space, Recreation and Historic Preservation Trust Fund in the amount of not to exceed \$5,565.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-217 COMMISSIONER KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUEDE:** Authorizing the County Manager to enter into an agreement with Hoffman International, Piscataway, New Jersey, for the procurement of Traffic Safety Equipment in an amount not to exceed \$29,738.64.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-218 COMMISSIONER KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUEDE:** Amending Resolution Number 2021-972, a contract with Colliers Engineering and Design, Red Bank, New Jersey to conduct NJDEP-compliant Preliminary Assessment work at the property located at 1580 Cooper Road, Scotch Plains, New Jersey in the additional amount of \$18,000.00 for a new contract amount not to exceed \$46,950.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-219 COMMISSIONER KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUEDE:** Amending Resolution Number 2021-970, a contract with Colliers Engineering and Design, Red Bank, New Jersey to conduct additional required NJDEP-compliant Preliminary Assessment work at the property located at 735-737 Springfield Avenue, Berkeley Heights in the additional amount not to exceed \$2,500.00 for a new contract amount not to exceed \$16,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-220 VICE CHAIR CHRISTOPHER HUDAK:** Resolution re-appointing Robert Rachlin as a Commissioner to the Union County Utilities Authority for a five (5) year term commencing February 1, 2022 and expiring on January 31, 2027; and further appointing Kyle Holder as a Commissioner to the Union County Utilities Authority for a five (5) year term commencing on February 1, 2022 and expiring on January 31, 2027.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-221 CHAIR REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS:** Authorizing the County Manager to enter into a contract with Catherine Vulcano, Berkeley Heights, NJ to serve as the Acting SART/FNE Coordinator for the Union County Prosecutor's Office for the period of March 4, 2022 through June 30, 2022 in an amount not to exceed \$12,750.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-222 CHAIR REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS:** Authorizing the County Manager to apply for and accept funding from the State of New Jersey, Department of Law and Public Safety, Office of the Attorney General under the SFY22 Law Enforcement Officers Training and Equipment Fund (LEOTEF) Grant Program, in the amount of \$16,317.00 for the period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. (Subaward Number LEOTEF 10-22)

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-223 CHAIR REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS:** Amending Resolution Number 2021-750, to revise Accounts numbers for the allocation of SANE contracts with no other changes to the original total contract amount or other terms and conditions of the agreement.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-224 CHAIR REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS:** Authorizing the County Manager to award a contract obtained through advertised public bidding, (BA# UCCP 8-2022) in accordance with the Local Public Contracts Law, NJSA 40A:11-1 et seq: Economic Development: Johnston Communications, Springfield, NJ, for the purpose of providing IT Infrastructure, Fiber Optic Network Advanced Applications and Services for all County buildings and County parks in the amount not to exceed of \$12,214,777.56 for a contract period of 24 consecutive months, upon full execution of the contract, with a 24 month extension option.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-225 CHAIR REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS:** Authorizing the use of the Competitive Contracting process, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:11-4.3(a) and N.J.S.A. 40A:11-4.1b(2), for the provision of providing Emergency Rental Assistance Program Application Processing.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-226 CHAIR REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS:** Authorizing the County Manager to enter into a contract with Altice Media Solutions, LLC, d/b/a A4 Media, LLC, Piscataway, NJ for the purpose of providing television advertising for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, in an amount not to exceed \$30,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-227 CHAIR REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS:** Authorizing the County Manager to enter into a contract with Intersection Media LLC, Secaucus, New Jersey, for the purpose of providing print advertising on buses and at NJ train stations for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program for the contract period of April 1, 2022 through April 30, 2022, in an amount not to exceed \$37,859.50.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-228 CHAIR REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS:** Authorizing the County Manager to enter into a contract with Comcast Cable Company dba Comcast Cable Communications Mgmt, LLC, Homdel, NJ for the purpose of providing television advertising for the



Emergency Rental Assistance Program, in an amount not to exceed \$30,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-229 CHAIR REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS:** Amending Resolution Number 2022-130, a contract with 4Connections, LLC, changing the contract date from December 1, 2021 through November 30, 2026 to December 18, 2021 through December 17, 2026, with no change to the contract award amount.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-230 CHAIR REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS:** Authorizing the County Manager to enter into a contract with The Weiner Law Group, LLP, Parsippany, NJ, as Special Counsel to the County to provide legal services by way of advice and guidance concerning shared services agreements during the period of January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022 in the amount not to exceed \$15,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

#### **COMMISSIONER SPONSORED RESOLUTIONS**

**2022-231 VICE CHAIR CHRISTOPHER HUDAK & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Resolution offering this Board's deepest sympathies to the family of Lorraine Bunk, a lifelong resident of Linden, during their time of time of sorrow.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-232 CHAIR REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Resolution congratulating the Union County St. Patrick's Day Committee upon its 25th Annual Union County St. Patrick's Day Parade to take place on March, 12, 2022; and further congratulating Michael McNany (Grand Marshal); Damien Holmes (Adjutant) and Pamela Joyce (General Chairwoman).

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-233 CHAIR REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Proclaiming March 8, 2022 as International Women's Day and the month of March as Women's History Month throughout the County of Union.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-234 COMMISSIONER KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOURED & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Resolution congratulating the following individuals for their recognition by the Union County Commission on the Status of Women for the 2022 Woman of Excellence Award: Kathy Arminio, Charlotte Brown, Sylvia Hicks, Audry Kelly, Amanda Parrish-Block, Gwendolyn Ryan, Elizabeth Stamler, and Anita Thomas.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

**2022-235 CHAIR REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Resolution condemning the Russian invasion of the Ukraine government and any actions taken by Russia that escalates the conflict further; and further implores Russia to return to diplomatic solutions to resolve their conflict with the democratic and independent government of Ukraine.

On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Baker roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

### **COMMISSIONER REPORTS AND COMMENTS**

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Commissioner Garretson acknowledged March as Women's History Month and encouraged everyone to recognize the women in their lives and the many women that have come before that have served as an inspiration to empower women everywhere. On another note, she spoke relative to her participation on a panel earlier that day, with Eagleton Institute of Politics, noting that it was rewarding experience and an opportunity to remind everyone why they were public servants. She recognized her female Commissioner colleagues, adding that it was a true accomplishment to be an elected official as well as a female elected official on the Board of Union County Commissioners. Relative to Ukraine, she noted the Board's support of Ukraine's efforts during this heartbreaking conflict, adding that it was wonderful to see everyone align with Ukraine on this issue. To close, she encouraged residents to visit the County website to see the list of scheduled events and activities taking place throughout the County in honor of Women's History Month.

Commissioner Leon congratulated Grand Marshal Michael McNany on his honor and thanked the St. Patrick's Day Committee for attending the evening's meetings and for their efforts relative to the Union County St. Patrick's Day Parade. On another note, she advised that Walgreens, in partnership with the Board of County Commissioners, was hosting a job fair on Wednesday, March 30<sup>th</sup> at Warinanco Sports Center. She encouraged interested residents to attend the event, noting that representatives from Walgreens would be available to speak to residents regarding employment opportunities. She closed by reminding residents that they could visit the Union County Works Portal for more information on employment services offered by the County.

Commissioner Granados recognized March as Women's History Month, noting that his female Commissioner colleagues made history when Union County became the first County in the State to elect a female-majority Board. On another note, he advised that Union County's Emergency Rental Assistance Program portal would open on March 7<sup>th</sup> at 9am. He encouraged qualifying residents in need to apply for the service that would provide up to 12 months of assistance for unpaid back rent and utilities as well as three additional months of forthcoming assistance. He noted that the monies allocated for this program were part of a total of \$16 million in funding received from the federal government. He advised that once approved, these grant monies would be issued directly to landlords and utility providers on behalf of the approved tenants. He added that assistance was available for all qualifying Union County residents regardless of

immigration status. He noted that the Commissioner Board was committed to providing significant economic relief to low to moderate income households facing housing instability by providing this temporary, financial relief. To close, he recognized Deputy County Manager Wagner and Deana Mesaros for being an integral part of the rental assistance program.

Commissioner Palmieri-Mouded spoke relative to COVID-19 vaccines and advised that moderately to severely immune-compromised individuals 12 years old and up were now eligible to receive a 2<sup>nd</sup> booster of any approved COVID-19 vaccine twelve weeks after their third dose or eight weeks after their 2<sup>nd</sup> dose, if they received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. She further advised that these individuals were especially vulnerable to COVID-19 and could possibly not achieve the same level of immunity from the vaccine series in comparison to individuals with healthy immune systems. On another note, she spoke relative to an upcoming gun turn-in event at Calvary Assembly Church in Springfield, on April 23<sup>rd</sup> hosted by the County in partnership with the U.C. Prosecutor's Office, Sheriff's Department, and Police Department as well as the Springfield Police Department. She noted that this event would allow residents to safely dispose of firearms, ammunition, and certain prescription drugs to ensure they don't fall into the wrong hands. She noted that this event was part of an ongoing effort by the County to keep the community safe for residents of all ages.

Commissioner Kowalski recognized the St. Patrick's Day Committee, noting that she appreciated the efforts of the Irish-American community. On another note, she spoke relative to the Ukrainian flag raising that took place earlier that day at the Union County Courthouse, adding that the Board stood in solidarity with the people of Ukraine against the attacks of Russia. She noted that she was proud of Poland, Moldova, and other countries that were accepting Ukrainian refugees fleeing the violence, adding that she hoped a peaceful resolution could be reached soon. She also spoke relative to the many events that took place last month in honor of Black History Month, noting her attendance alongside colleague Commissioner Palmieri-Mouded of the field house groundbreaking ceremony for the new athletic field on Chestnut Street in Roselle. She also spoke about a historic presentation made by members of the 24<sup>th</sup> infantry of the U.S. Army in Roselle relative to the Buffalo soldiers and the history of black soldiers within the various branches of military. She thanked Roselle Mayor Donald Shaw and the Roselle Recreation Department for organizing the event. On another note, Commissioner Kowalski advised that during the week, in honor of Read Across America, the Commissioners had been visiting various classrooms throughout the County to read to students, adding that the County has also organized a virtual reading event for children with disabilities through the Division of Human Services. To close, she noted the resident's comments about Mohawk Park and encouraged residents to take advantage of the upcoming archery program at Oakridge Park as well as visit Trailside Nature and Science Center for their upcoming spring break programs in April for children ages 7-12.

Commissioner Baker commended County Manager Oatman and all the staff that worked diligently and was able to propose a budget with a zero increase, noting the difficulties of achieving such a feat. He added that he hoped the residents of Union County understood the arduous effort that goes into presenting a budget with a zero increase, particularly for the third year in a row, noting that this would benefit all Union County residents regardless of their political affiliation, race, color, or creed.

Commissioner Mirabella noted that he was proud to participate in this year's budget process that once again yielded a zero increase for the third year in a row while also maintaining its triple A bond rating. He advised that a triple A bond rating was awarded to less than 10% of governmental agencies and that accolade was indicative of the successful leadership within Union County amongst the Board of Commissioners and County Administration. He added that he was looking forward to the budget process and finalizing the budget in the coming months. On another note, he spoke relative to Read Across America, during which time, he had the opportunity to read to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and 4<sup>th</sup> grade classes in Scotch Plains. He noted his conversation with the students regarding the work he did as a County Commissioner. To close, he noted the Ukrainian flag raising event at the Union County Courthouse, adding that he was happy and proud to be able to honor the Ukrainian people during these difficult times. He commended Ukrainian President Zelenskyy, noting that his bravery and unyielding support for his Country was inspiring. He expressed his hope that the conflict between Ukraine and Russia would subside quickly.

Vice Chair Hudak echoed the sentiments of Commissioner Baker and Commissioner Mirabella in commending County Manager Oatman for introducing a budget with a zero increase, adding that he looked forward to the budget process and learning more about the priorities highlighted within the budget. He noted that despite the ongoing pandemic and several outside pressures, the County was able to introduce a budget with a zero increase for the third year in a row while also reforming the size and scope of County government. On another note, he spoke relative to the war in Ukraine, noting it as an unnecessary and unfathomable conflict. He encouraged residents to make donations through various charitable organizations like the Red Cross, and Doctors Without Borders, among others to assist with the crisis. He also noted the upcoming St. Patrick's Day Parade, adding that it was a milestone to have the parade return following a two-year hiatus as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. To close, he spoke relative to Read Across America, including the virtual reading event organized through the Office of Disabilities and Special Needs, adding that it was a nice treat to be able to share in this pastime with students.

Chair Williams spoke relative to Black History Month, noting a past performance of Fences at Union County Performing Arts Center on February 18<sup>th</sup>, adding that all nine Commissioners attended the production in addition to a large crowd. She noted the presentation of the Chester Holmes Humanitarian Award to Dr. Inez P. Durham and added that Dr. Durham had sent a letter of gratitude to the Commissioners for the recognition. On another note, she spoke relative to her participation in Read Across America alongside Commissioner Mouded and Vice Chair Hudak, adding that she enjoyed the experience and being able to interact with the children. She also spoke relative to Women's History Month and a series of interviews had taken place at various libraries throughout the County, noting her interview of Plainfield Public Library Director Mary Ellen Rogan. She advised residents that these recorded interviews would be shared on the County's social media outlets. On another note, she also spoke relative to her recent visit to Josephine's Place in Elizabeth, joined by Commissioner Leon and County Clerk Joanne Rajoppi, to kick-off Women's History Month, adding that the non-profit organization was instrumental in providing resources skills and training for women. Chair Williams provided some history related to the creation of Women's History Month, noting the month as an opportunity to support the contributions made by women in the U.S. and in Union County. She noted the upcoming annual Women of Excellence Awards, awarded to women in Union County that lead, serve, and inspire, adding that

this award have been given for over 35 years. She advised that this year, eight women from Union County had been selected to receive this prestigious award for their outstanding contributions to their communities and the County as a whole. She further advised that the event would be held virtually on March 25<sup>th</sup>. To close, she spoke relative to the conflict in Ukraine and reiterated the Board's condemnation of Russia's attacks and their steadfast commitment to the people of Ukraine and the preservation of democracy in their country.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Williams asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Kowalski, roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:09 P.M.

**UNION COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
2022 MEETING SCHEDULE  
REORGANIZATION MEETING - THURSDAY, JANUARY 6, 2021 at 6:00 pm  
Courthouse Plaza, 2 Broad Street, Elizabeth, NJ**

**2022 MEETING SCHEDULE**

**AGENDA SETTING SESSION**

January 20, 2022

February 3, 2022

February 17, 2022

March 3, 2022

March 24, 2022

April 7, 2022

April 21, 2022

May 12, 2022

May 26, 2022

June 9, 2022

June 23, 2022

July 14, 2022

August 11, 2022

September 15, 2022

October 6, 2022

October 20, 2022

November 10, 2022

December 1, 2022

December 15, 2022

**REGULAR MEETINGS**

January 20, 2022

February 3, 2022

February 17, 2022

March 3, 2022

March 24, 2022

April 7, 2022

April 21, 2022

May 12, 2022

May 26, 2022

June 9, 2022

June 23, 2022

July 14, 2022

August 11, 2022

September 15, 2022

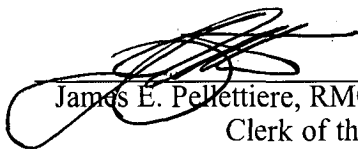
October 6, 2022

October 20, 2022

November 10, 2022

December 1, 2022

December 15, 2022

  
James E. Pelletiere, RMC, QPA  
Clerk of the Board

Please note that the County Commissioners' meetings are to be regularly held on Thursday evenings and are scheduled to be held on the same evening, with the Agenda Setting Session to commence at 6:00pm and the Regular Meeting to commence as soon as possible after the Agenda Setting Session, unless otherwise noted.

Persons requiring a sign language interpreter should contact the Office of the Clerk of the Board at 908-527-4140.