



UNION COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 07, 2023
AGENDA SETTING MEETING MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Granados presided over the meeting and called the meeting to order at 6:01 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Roll call showed Chairman Sergio Granados, Vice-Chairwoman Kimberly Palmieri-Mouded, Commissioner James E. Baker, Jr., Commissioner Joseph C. Bodek, Commissioner Angela R. Garretson, Commissioner Bette Jane Kowalski, Commissioner Lourdes M. Leon, Commissioner Alexander Mirabella, and Commissioner Rebecca Williams 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.

PRESENTATIONS BY THE BOARD

Resolution presentations will be made by the Board to Union County Vocational-Technical Schools Superintendent Gwen Ryan, Assistant Superintendent Walt Smolenski, former Superintendent Thomas Bistocchi, Union County Vocational-Technical Schools Board of Education Members, and students of the Union County Vocational-Technical School's Academy for Allied Health Sciences, the Union County Vocational-Technical School's Academy for Information Technology and the Union County Magnet High School in recognition of their top 10 Statewide Ranking according to US News and World Report; with Union County Vocational-Technical Magnet High School ranking first in the State (twenty-sixth in the Nation).

Chairman Granados made the following comments:

"Tonight, the Union County Board of County Commissioners is proud to present resolutions that shine a spotlight on the exceptional accomplishments of three remarkable schools within Union County in the latest rankings by U.S. News & World Report.

These prestigious rankings, released last Tuesday, have placed Union County at the forefront of the nation's best high schools.

Among 18,000 eligible schools across all 50 states and the District of Columbia, Union County has three public high schools within the Union County Vocational-Technical Schools that have secured coveted positions within the top 100 list of the best high schools in the United States.

One of these schools has even achieved the prestigious top position statewide, a truly remarkable feat.

These rankings consider various essential factors reflecting the overall quality and excellence of high schools. They encompass college readiness, state assessment proficiency, state assessment performance, underserved student performance, college curriculum breadth, and graduation rate.

The three Union County high schools that have secured their rightful places among the nation's elite are:

Union County Magnet High School: Securing an impressive rank of #1 in New Jersey and #26 in the nation.

Academy for Information Technology: With a commendable national rank of #122 and #9 in New Jersey.

Academy for Allied Health Sciences: Ranking at #10 in New Jersey and placing at #230 nationally.

These accomplishments not only reflect the dedication of our educational community but also inspire us to further our commitment to educational excellence in Union County.

Over the years, the alliance between the Union County Commissioner Board and Union County Vo-Tech has proven to be of utmost importance as we have worked hand-in-hand to enhance our educational system.

And I would like to recognize and thank Superintendent Gwen Ryan, for all of her continued hard work and support, as well as recognize Tom Bistocci, who was the first superintendent here at Vo-tech, who was instrumental to its creation, who is also here tonight.

Our commitment to collaborating with UC Vo-Tech to make our schools top-notch has always been one of our top priorities when it comes to education and these rankings are truly an inspiration and a testament to what can be accomplished by working together.

I would now like to invite Commissioners Williams, Garretson and Bodek, as liaisons to Vo-Tech, as well as the Superintendent of Schools, Gwen Ryan, Board of Education President, Jean Perkins, Board of Education Member,

Phyllis Mirabella and Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Walt Smolenski and to join me as we present the resolution.”

Commissioner Williams noted as an educated herself that she was thrilled to see the County's Vocational -Technical Schools were at the top of the nation and that Union County students are receiving an excellent education preparing the students for a wide range of careers through the various programs at the County's Vocational-Technical School.

Superintendent Gwen Ryan offered remarks, noting the national recognition is an incredible achievement. She stated that they work hard to ensure they educated the students each and every day, and that she was happy to see the Vocational-Technical School Community be recognized for their hard work and accomplishments. She noted the Commissioners' continued investment in the Vocational-Technical Schools and offered her congratulations to the Board on this achievement.

Board of Education President Perkins recognized the team's effectiveness and creativity which has trickled down to inspire the students to be as effective and creative. She thanked the Board for their support.

Former Superintendent Thomas Bistocchi noted that he came before the (then) Freeholder Board twenty-seven years ago asking for \$5.1M to create the first Magnet High School at the Vocational-Technical School. He noted the success and the subsequent commitment over the years to expand the program into what it is now. He noted, the support of the Board is what made it all possible. He stated that the future is just as bright, noting that the State Board of Education recognized Union County Vocational-School as a “lighthouse district,” one of five in the State.

Resolutions were presented.

Commissioner Mirabella stated Senate President Scutari has committed millions of additional funding towards the expansion of the Vocational-Technical School; noting that Senate President Scutari was a Freeholder during the creation of the Vocational-Technical School and places a great value on the School and its expanding programs.

A presentation will be made by Stephen Dunn, Founder of Union County Connects and Tom Sexton, Northeast Regional Director of National Rails-to-Trails Conservancy relative to their efforts in the National Rails-to-Trails Conservancy; followed by a resolution presentation by the Board recognizing their efforts.

Chairman Granados asked Commissioners Mirabella & Kowalski to join him for the second presentation.

Chairman Granados made the following remarks:

“Tonight we gather to honor and recognize the outstanding efforts of two individuals who have played pivotal roles in our pursuit of enhanced connectivity and transportation within Union County.

We are privileged to have with us today, Stephen Dunn, the Founder of Union County Connects, and Tom Sexton, the Regional Director of the National Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, who will be giving us a presentation about who they are and their successes in creating rails to trails.

Their dedication to promoting healthy lifestyles and active transportation through rail-to-trail conversions has been nothing short of inspirational.

Each one has been instrumental in our county's journey toward reimagining rail-trails as safe and accessible pathways for everyone to walk, bike, and enjoy active living.

We thank them for their work of both Union County Connects and the Regional Rails-to-Trails Conservancy.

Their partnership has been an example of progress, and their dedication to our shared goals is truly commendable.

Today's resolution serves as a testament to the commitment of Stephen Dunn, Tom Sexton, and their respective organizations.

I would now like to call up Stephen and Tom for their presentation and then to present this resolution.”

Commissioner Mirabella noted that he and Commissioner Kowalski have been working with the Union County Connects for a couple of years. He noted the inspiration of the High Line in New York City and was appreciative of their collaboration with the National Rails-to-Trails Conservancy.

Commissioner Kowalski added her congratulations on their work. She noted the need to encourage and incorporate bicycling and walking into our transportation as a means to get from one place to another in an enjoyable and recreational (and passive) manner.

Stephen Dun thanked the Board. He noted that Mike Dury and Al Wolcuff were co-founders of the organization, and further noted and thanked Commissioners Mirabella, Kowalski and Chairman Granados for their involvement with and support of the organization. He also thanked Parks Director Vikki Drake, Deputy County Manager Amy Wagner, Liza Betz, Phil Kandl and Engineer Rick Matais for their support.

He provided an overview of the creation of the Union County Connects; noting the Olmstead design of the Union County park system. He stated that the Covid pandemic fueled a lot of energy towards addressing the need for more “Rails-to-Trails” projects. He stated that “Good solutions solve multiple problems, and great ideas catch on like wildfire.” He introduced the members of the Union County Connects organization. He spoke on the need for a bridge over Route 22 to finish their work on the Rahway Valley Railroad. He noted \$1.5M dedicated in Kenilworth and Roselle Park.

Tom Sexton, Northeast Regional Director of National Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, spoke about working with the Union County Connects and the work in the City of Summit. He gave an overview of the National Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and the support they provide organizations like the Union County Connects organization. He spoke on potential funding for continued efforts in acquisition, design, construction and maintenance towards Rail-To Trails programs.

APPROVAL OF COMMUNICATIONS

Note and File

Chairman Granados advised that the Communications would be approved later during the Regular Meeting.

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Amy Crisp Wagner, Deputy County Manager/Director

There were no questions or comments by the Board.

1. Amending Resolution 2022-1032, a contract with We Are One New Jersey Inc., Trenton, NJ, to authorize reallocated funds of \$21,000.00 to be used to install updated security system at the Union County Center in the amount of \$223,000.00, without any changes to the total contract amount of not to exceed \$245,000.00. **(Chairman Sergio Granados)**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING, PUBLIC WORKS & FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Acting Director Joseph Policay

County Engineer Ricardo Matias represented the Department.

1. Authorizing the County Manager to enter into an agreement, through NJ State Contract, with Ciocca Ford of Flemington for the purchase of a truck in the amount not to exceed \$53,392.00. **(Commissioner Bette Jane Kowalski)**

Commissioner Baker asked County Engineer Matias to elaborate on this item.

County Engineer Matias advised that the Department would be purchasing a Ford Expedition to replace a retired Chevrolet Suburban.

2. Authorizing the County Manager to award a contract, obtained through advertising public bidding in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq. to Chemical Equipment Labs of DE, Inc., Newton Square, PA to provide Rock Salt for a twelve (12) month period commencing upon execution of the contract in an amount not to exceed \$780,000. **(Commissioner Bette Jane Kowalski)**

Commissioner Baker asked how the quantity of salt was calculated.

County Engineer Matias advised that this contract was secured through a public bid, adding that the rock salt was purchased for a unit price. He noted that the County was responsible

for approximately 176 miles of road and would consider this, as well as prior winter conditions, to determine the quantity needed. He added that rock salt was purchased as needed.

3. Authorizing the County Manager to exercise the County's option to extend the contract obtained through advertised public bidding in accordance with the Local Public Contracts Laws, NJSA 40A:11-1 et seq. with Sage Landscape Contractors, Inc., Watchung, NJ, for the provision of Snow Removal Services for the additional period of twenty-four (24) months in an amount not to exceed \$189,600.00. **(Commissioner Bette Jane Kowalski)**
4. Granting permission to the Township of Springfield to hang a banner on Meisel Avenue and Mountain Avenue from September 11, 2023 to October 17, 2023 and to close Mountain Avenue between Morris Avenue and Caldwell Place on Sunday, October 15, 2023 from 6 am until 7 pm for the Fall Festival and Car Show. **(Commissioner Bette Jane Kowalski)**
5. Granting permission to the Township of Springfield to hang banners on Mountain Avenue and South Springfield Avenue at the intersection of Evergreen Avenue from September 11, 2023 to October 17, 2023 and to close South Springfield Avenue on October 10, 11, 12, and 13, 2023 from 6 pm to 10 pm and on October 14, 2023 from 2 pm to 6 pm for the Saint James Church Festival. **(Commissioner Bette Jane Kowalski)**

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

Bibi Taylor, Director

There were no questions or comments by the Board.

1. Modifying the 2023 Union County adopted budget in the amount of \$170,035.00 as a result of notification received from the State of New Jersey, Department of Law and Public Safety for a program entitled: VOCA - SANE Grant. **(Vice Chairwoman Kimberly Palmieri-Mouded)**
2. Modifying the 2023 Union County adopted budget in the amount of \$661,000.00 as a result of notification received from the United States Department of Health and Human Services for a program entitled: Congressional Directives Grant - Mental Health and Recovery Support Services. **(Vice Chairwoman Kimberly Palmieri-Mouded)**
3. Modifying the 2023 Union County adopted budget in the amount of \$20,000.00 as a result of notification received from the State of New Jersey, Department of Community Affairs for a program entitled: Data-Driven Decision Making: Organizational Enhancement Program Grant. **(Vice Chairwoman Kimberly Palmieri-Mouded)**
4. Modifying the 2023 Union County adopted budget in the amount of \$9,563.00 as a result of notification received from the State of New Jersey, Department of Community Affairs for a program entitled: Community Service Block Grant (CSBG). **(Vice Chairwoman Kimberly Palmieri-Mouded)**

5. Modifying the 2023 Union County adopted budget in the amount of \$353,244.00 as a result of notification received from the State of New Jersey, Department of Human Services for a program entitled: Area Plan Contract. **(Vice Chairwoman Kimberly Palmieri-Mouded)**
6. Modifying the 2023 Union County adopted budget in the amount of \$200,000.00 as a result of notification received from the State of New Jersey, Department of Human Services for a program entitled: Alcohol/Drug Abuse Grant - Recovery Mobile Van Program - ARPA. **(Vice Chairwoman Kimberly Palmieri-Mouded)**

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Debbie-Ann Anderson, Director

Assistant Director Karen Dinsmore represented the Department.

1. Amending Resolution 2022-823 to increase the amount payable to Geneva Worldwide Interpretation Services, New York, NY for the purpose of providing interpretation services to the non-English speaking clients of the Union County Department of Human Services, Division of Social Services in an amount of \$15,000.00, for a total not to exceed \$65,000.00. **(Chairman Sergio Granados)**

Chairman Granados asked Assistant Director Dinsmore to elaborate on the top languages used through this service.

Assistant Director Dinsmore advised that Spanish, Haitian Creole, Swahili, and Polish, adding that they served a very diverse population.

2. Amending Resolution 2023-666, a contract with Geographic Solutions, Palm Harbor, FL for continuation of Workforce Information Management Data Exchange System, to adjust accounts and to extend the contract period by an additional six (6) months through June 30, 2024 and increase funds in the amount not to exceed \$29,550.00, for a new total contract of not to exceed \$59,100.00. **(Chairman Sergio Granados)**
3. Amending Resolution Number 2023-663, authorizing the FY2022 SuperNOFO Continuum of Care (CoC) program competitive grant award funds, to reflect a change in account numbers only. **(Chairman Sergio Granados)**
4. Amending Resolution 2023-664, agreement with United Way of Greater Union County, Elizabeth, New Jersey, to provide family support and prevention services to Union County families in order to promote stability and wellness, to reflect a shift in funds under the account number and to reflect additional grant dollars in the amount of \$17,500.00 for a new total not to exceed \$267,500.00; with no change to the grant term or terms and conditions of the agreement. **(Chairman Sergio Granados)**
5. Authorizing the County Manager to enter into a contract with Frank M. Gargiulo & Son, Inc. dba Gargiulo Produce, Hillside, NJ, for the purpose of providing food for the Union County COVID-19 Emergency Food Distribution events for the period of September 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023 in an amount not to exceed \$636,857.00. **(Chairman Sergio Granados)**

Commissioner Williams asked Assistant Director Dinsmore to elaborate on this item.

Assistant Director Dinsmore advised that the resolution, as well as Resolution Number 6 (below), have to do with the food providers for our food drives in the past and noted that the County is looking to continue providing food drives during the holidays later this year. She advised that the need in the community is as significant as it ever was; largely driven by the cost of food. She added that while there are more people employed, the cost of food is still prohibitive among this population and that these food drives help provide food to families during the time of year in which they should be celebrating.

6. Amending Resolution 2023-746 with Village Super Market, Inc. dba ShopRite of Union Springfield, NJ for the purpose of changing the agreement period from November 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023, to September 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023 with no other changes to the terms and conditions of the agreement. **(Chairman Sergio Granados)**

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Victoria Durbin-Drake, Director

County Manager Oatman represented the Department.

1. Amending Resolution 2023-50, a contract with Ben Shaffer Recreation Inc., under the Educational Services Commission of NJ Co-Op Contract# 20/21-02, for playground equipment, to increase the allocation amount in an additional amount not to exceed \$243,000.00 for a total contract amount not to exceed \$643,000.00. **(Commissioner Lourdes M. Leon)**

Commissioner Baker asked if this was for the purchase of new equipment.

County Manager Oatman advised that this equipment was for Rutgers Avenue Park in Hillside. He noted that the current equipment was old and weathered and would be replaced with new equipment.

2. Authorizing the County Manager to exercise the option to extend the open ended contract obtained through advertised public bidding in accordance with the Local Public Contracts Law, NJSA 40A:11-1 et seq: Department of Parks and Recreation: Johnny on the Spot LLC, Old Bridge, NJ for the purpose of providing Portable Toilet Rental & Septic Pumping Services for an additional period of twenty-four (24) months commencing October 15, 2023 through October 14, 2025, in the amount of not to exceed \$155,000.00. (BA# 10-2022) **(Commissioner Lourdes M. Leon)**
3. Authorizing the County Manager to execute a License Agreement with Summit Medical Group Foundation to hold a Physical Fitness Challenge at the Mt. Carmel Society property located at 56 River Road, Berkeley Heights, New Jersey, and the County's adjacent parkland on Sunday, October 15, 2023. **(Commissioner Rebecca Lynne Williams)**
4. Authorizing the County Manager to enter into a license agreement with the Union County Celtic Festival to hold a Celtic Festival at Oak Ridge Park on Saturday, September 9, 2023. **(Commissioner Rebecca Lynne Williams)**

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Dennis Burke, Acting Director

1. Authorizing the County Manager to enter into a contract with NMS Laboratories, Horsham, PA, for post-mortem toxicology lab services for basic and expanded testing services, for a contract term of October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2025, in an amount not to exceed \$150,000.00 with the potential option to extend the contract for one twenty-four (24) month period. **(Commissioner James Baker Jr)**
2. Authorizing the County Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement for Tuberculosis Services with the New Jersey Medical School Global Tuberculosis Institute at Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences for the period of January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023 in an amount not to exceed \$103,683.28. **(Commissioner James Baker Jr)**

Chairman Granados asked if this service was extended to the various municipalities.

Acting Director Burke confirmed this to be the case.

COMMISSIONER SPONSORED RESOLUTIONS

1. Recognizing September 2023 as National Recovery Month, which highlights the achievements of individuals who have reclaimed their lives in long-term recovery and honors the service providers who make recovery possible. **(Commissioner James Baker Jr, & The Entire Board)**
2. Offering this Board's deepest condolences to the family of Mrs. Myra Elaine (Cameron) Volpe during their time of sorrow. **(Commissioner Joseph C Bodek, & The Entire Board)**
3. Congratulating Pastor R. Lenton Buffalo, Jr. of Union Baptist Church in Elizabeth on his 35th Pastoral Anniversary on October 14, 2023. **(Commissioner Angela R. Garretson, & The Entire Board)**
4. Offering this Board's deepest condolences to the family of Joe Adair in their time of sorrow. **(Commissioner Angela R. Garretson, & The Entire Board)**
5. Offering this Board's deepest condolences to the family of Joseph Hartnett in their time of sorrow. **(Commissioner Bette Jane Kowalski, & The Entire Board)**
6. Authorizing the County Manager to Execute an Amendment to an existing Green Acres grant for the County of Union's Open Space and Recreation Plan to accept an additional \$3,000,000.00 in funding. **(Commissioner Lourdes M. Leon)**
7. Congratulating Vivian Haas, Fanwood resident, celebrating her 100th birthday on October 12th, 2023. **(Commissioner Alexander Mirabella, & The Entire Board)**
8. Congratulating Masjidullah Plainfield as they host their Annual Gala Fundraiser on September 23rd, 2023. **(Commissioner Rebecca Lynne Williams, & The Entire Board)**

9. Congratulating the Greater Union County Chapter of Jack and Jill Inc. as they host the Annual Jack and Jill Day Activities Event, also known as Carol Robertson Day, at Jerseyland Park in Scotch Plains on September 9th, 2023. **(Commissioner Rebecca Lynne Williams, & The Entire Board)**
10. Congratulating Mary Burgwinkle for her years of dedication to the Plainfield Symphony Orchestra at the 104th Season Showcase Gala on Saturday, September 9th, 2023. **(Commissioner Rebecca Lynne Williams, & The Entire Board)**
11. Authorizing Governing Body Certification of the 2022 Audit. **(Vice Chairwoman Kimberly Palmieri-Mouded)**
12. Sponsoring the City of Plainfield's House Music Festival For A Cause being held on September 16, 2023 in the amount of not to exceed \$1,500.00. **(Vice Chairwoman Kimberly Palmieri-Mouded, & The Entire Board)**
13. Sponsoring the Borough of Roselle Park's Annual Festival of India being held on October 7, 2023 in the amount not to exceed \$500.00. **(Vice Chairwoman Kimberly Palmieri-Mouded, & The Entire Board)**
14. Sponsoring the Township of Westfield's AddamsFest: Westfield Celebrates Charles Addams being held on October 15, 2023 in the amount not to exceed \$2,000.00. **(Vice Chairwoman Kimberly Palmieri-Mouded, & The Entire Board)**
15. Offering the board's deepest condolences to the family of Manuel Rodrigues Grova in their time of sorrow. **(Chairman Sergio Granados, Commissioner Lourdes M. Leon, & The Entire Board)**
16. Offering this Board's sincere gratitude to Joseph Graziano for his 17 years of service to the County as Director of the Department of Engineering, Public Works & Facilities Management. **(Chairman Sergio Granados, & The Entire Board)**
17. Proclaiming the month of September 2023 as Prostate Cancer Awareness Month. **(Chairman Sergio Granados, & The Entire Board)**
18. Commending the efforts of the Union County Connects and the Regional Rails-to-Trails Conservancy; and further recognizing their partnership in assisting the County's pursuit of rail to trail conversions throughout Union County. **(Chairman Sergio Granados, Commissioner Alexander Mirabella, & The Entire Board)**
19. Offering this Board's deepest condolences to the family of Joseph A. Fiordaliso, President of the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, during their time of sorrow. **(Chairman Sergio Granados, & The Entire Board)**

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Granados asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. On a motion made by Commissioner Mirabella and seconded by Commissioner Garretson roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 P.M.


UNION COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
2023 MEETING SCHEDULE
REORGANIZATION MEETING - THURSDAY, JANUARY 3, 2023 at 6:00 pm
Union County Courthouse- 2 Broad Street. Elizabeth

AGENDA SETTING SESSION

January 26, 2023
February 9, 2023
February 23, 2023
March 16, 2023
March 30, 2023
April 13, 2023
April 27, 2023
May 11, 2023
May 25, 2023
June 8, 2023
June 22, 2023
July 13, 2023
August 17, 2023
September 7, 2023
September 21, 2023
October 12, 2023
October 26, 2023
November 9, 2023
December 7, 2023
December 21, 2023

REGULAR MEETINGS

January 26, 2023
February 9, 2023
February 23, 2023
March 16, 2023
March 30, 2023
April 13, 2023
April 27, 2023
May 11, 2023
May 25, 2023
June 8, 2023
June 22, 2023
July 13, 2023
August 17, 2023
September 7, 2023
September 21, 2023
October 12, 2023
October 26, 2023
November 9, 2023
December 7, 2023
December 21, 2023


James E. Pellettiere, 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.

All meetings are to be held in the Commissioner Meeting Room within the Administration Building, 6th floor located at 10 Elizabethtown Plaza, Elizabeth New Jersey, 07207.

Due to the Covid-19 coronavirus concerns, County Commissioner meetings may be held remotely via Zoom webinar under the procedures conducted, as published, in 2021. If said procedures are deemed necessary, the Clerk of the Board will revise this Public Notice according to law.

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