



# UNION COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

**THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2024  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairwoman Palmieri-Mouded presided over the meeting and called the meeting to order at 6:19 P.M.

## **ROLL CALL**

Roll call showed Chairwoman Kimberly Palmieri-Mouded, Vice-Chairwoman Lourdes M. Leon, Commissioner James E. Baker, Jr, Commissioner Joseph C. Bodek, Commissioner Michèle S. Delisfort, Commissioner Sergio Granados, Commissioner Bette Jane Kowalski, and Commissioner Rebecca Williams were present, with Commissioner Alexander Mirabella absent.

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

Chairwoman Palmieri-Mouded called for a motion to approve the Communications. On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Vice-Chairwoman Leon, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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1. Wednesday, February 7, 2024 - Agenda Setting Session
2. Wednesday, February 7, 2024 - Regular Meeting
3. Wednesday, February 21, 2024 - Agenda Setting Session
4. Wednesday, February 21, 2024 - Regular Meeting

Chairwoman Palmieri-Mouded called for a motion to approve the February Minutes. On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative for the February 7<sup>th</sup> Agenda Setting and Regular Meeting Minutes, with Commissioner Mirabella absent; and

seven votes in the affirmative for the February 21<sup>st</sup> Agenda Setting & Regular Meeting Minutes, with Commissioner Delisfort abstaining and Commissioner Mirabella absent.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT PORTION**

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

Bruce Paterson, of Garwood, asked for additional information related to Reso Nos. 2024-247, 2024-248, 2024-263, 2024-264, and 2024-272. He made comments relative to Reso Nos. 2024-262 & 2024-274. He also made comments relative to the 2024 Budget presentation.

Relative to Reso No. 2024-247, County Engineer Matias advised that this item related to planning services for various County buildings. He noted that due to anticipated growth with the State's Judiciary Department and other changes, the firm would be assessing plans to address these changes in the future.

Relative to Reso No. 202-248, County Engineer Matias advised that this item related to the installation of solar panels on-site which would subsequently provide power to the facility and potentially the training center.

Relative to Reso No. 2024-263, Director Durbin-Drake confirmed that this item related to pre-construction services for the new, indoor skate rink at Warinanco.

Relative to Reso No. 2024-264, County Manager Oatman advised that this project was meant to address deficient construction on-site that was currently being litigated. He added that the project had been awarded to the lowest bid.

Relative to Reso No. 2024-272, Director Anderson advised that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department was contending with increased vacancies. She added that waiving the residency requirement would allow the Department to fill these vacancies with the most qualified personnel. She noted that Union County residents would receive priority over out-of-county residents and that this change would not affect unionized positions. She thanked the Board for their consideration of this item.

There were no additional questions or comments.

### **RESOLUTIONS FOR ADOPTION**

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The following resolutions are being offered for adoption:

- 2024-243 COMMISSIONER JAMES BAKER JR:** Authorizing the County Manager to enter into a five (5) year lease agreement with Wireless Edge Towers II, LLC for radio antennas, equipment shelter, and stand-by generator effective May 1, 2024 through April 30, 2029 in the amount of \$14,400.00 for the first year with a 3% increase each subsequent year.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-244 COMMISSIONER JOSEPH C BODEK:** Amending Resolution 2020-857, a contract awarded through advertised public bidding in accordance with the Local Public Contracts Law N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq., to Foggia Trinity Electric, LLC, of Scotch Plains, New Jersey for Intersection Improvements – Rahway Avenue & Lamberts Mill Road, West Broad Street & Scotch Plains Avenue, Township of Westfield, County of Union, New Jersey. This Final Change Order Number 1 will decrease the contract amount by \$5,873.57 for a final contract amount not to exceed \$394,371.68.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-245 COMMISSIONER JOSEPH C BODEK:** Amending Resolution 2018-86, a contract with CME Associates of Parlin, New Jersey to provide additional Engineering Services for the Replacement of Lower Road Minor Bridge, Li-63, City of Linden in the amount of \$90,666.00 for a new contract amount not to exceed \$258,862.70.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-246 COMMISSIONER JOSEPH C BODEK:** Authorizing the County Manager to extend the contract pursuant to Resolution 2022-212, originally obtained through advertised public bidding with Magic Touch Construction Co., Inc., Keyport, NJ, for the purpose of Plumbing Services at various locations for the period of April 4, 2024 through April 3, 2026 in an amount not to exceed \$175,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-247 COMMISSIONER JOSEPH C BODEK:** Authorizing the County Manager to enter into a contract with H2M Architects & Engineers, Parsippany, NJ to provide Planning Consulting Services for the Union County Courthouse Complex through December 31, 2024, in an amount not to exceed \$165,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-248 COMMISSIONER JOSEPH C BODEK:** Authorizing the County Manager to enter into a contract with LiRo Program and Construction Management, Syosset, NY to provide Engineering Services for Solar Installation at the Galloping Hill Golf Course through December 31, 2024, in an amount not to exceed \$303,761.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-249 COMMISSIONER JOSEPH C BODEK:** Authorizing the Township of Berkeley Heights to close Springfield Avenue from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm on Sunday, June 9, 2024 to hold its annual Block Party.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-250 COMMISSIONER JOSEPH C BODEK:** Authorizing the Township of Berkeley Heights Rescue Squad to hang a banner across Springfield Avenue and Plainfield Avenue from April 1, 2024 to April 27, 2024 and October 1, 2024 to October 31, 2024 to advertise the Rescue Squad Membership Drive and Recruitment.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-251 COMMISSIONER SERGIO GRANADOS:** Amending Resolution 2023-945, a contract awarded pursuant to advertised public bidding in accordance with the Local Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq., with Johnston Communication, Springfield, NJ, for the provision of electronic network equipment, security and cabling for various County Departments, to reflect an increase to the contract in the amount of \$6,399.30 for a new total amount not to exceed \$399,715.19.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-252 COMMISSIONER BETTE JANE KOWALSKI:** Authorizing the County Manager, through the Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, to reallocate funds received from the New Jersey Historical Commission to various Union County agencies and organizations as recommended and approved by the Cultural and Heritage Programs Advisory Board in the amount not to exceed \$55,200.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-253 COMMISSIONER REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS:** Approving transfer of Current Fund Appropriations.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-254 COMMISSIONER REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:**  
Sponsoring the Queen City Film & Television Workshop in the amount not to exceed \$750.00, in support of their Screen Talk events to be held on May 11, June 8, July 13 and August 10, 2024.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-255 COMMISSIONER REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:**  
Sponsoring the Elizabeth Portugal Day Committee Festivities to be held on May 31, June 2 and September 7, 2024, in an amount not to exceed \$4,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-256 COMMISSIONER REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:**  
Sponsoring Citizens Going Forward's Goodwill Festival 2024 to be held on June 1, 2024, in an amount not to exceed \$1,500.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-257 COMMISSIONER REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:**  
Sponsoring Berkeley Heights Business & Civic's Downtown Berkeley Heights Block Party to be held on June 9, 2024, in an amount not to exceed \$1,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-258 COMMISSIONER REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:**  
Sponsoring the Township of Scotch Plains' 2024 Independence Day Fireworks to be held on June 29, 2024, in an amount not to exceed \$4,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-259 COMMISSIONER REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:**  
Sponsoring the Queen City Film & Television Workshop 7th Annual Queen City Film Festival to be held on October 18-20, 2024, in an amount not to exceed \$1,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-260 COMMISSIONER REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Sponsoring the City of Linden's 71st Halloween Parade to be held on October 27, 2024, in an amount not to exceed \$4,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-261 VICE-CHAIRWOMAN LOURDES M. LEON:** Amending Resolution Number 2023-1052, a contract with Kemper Sports Management Inc. to enhance the scope of services for Union County Recreational Facilities, to add an addendum for the inclusion of management for both the Walter E. Ulrich Pool, Rahway and Wheeler Spray Park, Linden commencing April 1, 2024 to September 30, 2024 for a fee of \$3,000.00 for the four (4) active seasonal months of May-August 2024 in an amount not to exceed \$12,000.00 for a new total amount of \$7,635,776.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-262 VICE-CHAIRWOMAN LOURDES M. LEON:** Authorizing the County Manager to enter into a contract with USA Architects of Somerville, New Jersey, to provide Professional Architectural Services related to the Warinanco Indoor Ice Rink, City of Elizabeth, County of Union, New Jersey in an amount not to exceed \$800,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-263 VICE-CHAIRWOMAN LOURDES M. LEON:** Authorizing the County Manager to enter into a contract with Mast Construction of Little Falls, New Jersey, to provide Pre-Construction Management Services related to for the Warinanco Indoor Ice Rink, City of Elizabeth, County of Union, New Jersey in an amount not to exceed \$121,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-264 VICE-CHAIRWOMAN LOURDES M. LEON:** Authorizing the County Manager to award the proposed 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: Grove Contracting, LLC., Verona, NJ 07044 for the Ashbrook Golf Course Clubhouse Improvements in the amount not to exceed of \$4,107,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-265 CHAIRWOMAN KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUDED:** Authorizing the County Manager to enter into an agreement with International Business Machines Corporation (IBM), Piscataway, New Jersey for the purpose of providing hardware and software maintenance for the Union County Clerk's imaging and web servers for the period of January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024 in an amount not to exceed \$62,517.73.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-266 CHAIRWOMAN KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUDED:** Authorizing the County Manager, through the Office of the Union County Prosecutor's Office, to apply for and accept funding from the State of New Jersey, Division of Administration, Department of Law and Public Safety, Office of the Attorney General, Grants Development Section FFY23 STOP Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Grant Program in the amount of \$45,686.00 in federal funds with a required match of \$15,229.00 for a total project cost in the amount of \$60,915.00 for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-267 CHAIRWOMAN KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUDED:** Amending Resolution 2024-105, authorizing the County Manager to apply for and accept funding from the State of New Jersey, Department of Children and Families for the Child Advocacy Development Grants - Treatment Services, Programs, Technology and Capital Improvement, to reflect an additional award amount of \$81,772.00 for a new total award of \$199,184.00; all other terms remain unchanged.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-268 CHAIRWOMAN KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUDED:** Authorizing the County Manager to enter into a contract with Xtel, Mount Laurel, NJ, through ESCNJ 23/24-10 for the purpose of telecommunication services through December 31, 2024, in the amount not to exceed \$990,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-269 CHAIRWOMAN KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUDED:** Authorizing the County Manager to accept a Local Efficiency Achievement Program (LEAP) County Coordinator Fellowship Grant from the Department of Community Affairs, Division of Local Government Services, to enhance focus on and interest in the procurement of shared services opportunities across local units, in the amount not to exceed \$37,500.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-270 CHAIRWOMAN KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUEDED:** Authorizing the County Manager to approve the City of Plainfield's request, under the successful administration of the Community Development Block Program by the City, to use Program Income funds to help offset the cost of installing doors and window guard systems for 715-717 and 721-723 Arlington Avenue in the City of Plainfield, in an amount not to exceed \$35,000.00.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-271 CHAIRWOMAN KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUEDED:** Amending Resolution 2023-962, a contract with Primepoint, LLC, Mt. Holly, NJ for the provision of Payroll Services and Time and Labor Management Services, to include the Division of Social Services and the American Job Center, at both Elizabeth and Plainfield locations under the County's agreement for the period of December 1, 2023 through November 30, 2024 in an amount not to exceed \$17,730.00, for a total amount not to exceed \$207,330.00, with no other changes to the terms or conditions of the prior resolution or agreement.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-272 CHAIRWOMAN KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUEDED:** Approving waiver of the County's residency requirement for the Department of Human Services.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-273 CHAIRWOMAN KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUEDED:** Authorizing the sale of a quarter acre of former parkland in the County's Passaic River Park in Berkeley Heights, NJ, no longer needed for public use, by way of open public sale at auction and authorizing the County Manager to execute any and all necessary documents.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-274 CHAIRWOMAN KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUEDED:** Appointing the Taylor Law Group, LLC, New Providence, NJ, to represent the County of Union, as special counsel concerning state licensing and related matters for Cornerstone Behavioral Health Hospital of Union County, in an amount not to exceed \$25,000.00.



On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-275 CHAIRWOMAN KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUDED, COMMISSIONER ALEXANDER MIRABELLA, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Appointing Joseph Signorello Jr., as the Union County Fire Marshal for a three (3) year term commencing on March 28, 2024.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

#### **LAUDATORY RESOLUTIONS & RESOLUTIONS OF CONDOLENCES**

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**2024-276 COMMISSIONER JAMES BAKER JR, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Recognizing the month of April 2024 as Alcohol Awareness Month throughout the County of Union

**2024-277 COMMISSIONER JOSEPH C BODEK, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Recognizing Giovanni Lavorato for his years of service in Linden and Union County.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-278 COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE S. DELISFORT, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Offering this Board's deepest condolences to the family of Karen People during their time of sorrow.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-279 COMMISSIONER BETTE JANE KOWALSKI, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Offering this Board's deepest condolences to the family of Michael Yesenko during their time of sorrow.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-280 COMMISSIONER BETTE JANE KOWALSKI, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Congratulating the following individuals from the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 80, on obtaining the rank of Eagle Scout: Owen Cumiskey, Owen Giblin, Jack Goodwin, Daniel Kennedy, Miles Murphy, Aiden Nester, EJ Orr & Evan Surmay.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-281 COMMISSIONER REBECCA LYNNE WILLIAMS, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Offering this Board's deepest condolences to the family of Carrie Nichols during their time of sorrow.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-282 VICE-CHAIRWOMAN LOURDES M. LEON, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Offering this Board's deepest condolences to the family of Abelardo Gonzalez Tarrago during their time of sorrow.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-283 CHAIRWOMAN KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUEDED, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Recognizing the month of April 2024 as "Autism Acceptance Month" (AAM) throughout the County of Union and further recognizing April 2, 2024 as 'Wear Blue Day' in celebration of Autism Acceptance Month while lighting the Union County Administration Building Blue from April 1st through April 7th.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-284 CHAIRWOMAN KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUEDED, COMMISSIONER SERGIO GRANADOS, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Recognizing the month of April 2024 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) throughout the County of Union.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-285 CHAIRWOMAN KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUEDED, COMMISSIONER SERGIO GRANADOS, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Offering this Board's deepest sympathies to the family of Mercedes Reinoso during their time of sorrow.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

**2024-286 CHAIRWOMAN KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUEDED, & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Congratulating the 2024 Unity Award recipients upon being honored by the Union County Human Relations Commission.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

2024-287 CHAIRWOMAN KIMBERLY PALMIERI-MOUDED, & THE ENTIRE BOARD: Resolution supporting New Jersey Senate Bill SCR-93, sponsored by NJ Senator M. Teresa Ruiz, which urges the Biden Administration and the United States Congress to enact the "Poverty Line Act of 2023" and raise the threshold for the federal poverty level by accounting for regional cost-of-living differences.

On a motion made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Bodek, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella absent.

### COMMISSIONER REPORTS AND COMMENTS

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Commissioner Kowalski reminded voters wishing to change their party affiliation that the deadline to do so was April 10<sup>th</sup> in order to voter in the Primary Election on June 4<sup>th</sup> 2024. She added that this deadline did not apply to voters who were currently listed as unaffiliated. She further advised that as a result of new legislation passed in 2023 and updated in 2024, all unaffiliated voters who were designated to receive vote-by mail ballots for all future elections would have until May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024 to declare their party affiliation. She also added that unaffiliated voters could also declare their party affiliation during in-person early voting from May 29<sup>th</sup> – June 2<sup>nd</sup> and or on June 4<sup>th</sup>, Primary Election Day. She encouraged voters to contact the Board of Elections for additional information related to their party affiliation. To close, she thanked all the County administration and staff for their work on the 2024 Budget.

Commissioner Baker invited children with autism and other sensory sensitivities and their caregivers to attend Jeff Boyer's Big Bubble Bonanza on April 14<sup>th</sup> at the Union County Performing Arts Center. He noted a fee of \$8 per person, adding that tickets could be purchased through the County website and or UCPAC's box office. He added that this performance was part of the County's Sensory-Friendly Theater Series and designed and adapted specifically for children with autism and similar sensory sensitivities.

Commissioner Williams announced a significant reduction in long term debt, showcasing the County's commitment to responsible, fiscal policies and diligent stewardship of tax payer resources. She noted that according to NJ mandates, counties were required to adhere to a maximum net-debt limit. She advised that in 2013, Union County's net-debt was .87% of equalized assessed value, decreasing to .57% by close of 2023, representing a commendable ten-year reduction of 34% to \$46.57 million. She noted that a majority of this debt reduction had been achieved since 2018 reflecting a focus on financial sustainability. She added that Union County's average equalized assessed value had experienced substantial growth over the same ten-year period, rising from \$66.2 billion in 2013 to \$91.25 billion, indicating economic vitality and effective fiscal management. She further advised that Union County has maintained a AAA bond rating for several years, reaffirmed by Moody's Investors Services in 2023, underscoring the County's strong financial position through 2024 and beyond. She recognized County Manager Oatman and Director Taylor as well as all the County Administration and Staff that played key

roles in achieving these results. She noted that she was proud of the County's ability to deliver such outcomes.

Commissioner Granados advised that the County would be lighting up the Union County Courthouse in blue on April 2<sup>nd</sup> in recognition of Autism Awareness Day. Additionally, he noted that the County would be hosting their Annual Autism Acceptance Celebration on April 20<sup>th</sup> at Mattano Park in Elizabeth, advising that the rain-date was scheduled for April 27<sup>th</sup>. He advised that the event was free, but pre-registration was required. He noted the County's continued commitment to providing programs and resources to support residents with autism.

Commissioner Bodek advised that the County would be holding its first of many free, hazardous waste events on April 6<sup>th</sup> at UCVTS's West Hall Police Academy Lot in Scotch Plains. He noted that these events provided Union County residents with a free, environmentally safe way to dispose of household items and waste. He encouraged residents to visit the County website to learn more about the event, including a list of acceptable materials. To close, he noted his recent visit to UC Vocational Technical School and Union College of Union County, noting it as a great experience.

Commissioner Delisfort noted her recent attendance of a production of 42<sup>nd</sup> Street at UCPAC, performed by students from UCVTS' Academy of Performing Arts. She thanked the students for the invitation, noting the showcase of great talent. On another note she spoke relative to her recent visit to Union College of Union County's Cranford Campus. She thanked College President, Dr. Margaret McMenamin for her continued efforts in providing students with the resources needed to overcome barriers and succeed. In recognition of Alcohol Awareness Month, Commissioner Delisfort also advised that the County would be offering a virtual webinar, in partnership with Atlantic Health Systems, entitled "Overcoming Alcohol in 2024" on April 11<sup>th</sup>. She noted that this informative discussion would provide residents with an opportunity to learn about the sensitivity and challenges associated with alcohol addiction and identify the different resources and treatment options available to overcome these challenges. To close, she thanked the County Administration and Staff for their efforts relative to the 2024 Budget and wished everyone a Happy Easter.

Vice-Chairwoman Leon announced that the County's Parks and Recreation Department was seeking seasonal staff for the 2024 Summer season, noting an upcoming job fair on April 13<sup>th</sup> at Warinanco Sports Center. She advised that staff was needing to work at Walter E. Ulrich Pool in Rahway and Wheeler Spray Park in Linden. She added that the Department was looking lifeguards, pool attendants, spray park attendants and park maintenance laborers. She encouraged interested residents to visit the County's website for additional information. On another note, she recognized County Manager Oatman and the County Administration and Staff for their efforts relative to the 2024 Budget. To close, she wished everyone a Happy Easter.

Chairwoman Palmieri-Mouded advised that in honoring of Women's History Month, the County, in partnership with the 1-102<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Family Readiness Group, had organized a special collection drive for active duty female personnel from our area currently serving

overseas. She noted that the collection, running through March 30<sup>th</sup>, aimed to provide a diverse range of items to provide comfort and convenience to the brave women in the military. She recognized the many partners and volunteers and thanked them for their tremendous efforts and generosity. On another note, she made comments relative to the 2024 Budget and thanked the County Administration for their hard work to this effect. To close, she wished everyone a Happy Easter.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairwoman Palmieri-Mouded asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. On a motion made by Commissioner Delisfort and seconded by Commissioner Williams, roll call showed eight members of the Board voted in the affirmative, with Commissioner Mirabella.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:42 P.M.

## UNION COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS 2024 MEETING SCHEDULE

**REORGANIZATION MEETING - THURSDAY, JANUARY 4, 2024 at 6:00 PM**  
**Union County Courthouse- 2 Broad Street. Elizabeth**

### AGENDA SETTING SESSION

Thursday, January 25, 2024  
 Wednesday, February 7, 2024  
 Wednesday, February 21, 2024  
 Wednesday, March 13, 2024  
 Wednesday, March 27, 2024  
 Wednesday, April 10, 2024  
 Wednesday, April 24, 2024  
 Wednesday, May 8, 2024  
 Wednesday, May 22, 2024  
 Wednesday, June 5, 2024  
 Wednesday, June 19, 2024  
 Wednesday, July 17, 2024  
 Wednesday, August 14, 2024  
 Wednesday, September 11, 2024  
 Wednesday, September 25, 2024  
 Wednesday, October 9, 2024  
 Wednesday, October 23, 2024  
 Wednesday, November 13, 2024  
 Wednesday, December 4, 2024  
 Wednesday, December 18, 2024

### REGULAR MEETINGS

Thursday, January 25, 2024  
 Wednesday, February 7, 2024  
 Wednesday, February 21, 2024  
 Wednesday, March 13, 2024  
 Wednesday, March 27, 2024  
 Wednesday, April 10, 2024  
 Wednesday, April 24, 2024  
 Wednesday, May 8, 2024  
 Wednesday, May 22, 2024  
 Wednesday, June 5, 2024  
 Wednesday, June 19, 2024  
 Wednesday, July 17, 2024  
 Wednesday, August 14, 2024  
 Wednesday, Sept. 11, 2024  
 Wednesday, Sept. 25, 2024  
 Wednesday, October 9, 2024  
 Wednesday, October 23, 2024  
 Wednesday, Nov. 13, 2024  
 Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2024  
 Wednesday, Dec. 18, 2024

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

Please note that the County Commissioners' meetings, with the exception of the January 25, 2024 meetings, are to be regularly held on Wednesday evenings. These meetings 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, 6<sup>th</sup> floor located at 10 Elizabethtown Plaza, Elizabeth New Jersey, 07207. Persons requiring a sign language interpreter should contact the Office of the Clerk of the Board at 908-527-4140.