



UNION COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS

THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2019
AGENDA SETTING MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Kowalski presided over the meeting and called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Roll call showed Chairman Bette Jane Kowalski, Vice Chairman Alexander Mirabella, Freeholder Angel G. Estrada, Freeholder Angela R. Garretson, Freeholder Sergio Granados, Freeholder Christopher Hudak, Freeholder Kimberly Palmieri – Mouded, Freeholder Andrea Staten, Freeholder Rebecca Williams were present.

Also present were County Manager Edward T. Oatman, County Counsel Robert E. Barry, 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.

PRESENTATION BY THE BOARD

A Resolution Presentation was made by Chair Bette Jane Kowalski and Freeholders Christopher Hudak and Andrea Staten to Gwendolyn Ryan, Acting Superintendent of Schools and various students of the Union County Vocational-Technical School, as the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders designated the month of February 2019 as National Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month in Union County.

Chairman Kowalski called upon Acting Superintendent of Schools Ms. Gwendolyn Ryan to join her and fellow Freeholders Hudak and Staten for the presentation of the resolution designating February 2019 as National Career and Technical Education Month in Union County.

Gwendolyn Ryan asked the students in attendance to join her. She noted that students had celebrated the month of February through various activities including guest speakers, field trips/site visits, and evening presentations for students and parents, among others. She cited that students had created several items for the Freeholders as tokens of appreciation including personalized coasters, designed and printed by students enrolled in the engineering program at the Magnet High School, as well as pins from the Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) at the Academy for Allied Health Sciences (UCAAHS) and Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) at the Academy for Information Technologies (UC-AIT). She added that tickets had also been provided to the Freeholders for the production of the Addams Family at UCPAC in Rahway. She introduced the students in attendance, noting their course(s) of study and the various organizations and activities

with which they are affiliated. She recognized the teachers and administrative staff in attendance, thanking them for their hard work and dedication to the students. She concluded by thanking the Board for the honor and their continued support of the educational programs offered at U.C. Vocational-Technical Schools (UCVTS).

A Resolution Presentation was made by Chair Bette Jane Kowalski and Freeholders Christopher Hudak and Andrea Staten to Gwendolyn S. Ryan, District Interim Superintendent of Schools and Bonnie Baldasare, FFA Advisory as the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders designated the week of February 16, 2019 through February 23, 2019 as the "National FFA Organization Week" throughout the County of Union.

Chairman Kowalski joined by Freeholders Hudak and Staten asked Ms. Bonnie Baldasare FFA Advisor to come forward along with David Tohon and Beatriz Cruz, members of the FFA, for the resolution presentation. Freeholder Staten provided some background information on the Future Farmers of American (FFA) organization, noting the importance of agricultural education.

David Tohon provided additional information related to the FFA organization and its importance, outlining his participation in several programs and career development events related to agriculture, including the Advocacy and Legislative Leadership Day held at The College of New Jersey during National FFA Organization Week, among others. He concluded by thanking the Board for the recognition and support.

Ms. Bonnie Baldasare provided details related to the crops they brought along, noting that thanks to the Kids Dig In! grant program facilitated by the Board, students now had access to an aeroponic system which allows plants to grow in air or mist, rather than soil.

Chairman Kowalski commended the students on their hard work and contribution to the community.

A Resolution Presentation was made by the Board to the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee in recognition of the annual Union County St. Patrick's Day Parade; congratulating the following Union County St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee 2019 honorees: Union Catholic Regional High School Principal Sister Percylee Hart, RSM, Grand Marshal; Kerry E. Ricci, Adjutant; Jessica Ann Cunningham, General Chairwoman.

Chairman Kowalski asked Vice Chairman Mirabella and Freeholder Williams to join her for the Resolution Presentation.

Vice Chairman Mirabella spoke highly of the annual parade and encouraged everyone to attend the event.

Chairman Kowalski provided background information related to the honorees in attendance, including Sister Percylee Hart, celebrating her long career at Union Catholic Regional High School.

Grand Marshal Sister Percylee Hart thanked the Board for the recognition and their unyielding support of the St. Patrick's Day Parade, an event she is very proud of as it brings the community together in honor and celebration of the Irish heritage.

Kerry E. Ricci provided additional details related to the upcoming parade and introduced the other committee members, which included Chief of Staff Dr. Jim Reagan Jr. and aides Dave and Betsy Thorton.

APPROVAL OF COMMUNICATIONS

Chairman Kowalski advised that communications would be approved next week during the regular meeting.

Note and File:

Emergency Management Council: Michael Monahan; Shade Tree Advisory Board: James Nichnadowicz; Transportation Advisory Board: Andre Luboff and Stephen Thorpe; Union County Air Traffic and Noise Advisory Board: Scott Jaffee; Voter Accessibility Advisory Committee: Helen Alvarado, Richard Barry, Nicole DeAugustine, Nicole DiRado, Bette Jane Kowalski, Marie Oakie and Manuel Ramirez.

Prior to addressing the business on the agenda, Chairman Kowalski asked County Manager Edward T. Oatman to comment on the 2019 Executive Budget.

County Manager Oatman spoke highly of the new budget, citing that it was below cap and a result of sound fiscal management. He noted that the proposed budget maintained low debt levels and would only result in a 2% increase in property taxes, citing the increase as the lowest in 20 years. County Manager Oatman outlined several instances of fiscal reform that had been implemented, including but not limited to, a hiring freeze of non-essential employees. He noted that the new budget would continue to fund several invaluable services provided by the county such as the Infrastructure and HEART Grant Programs, among others, as well as allow for new improvements and features to be included in the various park systems. County Manager Oatman added that the proposed budget would support Chairman Kowalski's initiatives related to shared services. He concluded by thanking Finance Director Bibi Taylor and her staff for their work on presenting the budget.

Chairman Kowalski called upon Vice Chairman Mirabella to say a few words related to the budget as Chairman of the Fiscal Committee.

Vice Chairman Mirabella offered a reminder relative to the upcoming annual budget hearings which serve to review the proposed Executive Budget prior to adoption. He outlined the schedule of the meetings, noting that additional information was available on the county website.

Chairman Kowalski noted the presence of Garwood Council Members Jen Blumenstock and Sean Benoit.

OFFICE OF THE UNION COUNTY PROSECUTOR

Michael A. Monahan, Acting Prosecutor

First Assistant Prosecutor Al Cernadas, Jr. represented the Office of the Prosecutor.

1. Amending Resolution Number 2018-1049, to include Janell Soto to serve as an Independent Contractor as part of the Union County Sexual Assault Response Team for the period of

October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019 at no additional cost to the County. **(Chair Bette Jane Kowalski)**

Freeholder Garretson inquired as to why this item was being presented now as it relates to a 2018 Resolution.

First Assistant Prosecutor Cernadas noted that the presentation of this amendment related to a previously adopted resolution was a result of the contract period which crosses over between two subsequent years. He added that the amendment was intended to include an additional Independent Contractor to accommodate fluctuating needs.

Freeholder Garretson asked County Manager Oatman to review the matter further.

2. Authorizing the County Manager, through the Union County Prosecutor's Office, to enter into an agreement with Porter Lee Corporation, Schaumburg, Illinois, for the purpose of providing annual support services, supplies and upgrades for the Barcode, Evidence Analysis, Statistics and Tracking (BEAST) evidence logging system for the period of January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019 in an amount not to exceed \$28,000.00. **(Chair Bette Jane Kowalski)**

Freeholder Estrada asked First Assistant Prosecutor Al Cernadas to elaborate on how he felt about the BEAST system.

First Assistant Prosecutor Cernadas noted the importance of the evidence logging system, describing it as essential to the operations of the office.

3. Authorizing the County Manager through the Union County Prosecutor's Office, to enter into a Professional Services Contract with various experts for litigation support and transcription services for the period of January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019 in an amount not to exceed \$95,000.00. **(Chair Bette Jane Kowalski)**

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Nicole DiRado, Administrator

Administrator Nicole DiRado advised that the Board of Elections would be offering demonstrations of the new voting machines at the legislative office in Union during the St. Patrick's Day Parade.

1. Authorizing the County Manager to award a contract to A. Rifkin, Wilkes-Barre, PA for the purpose of providing election security bags for the Union County Board of Elections in an amount not to exceed \$100,465. **(Chair Bette Jane Kowalski)**

Freeholder Hudak inquired about the price of the election security bags and whether or not this was a one-time expense.

Administrator DiRado advised that as result of the new Express Vote XL voting machines these bags would be necessary to retrieve the ballot cartridge bins from the various polling locations on election night. She noted that the proposed bags had been customized to ensure content integrity and facilitate storage and transport. Administrator DiRado confirmed that the purchase was a one-time expense.

Freeholder Hudak marveled at the new machines, citing them as a great investment and a nice addition to future elections.

Freeholder Granados asked for the specific quantity of bags being ordered.

Administrator DiRado advised that the quantity was 485 supply bags and 440 wheeled bin bags.

Freeholder Staten asked Administrator DiRado to provide additional information related to the voting machine demonstrations during the St. Patrick's Day Parade that she noted earlier.

Administrator DiRado confirmed that her office would be there for the duration of the parade.

Freeholder Estrada asked if the new voting machines came equipped with a bag and whether the bags have always been the county's responsibility to furnish.

Administrator DiRado advised that the new voting machines do not include bags and confirmed that the bags have always been supplied by the county.

Chairman Kowalski prompted Administrator DiRado to provide additional information related to the machine demonstrations currently available throughout the county.

Administrator DiRado advised that demonstrations were currently available at the Colleen Fraser building in Westfield as well as the Union County Courthouse in Elizabeth, citing the varying schedules for each location. She noted upcoming scheduled events including the Earth Day event at Trailside, among others. She added that upcoming scheduling was being arranged, including night and weekend hours for the various municipalities set to use the new machines in the primary election.

Freeholder Garretson addressed the Board and requested a consolidated resource related to the deployment and status of the new voting machines throughout the various municipalities.

County Manager Oatman advised that Administrator DiRado could provide the requested information following the meeting.

Chairman Kowalski acknowledged the presence of Director Joseph Graziano of the Department of Engineering, Public Works & Facilities Management and wished him a Happy Birthday.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

Bibi Taylor, Director

There were no questions or comments from the Board.

1. Amending the 2019 Temporary Budget Ch. 96 P.L. 1951 (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-20). **(Chair Bette Jane Kowalski)**

FREEHOLDER SPONSORED RESOLUTIONS

Chairman Kowalski noted that she would have a few laudatory and advisory board resolutions to add for the regular meeting.

Vice Chairman Mirabella advised that he too would have additional sponsorship resolutions to include at the regular meeting as a result of the fiscal meeting that evening.

1. Appointing Natalie Chin (Delegate) and Meera Roa (Alternate) as members to the Union County Transportation Advisory Board to represent the Township of Berkeley Heights for a one-year term ending December 31, 2019. **(Freeholder Angel G. Estrada)**
2. Resolution congratulating Victoria Bastos, captain of the Elizabeth High School Varsity soccer team, on the remarkable accomplishment of making the Portugal National team. **(Freeholder Sergio Granados)**

Freeholder Estrada asked to join this resolution.

3. Extending the Board's deepest condolences to the family of Diodato "Dee" Francesco Villani upon their time of sorrow. **(Freeholder Christopher Hudak)**

Freeholder Estrada asked to join this resolution.

4. Re-appointing the following members to the Advisory Board on the Disabled: Aaron Cohen, Charles Newman and Courtney Washington; and further re-appointing Giselle Marmolejos for three-year terms beginning January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2021. **(Freeholder Kimberly Palmieri-Mouded)**
5. Congratulating Jerzey Jewels All-Star Cheerleading Organization upon winning the Grand Championship. **(Freeholder Kimberly Palmieri-Mouded)**

Freeholder Staten asked to join this resolution.

6. Resolution recognizing Sunday, March 10 as National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. **(Freeholder Rebecca Lynne Williams)**

Freeholders Estrada, Garretson, and Staten asked to join this resolution.

7. Proclaiming the month of February 2019 as National FFA Month and the Week of February 16-23, 2019 as National Future Farmers of America (FFA) Week throughout the County of Union. **(Chair Bette Jane Kowalski & the Entire Board)**
8. Congratulating Cranford / Elmora Soup Kitchen upon its 30th anniversary. **(Chair Bette Jane Kowalski)**

Freeholder Garretson asked to join this resolution.

9. Proclaiming March 8th as International Women's Day and the month of March as Women's History Month throughout the County of Union. **(Chair Bette Jane Kowalski)**

Freeholder Garretson asked to join this resolution, adding that that the entire board should join; Chairman Kowalski concurred.

10. Congratulating Bill Lee, Administrative Supervisor 2 of the Operations Division of the Union County Judiciary upon his well-deserved retirement after 31 years. **(Chair Bette Jane Kowalski & the Entire Board)**
11. Congratulating the New Jersey Intergenerational Orchestra (NJIO) upon its 25th anniversary. **(Chair Bette Jane Kowalski)**

Freeholder Garretson asked to join this resolution.

12. Congratulating the Union County St. Patrick's Day Committee upon its 23rd Annual Union County St. Patrick's Day Parade to take place on March 16, 2019; and further congratulating the 2019 honorees: Sister Percylee Hart (Grand Marshal); Kerry E. Ricci (Adjutant) and Jessica Cunningham (General Chairwoman). **(Chair Bette Jane Kowalski & the Entire Board)**
13. Proclaiming the month of February 2019 as National Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month. **(Chair Bette Jane Kowalski & the Entire Board)**
14. Resolution offering the Board's deepest sympathies to former County Manager George Devanney, and his family, as they mourn the passing of George W. Devanney, Jr, 79, who passed away peacefully on Saturday, March 2, 2019. **(Chair Bette Kowalski & the Entire Board)**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Kowalski asked County Counsel Robert E. Barry to address the pending Executive Session.

County Counsel Barry advised that the session related to a discussion regarding the cited case, adding that the respective minutes for the Executive Session would be made available, separate from the agenda setting meeting minutes, in approximately 30 days as prescribed by law.

To the extent known, the following matter was discussed in the Executive Session:

Attorney-Client privileged communication and discussion of possible settlement in the matter of Valerie Fischbach v. UC, et als.

Chairman Kowalski asked for a motion to move the meeting to the Executive Session. On a motion made by Vice Chairman Mirabella and seconded by Freeholder Hudak a voice vote showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

A voice vote showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative to return from the Executive Session.

Prior to the close of the meeting, Freeholder Granados advised that he would have two resolutions to add for the regular meeting resulting from the Open Space Trust Fund meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Kowalski asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. On a motion made by Vice Chairman Mirabella and seconded by Freeholder Hudak a voice vote showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 P.M.

UNION COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS 2019 MEETING SCHEDULE

Please note that meetings are regularly held on Thursday evenings. Agenda Setting Sessions and Regular Meetings are held at 7:00pm in the Freeholders' Meeting Room, Administration Building, 10 Elizabethtown Plaza, 6th Floor, Elizabeth, New Jersey, unless otherwise specified. In the event an Agenda Setting Session and Regular Meeting are held on the same night, the Agenda Setting Session will commence at 7:00pm and the Regular Meeting will commence as soon as possible after the Agenda Setting Session.

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

REORGANIZATION MEETING - SUNDAY, JANUARY 6, 2019 at 12:00 pm
Assignment Judge Karen M. Cassidy's Courtroom, 2 Broad Street, Elizabeth, NJ

AGENDA SETTING SESSION

January 17, 2019

February 7, 2019

February 21, 2019

March 7, 2019

March 28, 2019

April 4, 2019

April 25, 2019

May 2, 2019*

May 23, 2019**

June 13, 2019

June 27, 2019

July 25, 2019

August 22, 2019

September 5, 2019

September 26, 2019

October 3, 2019

October 24, 2019

November 7, 2019

REGULAR MEETINGS

January 24, 2019

February 14, 2019

February 21, 2019

March 14, 2019

March 28, 2019

April 11, 2019

April 25, 2019

May 16, 2019

May 23, 2019**

June 20, 2019

June 27, 2019

July 25, 2019

August 22, 2019

September 12, 2019

September 26, 2019

October 10, 2019

October 24, 2019

November 14, 2019

December 5, 2019
December 19, 2019

December 5, 2019
December 19, 2019

AMENDMENTS TO THE 2019 FREEHOLDER MEETING SCHEDULE

* The Agenda Setting Session of May 9, 2019 has been rescheduled to be held on May 2, 2019. Same time and location.

**The Agenda Setting Session and the Regular Meeting of May 30th has been rescheduled to be held on May 23, 2019. Same time and location.