

**EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**MONDAY, APRIL 16, 2018
4:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Paul Ruskiewicz, Chairman
Leigh J. Benton, Barry J. Cheney, Thomas Faggione,
Kevindaryan Lujan, Joseph Minuta, James D. O'Donnell,
Rob Sassi, Laurie R. Tautel

ALSO

PRESENT: L. Stephen Brescia, Chairman
Katie Bonelli, Majority Leader
Joel Sierra, Legislator
Kathy R. Stegenga, Legislator
Janet Sutherland, Legislator
Peter Tuohy, Legislator
John S. Vero, Legislator
Antoinette Reed, Legislative Counsel
David Church, AICP, Commissioner of Planning
Maureen Halahan, President/CEO, Orange County Partnership
Dr. Kristine Young, President, Orange County Community College
Helen Ullrich, Chairwoman, Orange County Community College Board of Trustees

Chairman Ruskiewicz opened the committee meeting at 4:00 p.m. by asking everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. All committee members were present with the exception of Mr. Lujan who arrived at 4:06 p.m.

The first item on the agenda was Ms. Halahan who provided the committee with a quarterly update on Orange County Partnership. She stated that she was traveling last month and thanked Chairman Ruskiewicz for allowing her to push her update to this month. She added that she will continue to give a quarterly update every month to keep everyone current on the economic development in Orange County. The power point presentation (see original minutes) began with Ms. Halahan who discussed the Burgeoning Industry Clusters in Orange County, the 2018 Marketing Mix, the Site Selectors Guild Conference, Airline Attraction Initiative, Transportation & Traffic-Alleviation Program (TTAP), Top Active Projects and the 3 Cities Summit which will be held on May 30th at Touro College. She addressed the State of the Orange County Market, Top Active BR&E Projects and the Top Active Attraction Projects. Ms. Halahan concluded by reminding everyone of the upcoming Spring Dinner on April 19th.

Next on the agenda was Ms. Young who provided an update on the Early Retirement Incentive which she was happy to announce was a success. It accomplished what it needed to do and what they hoped it would do. The point of the incentive was not to have large numbers of staff leave but to offer the college budget relief in the upcoming operational budget cycle as well as ongoing relief and this was achieved. They spent \$982,143 out of the \$1 million they used from their fund balance which offered 11 participants to retire. They were trying to avoid layoffs and involuntary terminations and this success helped them avoid this. They project that next year they will be able to save about \$850,000 which will offer

relief. Back in December there were thirty-nine individuals who were eligible and thirteen applied and out of the thirteen one was ineligible so that left them with twelve. They were close to the \$1 million so they were not able to offer the incentive to that twelfth individual so they offered it to eleven. Out of those eleven people who were awarded the incentive, ten of them qualified for the 75% package and that means that these individuals were at the college for thirty or more years. The eleventh individual received the 25-30-year package which offered an incentive of 58%. The eleven individuals who were approved, five of those positions will not be filled. It is four faculty positions and one staff chair position and by not filling these positions they saved about \$730,000.

Mr. Sassi asked if there was any contractual retirement incentive and Ms. Young replied that there is. She explained that the collective bargaining units are the Faculty Association which covers full time faculty and Staff and Chair. There is also Professional Staff. Each of them have an early retirement incentive of 42% of their current base salary with twenty years of service and age 62.

Mr. Cheney recalled in previous discussions that the contract with the various Associations require that you had to get out by the age of 62, Ms. Young responded that he was correct.

Mr. Cheney asked if that was going to change in future contracts so that the incentive will remain for anyone who decided not to take it when they are 62.

Ms. Young stated that the contract was open at this point as it expired in August.

Mr. Cheney asked if they were looking at mandatory retirement age and Ms. Young stated that it was a recommendation that was made and the negotiation team is aware.

Mr. O'Donnell asked who was on their negotiating team.

Ms. Young responded that Steve Gross, Damian Brady, Linda Dauer, Erica Ackman and Wendy Holmes.

Mr. O'Donnell asked for more detail on the savings and Ms. Young explained that of the eleven slots of employees, five positions are not coming back and have been removed from the budget. The other six positions provide a function that they must have to continue the academic program. They do need to refill those job functions but the salaries will be much lower. There is a budget for salary and benefits for the new people but it lower than the people that are leaving.

Mr. O'Donnell asked why they consider this as ongoing savings for the six positions that are left over.

Ms. Ullrich explained that it is an ongoing savings because if they eliminated the five positions from the budget for this year and every year thereafter. The other six positions that will be filled will be done at a lower salary, approximately half the rate that they are currently filled at so the savings of \$215,000 because it is tracked together. Ms. Ullrich noted

that the figure of \$215,000 will change because those salaries will rise by one to two percent per year. However, there is still a substantial savings.

Mr. O'Donnell stated that the information was misleading because it is \$215,000 savings for this year.

Ms. Ullrich noted he was correct so it was a \$215,000 savings which will diminish over time. Ms. Young stated that she would make a note of that.

Mr. O'Donnell asked why they did not eliminate the five positions and Ms. Young explained that they were tenured individuals delivering classes to students who still exist although the positions will not because they plan to staff a different way.

Mr. O'Donnell disputed the savings amount of \$729,000 because if they laid off the positions, the lower positions have a number so that number is subtracted from the \$729,000 if you eliminated those positions. However, they could not because they are tenured and now have five less positions in the budget next year than you did this year so the five positions have a number. It might be lower but there is still a dollar figure to consider. He reiterated that it was not a savings of \$729,000.

Debate continued over the amount of savings there was and Mr. O'Donnell concluded that they eliminated five positions and it was still good.

Mr. Cheney gave a scenario that if the five positions were valued at \$50,000 and there is a total savings of \$250,000 in the budget. That will not go away, they are now going to redistribute the workload of those five-people valued at \$729,000 to other faculty who are being paid anyway so there really is a savings of \$729,000 by redistributing the workload to staff that is already there.

Chairman Ruszkiewicz commented that math can be debated any way you want but for this discussion the college was reporting on the results of the retirement incentive which we can all agree was successful.

Mr. Minuta stated that enrollment around the country is on the decline and Ms. Young confirmed that was correct.

Ms. Young announced the Spring 2017 to Spring 2018 results for credit hours which were up .6% which is not very impressive but everyone else, to the best of her knowledge, are going backwards. She shared that the college plans to schedule smarter and reviewed the ongoing enrollment and retention projects.

Mr. Lujan asked if the college did something different that brought up the Hispanic student enrollment up 4.6%.

Ms. Young believed that the EOP (Equal Opportunity Program) which is funded through state grant and the TRIO Program which is a federal program, attributed to that. These programs gave them additional support for students who are underrepresented in higher education. The two programs are statistically completed, students graduate and move on.

Ms. Tautel asked if the headcount of enrollment increased at all from last year to this year.

Ms. Young stated that the headcount is down slightly but overall credit hours are up.

Mr. Benton asked how the pre-college programs affect the numbers.

Ms. Young explained that it was hard to answer that question now because the students are coming up at the end of their second semester and they can only remain eligible if they get 30 college credit hours. If a student ran short and only received 27 credits in fall and spring they can still use the summer to get 3 more credits to get to 30 and remain eligible. It is hard to determine the impact right now.

Mr. O'Donnell asked what the starting salary is for a professor and Ms. Young responded it was \$51,500 but she would need to confirm that.

Mr. O'Donnell further asked if all the savings they discussed included benefits and Ms. Young replied that was correct.

Mr. O'Donnell asked if there was written policy on who receives free tuition such as children of professors and Ms. Young replied that was within the contract. Mr. O'Donnell requested a copy of the policy and Ms. Young responded that she would provide it to him.

Next on the agenda was Mr. Church to address the inclusion of lands in the Agricultural District. Mr. Church explained the Agricultural District Program to the new Legislators on the committee. He stated that they were presently reviewing the applications for eligibility. He added that it is a legislative decision to add parcels to the Agricultural District. The Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board meets this month and will most likely meet again in May to make the final recommendation. Letters were also sent to town supervisors. He noted that the Town of Wallkill and the Town of Newburgh applications have updates and will be corrected but pointed out there were no major errors.

Mr. Lujan moved to set Public Hearing for
Inclusion of Lands in Agricultural District
Nos. 1 & 2 on June 7, 2018 at 3:15 p.m.,
seconded by Mr. Cheney.

Motion carried. All in favor.

On the motion of Ms. Tautel, seconded by Mr. Benton, the meeting adjourned at 5:18 p.m.

