

**BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
**OF THE**  
**SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE**

**MINUTES**

A meeting of the Budget & Finance Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York, on Tuesday, February 27, 2007.

**Members Present:**

Legislator Ricardo Montano - Chairman  
Legislator Jon Cooper - Vice-Chair  
Legislator Cameron Alden  
Legislator Jay Schneiderman  
Legislator Steve Stern

**Also In Attendance:**

George Nolan - Counsel to the Legislature  
Bob Martinez - Aide to Legislator Montano  
Linda Burkhardt - Aide to Presiding Officer Lindsay  
Renee Ortiz - Chief Deputy Clerk of the Legislature  
Gail Vizzini - Director/Budget Review Office  
Linda Bay - Aide to Minority Caucus  
Ben Zwirn - Assistant County Executive  
Brian Beedenbender - County Executive Assistant  
Allen Kovesdy - Deputy Director/County Executive's Budget Office  
Cheryl Felice - President - AME  
Ron Foley - Commissioner - Parks Department  
All Other Interested Parties

**Minutes Taken By:**

Donna Catalano - Court Stenographer

(\*THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 9:50 A.M.\*)

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

We're going to start the meeting of the Budget and Finance Committee. We're going to start with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator Cooper.

**SALUTATION**

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Thank you. I'm sorry that we're starting a little late. We're going to go right into the public portion. I'm going to call up Cheryl Felice from AME, President of AME. Good Morning, Cheryl.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Good morning, Cheryl.

**MS. FELICE:**

Good morning. How are you? Good morning, everyone.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Hello, Cheryl.

**MS. FELICE:**

As Chairman Montano reported, I'm Cheryl Felice, President of AME. I'm here to speak to you on a number of resolutions that are on your agenda for today. We sent you over some support and reject letters that we have.

Just very briefly and then I'll go into one I'm interested in more depth. 1135, transferring funds in connection with contract agencies to Social Services. Now that the Presiding Officer has created the new Committee for Contract Agencies, we ask that the Legislature take a look at those agencies at that committee and evaluate whether or not services would be better served in-house or through the contract agencies. As well as Resolution 1048, amending the operating report transferring maintenance services for the Flight 800 Memorial at Smith Point County Park. We would ask the same be done with that resolution.

The resolution I want to speak to you more strongly on is Resolution Number 1134, transferring the Division of Insurance and Risk Management back from -- back to Audit and Control. That is where it -- but actually, your resolution is calling to put it back to Civil Service. Right now the budget, through your Omnibus Resolution, has created that that division has -- is now sitting in Audit and Control, but it doesn't have County Charter resolution. What AME is asking your consideration for is to restore putting the Division of Insurance and Risk back to Audit and Control where it once was prior to probably most of your tenure here way back when. I would say probably within a ten year span, Audit and Control did always maintain jurisdiction over the Insurance and Risk, and especially in Workers Comp.

For political reasons back then and a prior administration here at the Legislature and a prior administration even with the County Executive, changes were made, when perhaps at that time, they did not need to be made. In your Budget Review Office, you have supporting evidence to show that the Insurance and Risk Division would be better served in the Audit and Control Division so that you have the checks and balances necessary to control the payments that go in and out of that particular agency.

The fact that you want to -- this legislation supports putting it back to Civil Service and Human Resources is raising a red flag to AME, and raising a red flag to say that we hope this is not a veiled attempt at privatizing that division. That's what we're here to ask for your support to reject 1134. We will appear at the Ways and Means Committee to support the 2006 resolution 2442 and to

effectuate the change in the Charter keeping the Division of Insurance and Risk with Audit and Control. And that's my presentation for you today. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Cheryl, a quick question. Could you just elaborate a little more on your position on 1135 and 1048? You said you'd like us to review --

**MS. FELICE:**

Yeah. Both of those -- both of those resolutions call for transferring funds in connection with contract agencies. Naturally, AME's position is -- would be that any jobs that can and should be done in-house should remain in-house. It became aware to us at the first meeting of the contract agency that the TWA Flight Memorial was being maintained by an outside agency and not County employees. So we respectfully ask the committee to look into those services. A \$45,000 contract is what the County is looking to let for the maintenance of that particular site. That's one site, \$45,000. The entry level for a laborer in the Parks Services is \$26,000 entry level, which that person could be available to maintain more than that one site. We just thought that was a bit excessive for just that one particular site. And we respectfully ask that the committee look into those -- into the provision of the contract and just how many hours of maintenance that it does call for.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Right. But there's no suggestion that any County employees are affected by this in terms of losing their position because we're contracting out, unlike the 1134 Bill.

**MS. FELICE:**

For the 1135 Bill, I would say at this point that would could be talking about some jobs, because actually this week we will be making another presentation to Health and Human Services where we were notified by the County they do intend on privatizing certain divisions Social Services, namely, CPS, Child Protection Services. Several letters back and forth went between AME and Labor Relations to no resolution, and we will be making the Health and Health Services Committee aware of that fact on Thursday. So that's why at this point, you know, another red flag was raised with 1135. And we ask that, again, let's put this -- the reasons that we asked and we respectfully asked the Legislature to consider another committee to look at the contract agencies was for issues like this.

AME is not blind to the fact to say that some areas are better served with contract agencies. And by all means, the County is in the business of providing constituent services, but there has to be that balance. And in the particular case where we already have AME doing the job, it hasn't necessarily been proven to us that it would be served by a contract agency. And that's we asked for this committee. And we hope to get a lot of dialog in that committee, because after all, the front line workers should be invited to the table to discuss how to best deliver services.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Thank you, Cheryl.

**MS. FELICE:**

Okay.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Legislator Alden, I think, has a question.

**MS. FELICE:**

Sure.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Cheryl, on the CPS, that's the first time I'm hearing of that.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Same here.

**MS. FELICE:**

I knew it would be.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Thank you. And if you could keep us informed on your end.

**MS. FELICE:**

You'll have that information all this week, because that was all developing. The last letter we got from Labor Relations making their intentions known was within the last couple of weeks, and we've been putting together the documentation for your review.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Thank you.

**MS. FELICE:**

You're welcome. Okay? Thank you very much.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Thank you, Cheryl. Next, I have Commissioner Ron Foley from the Department of Parks. Ron.

**COMMISSIONER FOLEY:**

Good morning. I just wanted to talk a little bit 1048 also. My attention was attracted to it when the offset would come from our garbage collection Operating Budget line that's been changed thankfully, because we got the budget right to reflect what's actually going on.

What I'm wondering when I look at this is why we can't take \$25,000 that's already in the Operating Budget and combine that with a contract with IGHL and have a combination of volunteerism and both permanent and seasonal County employees do the maintenance of that facility. That's not to say that the families and IGHL don't do a good job now, but just in a budgetary sense, do we need to do this. And that's my main comment on that. If you have any questions, I'll be happy to take them.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Legislator Alden has a question, I believe.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

When we're doing -- and it's a subcommittee on contract agencies -- I think we have to share some of the information that was developed at that committee with you. And as far as the amount of money that goes into that monument, between the families and IGHL -- and I think the Legislature -- the Chairman was on that committee also -- there's hundreds of thousands of dollars that they spend each year on different things. So I think it's -- we needed to fix something that was a mistake that I believe we made in the budget because we didn't really know what they did, and that's why some of the money was cut out of that, but I think that we have to develop a fuller understanding of what their roles are going to be going forward into the future and what -- really what Suffolk County wants to do and accomplish with that memorial, because there was a lot of stuff that was -- it was kind of an eye-opening, you know, dialog that we had with two representatives that came down.

You know, we weren't really aware of all the things that were going on in there, like, for instance, when they have to bring in, you know, somebody to reface the granite when it gets scratched. And there's a lot of specialty things that go on there. And as with all our parks, the kids are going in there with their skateboards, and they're just -- they're destroying things. So it was kind of an eye

opener that -- even the amount of plantings that they do each year, they're all donated. And they get the -- some of the people from IGHM to -- am I saying that right?

**COMMISSIONER FOLEY:**

I believe that's correct.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Okay. But they do get a lot of volunteers and in-kind type of contributions. So I think that before we do another budget next year, we've got to sort of mesh all the information and make sure that you have all of it too.

**COMMISSIONER FOLEY:**

Okay. That's fine. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Anyone else? Thank you, Ron. Allen Kovesdy from the County Exec's Budget Office.

**MR. KOVESDY:**

Good morning. At the last meeting, Legislator Schneiderman posed a question to Budget Review and the County Executive concerning 2006 sales tax and how it came in what we felt for the future. Robert answered correctly, that we didn't have all the information in and once we got all the information, we'd be able to give a little -- a better answer.

We now have all the data on sales tax for 2006 in. I presented a very, very simple chart which is a five year history of sales tax, all funds together. And I just wanted to point out a little bit of a trend. As you can see, the first column has year, next one has actual that the County received, then the simple -- the increase, then the percentage increase for the -- compared to that. You can see that we went from a gigantic 11% increase between 2002 to 2003 to 8.9%. Then in the more near past, in 2005, we only received 2.77% increase, following in 2006, a 2.64% increase.

If you follow on the last boxes on the bottom, you can see that we had projected -- when we did the budget, adopted the budget, we had hoped to get one million-one hundred forty seven -- one billion -- I'm sorry -- one hundred forty seven million dollars in. We reduced that between the Budget Office and the Budget Review Office to 1.42 at the time. The budget was adopted, which was a \$5 million drop. Unfortunately, the actual came in even lower than that. It came in lower one million-two hundred and nineteen thousand dollars less[.]. So we had almost a .6% drop.

The drop in itself, the number of one million-two hundred thousand in a billion dollars is not significant. What is significant and what I wanted to bring to your attention is a definite trend of the increase in sales tax has gone down consistently. We are also concerned how this trend will affect 2007. I put in the middle the 2007 number, which requires \$32.5 million of an increase, 2.86%, which is higher than we have gotten over the last two years.

We are also concerned that -- how this number goes into 2007. At this point, we've only got one check in, so to make any real analysis based on one check would be foolish. But there are some disturbing signs in the economy. The housing market has flattened, housing starts are down, durable goods are down in Suffolk County, the December energy number that we got from the State, which this December did not include the reduction that we had -- the Legislature put through is almost the exact same, so we have no additional revenue from the energy tax. January was a very, very warm month, therefore, we're not projecting that we picked up any significant real growth in the energy money.

So we're looking to the beginning of 2007 relatively flat. So we do have concerns as to making the 2.86%[.]. I just wanted to bring it to your attention. We're not saying we will make it, we will not make that number, we're just saying that we have a definite trend. The trend shows sales tax going down on a consistent basis. And the initial information is not the best, it is not the worst.

So you had asked for this information. I tried to put it in a chart and present it to you. I'm sure Robert has similar information, may have the same take or not. But we are concerned of the future sales taxes, over 50% revenue review for Suffolk County. If there's a blip in sales tax, there's almost no place up -- else to make it up without reducing any services. So I'd be happy to answer any questions you have.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Quick question. Maybe do the math for me. If the sales tax doesn't increase at the 2.86 and stays basically flat, how much is that in cash, about \$4 million?

**MR. KOVESDY:**

I can't do that quick in my head, I'm sorry.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Okay. I thought maybe you knew that. You can get back to me on that. Any other questions? Legislator Alden.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Have you done a correlation between this and just the economic cycle, like an economic business cycle?

**MR. KOVESDY:**

We just take the leading economic indicators, which are two or three months old, and we correlate that. We did get a little information that -- on housing, that the housing that has started in Suffolk County has continued, the people who are working on homes and buildings and factories are continuing to work, but there's a little bit of information that when these jobs are finished, there may not be as much work for the people in the future.

So we're concerned about that. Even though we remain strong with unemployment being down in Suffolk County, we're concerned that when this -- when all the work on the major projects ends, there might not be replacement projects to keep all those people working. That's our concern.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

But on a macro basis, you know, the business cycle goes up and it goes down, you hope that it's all spiraling upwards, and this stops at -- you only went back to 2002. If you went back, say, ten or 15 years, wouldn't it give you a trend?

**MR. KOVESDY:**

It would, but I tried to give realistic numbers of the last five years. I could do it over the last -- over the last ten years. But as the numbers were lower, the percentages get higher when there's a blip. I just tried to give you an honest number for five years. If you want me to go back another five years, I'd be more than happy to do it.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Well, I think sometimes it's helpful, not all the time, but sometimes, because I'm watching it decrease, and if you are at the bottom of a, you know, long-term business trend and it's going to hit bottom and come back up again, then, you know, that's something that -- not that you are not going to be able to predict with great accuracy -- but it would be something to look at.

**MR. KOVESDY:**

We would hope that that happens. But I just tried -- I thought five years was just a fair appraisal.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

How long ago was the last time that it really peaked on the bottom side, '97?

**MR. KOVESDY:**

It's the trend that's alarming, sir, it's not the -- it's not the numbers. The numbers have been going up, we've been doing it. The trend is down, the national trend is down. You know, when housing starts, durable goods and people don't buy cars, those are the biggest single impacts on there. You know, we would have to merge -- we would have to merge forfeitures on property into this thing and all other types of things to really do that. But we get better information as the year goes on.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Have our foreclosure gone up on property?

**MR. KOVESDY:**

I only have information in the Town of Brookhaven. The Town of Brookhaven shows an alarming increase in the people not paying their taxes. But that's, you know, premature. I only have Brookhaven. It went up from three million to -- it went up from six million to 15 million other a year and a half. So that's just an alarming trend.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

What went up?

**MR. KOVESDY:**

People not paying their taxes in the Town of Brookhaven, from six to 15 million in a year -- in 18 months. That's the only hard information I have. I don't have the other towns.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

I would like to see this, though, you know, basically in a bigger scope where if you're looking at economic trends, you know, and maybe that's something between you and Budget Review -- you know, we can place this information just in where it really belongs, and that's in the whole economy.

And as far as when people -- when people have huge increases in their energy costs, that's were a lot of the money is going to be soaked up. And we have had that happen. And I believe that even our CPI is a little bit skewed, because years ago everything was in the basket, and now all the things that really tends to go up in price, they're out of the basket. So, you know, maybe we're going through a major -- you know, it could be a recession, could be just a downturn in the economy. But I'd like to see it in a little bit bigger perspective than this.

**MR. KOVESDY:**

Well, we will be reporting to you -- I know that Gail and Bob will be reporting when they do their new model, what they estimate the sales tax will be for 2007-2008. And I'll be happy, you know, on a three or four month basis to give you an update. But the question was raised at the last meeting.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Because the Federal Reserve Chairman just -- he just did a huge presentation on economic trends. And I would hope that we'd look at, you know, some of those things too to see where we are. As he admitted there, it's always going up and it's going down. There's business trends, then there's going to be local business trends also.

**MR. KOVESDY:**

As we get more information, I'll be happy to share it.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Thanks.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Any other questions? Allen, thank you.

**MR. KOVESDY:**

You're welcome, sir.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

We're going to go into -- Gail, you gave me a memo a while ago -- this morning, 2006 year end sales tax revenues. Could you just go over it, because I don't know that we have had a full opportunity to read it and digest it.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Robert.

**MR. LIPP:**

The memo was released yesterday -- actually today, it's today's date on it. And basically, it's a review, as Mr. Kovesdy was speaking about, of 2006. We did end the year with a small shortfall of 1.2 million. By shortfall I mean what's in the 2007 adopted budget for the 2006 estimate. There's a sales tax shortfall of 1.2 million, all funds. One of problems is that the \$1.2 million turned out to be a surplus in the Water Protection Funds of 1.1 million and a deficit in the General Fund 2.3 million.

We mentioned this in a review of recommended budget that there was a misalignment -- misallocation, I should say, between the funds and that we had recommended reducing the General Fund sales tax revenue by 1.8 million, increasing the Water Protection Fund revenue by that amount. As a result, that wasn't -- that wasn't changed in the budget. So as a result, we wound up with not a \$1.2 million -- rather there was a 1.2 million deficit for sales tax, but that translated into 2.3 million in the General Fund. So that's one point.

Another point was we accrue back part of February, and then the year ends for '06. And the dollars that were accrued back proved to be a bad number, if you will. Good news bad news about February. The portion that was accrued back to 2006 was down substantially over five million compared to the same check last year. However, the good news is that February, although was flat, which is not good, the portion that remained in 2007 was up over five million. So the moral of the story is we end 2006 on a bad note, we start 2007 on a good note, that is we're up five million compared to last year's first check. And that's only one check of many, many checks. And it's not to say that, therefore, we're doing good, but it's always good to start the race out of the block before everybody else leaves the start line. So that's basically an over simplistic view.

Another view is how we're going to look in 2007. And at the end of the day, as Mr. Kovesdy said, that remains to be seen. But when we do our analysis, we don't just look at the cash receipts, we adjust the numbers to try to sequence and -- with the actual economic periods when the sales occur, and we adjust out things that have nothing to do with the economic activity or that time. And as a result, those growth rates actually show that 2006 was higher than 2005.

The big reason for that is very simple. We started out 2006 with a 1% reduction in the home energy sales tax, so naturally we collected less in 2006, because we weren't collecting the full two and a half percent, only one and a half percent. So as a result, if you add those monies back in for an apples to apples comparison, instead of a 2.6% increase in sales tax, it would have been closer to 4.9%, because 2006, we received less revenue because we did not collect the full two and a half percent on home energy.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Go ahead, Legislator Schneiderman.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

In millions, what is the home energy -- we cut it in half basically, the home energy tax.

**MR. LIPP:**

There are other adjustments too. In millions, it's probably, off the top of my head, about \$12 million. But there are other adjustments to the data to sequence it for economic activity and vendor

sales. So that's not the only adjustment that we make, but that's the big ticket one that you could most easily sink your teeth into. So when you make all the adjustments, the moral of the story is including that alteration in the home energy sales tax, the rate goes up from 2.6 and change to just under 4.9%. I can show you the data any time you would like to look.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

If you added 12 million to the 1.14 billion -- 1.14 billion, rather.

**MR. LIPP:**

My point to be made is that that's only one adjustment.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

It doesn't sound like it would jump from 2.64% to four point something percent.

**MR. LIPP:**

Because there are other adjustments.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

You would have to show me then.

**MR. LIPP:**

I'd be happy to show it to you, it would bog down the meeting though.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Just so I understand this. If you made the other adjustments, if you included everything, what would the 2.6 figure -- 2.64 figure actually be? Would it be 4.9?

**MR. LIPP:**

Close to it, yes.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

So that reverses this trend down.

**MR. LIPP:**

Correct.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

If we hadn't factored in or we hadn't eliminated the collection of the sales tax temporarily, we would have increased our collection of sales tax revenues up to 4.9% over last year?

**MR. LIPP:**

And assuming that the other adjustments didn't occur. The other adjustments were things like late filers. So in other words, we'd get cash in every period for people that don't file their returns timely. And there are other adjustment too. If you take those adjustments out so that you strip away the portion of the revenue that has nothing to do with current period economic sales or consumer spending, then you get sort of a cleaner number to look at from an economics perspective.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I see a rebuttal out of the corner of my eye. Allen, you want to say something on this?

**MR. KOVESDY:**

I'm not going to disagree with him, I'm just saying that if you want to take that trend, then you're going to have to take all the back years, back out all the adjustments for 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005 and redo the whole thing with all the adjustments. We take the view of what we get in cash -- what the County gets in cash is what we have. That's what the budget is based on and so forth.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Right. But I just want to -- I just want to keep this on track, because I'm not really clear on the other adjustments. But the simple point that I'm getting is that but not for the elimination of the collection on the sales tax temporarily, we would have had an increase in collections, instead of 2.64 up to 4.49; is that accurate?

**MR. KOVESDY:**

I would have to have to see his data. But we also got a check --

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Is it close?

**MR. KOVESDY:**

I have no idea. I would have to look at his data. But we also have last year a one-time check of significant dollar value that was -- that the State had made a mistake in the prior year. So I'm just saying that Robert may be 100% right, but if he is talking in that vain, we have to match apples and apples. We have to take an adjusted figure for every single year and compare it compared to a straight change in the actual dollar values that come into the County. I'm not disparaging his number, Robert does a very good job with his data. I'm just saying that if you want to look at that trend, you're going to have to compare the other years with the adjusted figures on a year-by-year basis. Just taking that one number by itself isn't a fair comparison. That's all I'm saying. I'm not doubting his numbers as being right.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Are there any other questions from the committee members? Legislator Schneiderman, you have a question?

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Two questions.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

To Allen or to --

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

No. This is to Robert. What's the current rate of inflation, do you know?

**MR. LIPP:**

It's a little over 3%, I think. We're increase at a higher rate than the rest of the country.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Our inflation is.

**MR. LIPP:**

Yes. Yes. I could look it up as we speak.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

All things being equal, if I use this 2.64%, so we are -- our sales tax revenues are not keeping pace with inflation. Is that fair to say?

**MR. LIPP:**

I disagree only because as I said before if you make the adjustment to the home energy tax as well as the other factors, that isn't the case anymore.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I'm going to have to see your numbers, because that 12 million that you talked about that we would have gotten only accounts for maybe 1% of the \$1.2 billion.

**MR. LIPP:**

Right. And there are other adjustments.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Well, but you can adjust the other way too and say, well, people saved money -- because they didn't have to pay that energy tax, they saved money, had more money in their pockets which they may have spent on other things so there might have been a stimulate affect too. So I'd have to look at all your numbers to see where you're coming up with this extra boost.

**MR. LIPP:**

That's a valid point.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

But the numbers I have in front of me are 2.64, which is below the 3% of inflation. Also, our population has been growing by about 7 1/2% per decade. I'm not sure -- I haven't done a per year calculation --

**MR. LIPP:**

It averages about a percent a year maybe roughly.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

So you would expect sales tax revenues to grow by a percent --

**MR. LIPP:**

Part of trend, as Legislator Alden had spoken about.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. On a per capita basis?

**MR. LIPP:**

Not to belabor the point, but we look at the data that's the adjusted version back to the mid '90s or so on a quarterly basis, and we find that the forecasts on the statistical analysis is more reasonable, accurate, a better forecast than if we just look at the cash recipients.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

You know, the reason why I ask these questions is I'm trying to get a long term picture of our economic health for Suffolk County. I know we take in 50 million in property taxes, I know we take in 1.2 billion in sales tax revenues. And if those sales tax revenues don't keep up with our expenses, there's nowhere else to go but property taxes. So I want to make sure that we keep our property taxes down. And to do so, we have to keep sales tax revenues keeping pace at least with inflation. I'm not sure we're doing that.

**MR. LIPP:**

Right. By the way, as a point of reference, the inflation increased by almost 3.8% in 2006 locally, but only 2 1/2% nationally.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Any ideas why that is happening.

**MR. LIPP:**

A very high cost area.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Taxes.

**MR. LIPP:**

Business costs are going up. We're at, you know, a competitive disadvantage, which has shown to be the case over the last few years. You'd have to go back to the Year 2000 to observe a lower inflation rate locally.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Robert, with respect to the housing costs, is that factored into that inflation rate -- or how does it factor in, if at all?

**MR. LIPP:**

Implicitly. The consumer price index is what's referred to as a market basket of goods and services. So you go to the supermarket and you put in your cantaloupes and you also put in your house and your car, and it's a weighted average of that stuff.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Do you know what the increase in average housing costs were the last year?

**MR. LIPP:**

I don't have that data --

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

If the inflation rate was 3%, I would imagine that the housing costs went up much higher than that.

**MR. LIPP:**

I don't have the data in front of me, but the -- I guess the point to be made about the housing market is that's a real problem that we are having. The one perhaps minor piece of good news from an economics perspective is you have a bubble burst, but rather a flattening of the housing prices. Of course, on the other hand, you can make the case that we overshot where we should be. And, you know, the affordability problem, as we all know, is a real issue.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I'm going to get to the agenda, but if you have some questions.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Two quick things.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Go ahead. Legislator Alden, then Legislator Schneiderman.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

One would be MLS -- and it's being sending them to my district -- and it does a district analysis on trends in --

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Multiple Listing Service?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Yeah. Prices. So I'll make sure that they're sending it over to you too. Secondly, that's a good news-bad news scene. When the prices of houses go up, people actually borrow the equity out of the house and then they spend it. When the price flattens out, then they stop borrowing the equity out of the house.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Yeah, but then the other problem is that if they lose their job they're not paying the mortgage at the

higher rate. And I think we're seeing that with the sub prime. But I'm not going to go into that. These are issue for another day. Legislator Schneiderman.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Real quick. The picture of sales tax revenues is actually broken down into a lot of different components. And I don't know if you had a chance to look at the various components that make up the sales tax, such as, you know, construction, energy, etcetera, I know that there has been a trend in several of the towns, there are less building permits for new homes. Some towns are down by 30 plus percent from where they were a year ago at this time.

So I know with construction of a new homes there's a lot of sales taxes that are applied to those building materials. Have you looked at those components? You know, are you forecasting at all any of those trends? I know the housing market again has slumped in some areas in terms of new sales. Though the prices are pretty level, the number of sales seem to be decreasing.

**MR. LIPP:**

That's the biggest negative that we have, the real estate market. And it's not clear to what extent that's going to have a major impact in terms of people taking, for instance, equity out of their homes. We're looking at that, but it's really -- the point to be made, I guess, is that the sales tax is pretty aggregate. We don't see data on individual components until about two years old. Okay. We can see quarterly data, but they're about two years old. All we get on a current basis is the gross numbers and a couple of minor break outs for home energy and for motor fuels. But we do not get individual detailed data on what the sales tax components are on a current basis. So at the end of the day what it is we think we have good forecasting techniques and we look at economic trends, but we're looking at it with gross numbers. It's not a perfect science.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Thank you very much. Very interesting. I'm going to move on to the agenda if there are no other questions. First we're going to get to Tabled Resolutions.

**2598-2006. Adopting Local Law No. 2007, A Charter Law to amend Section C4-35 of the Suffolk County Charter.**

This I understand deals with contract agencies, but we have to table this for a public hearing; is that correct, Counsel?

**MR. NOLAN:**

That's correct.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Okay. I'm going to make a motion to table for a public hearing.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **TABLED (VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Next, **1013-2007, Repealing home energy nuisance taxes on Suffolk County residents.**

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Motion to table.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I'll second the motion to table. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **TABLED (VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

**1014-2007. Establishing a program to reduce unfair home energy nuisance taxes on Suffolk County residents.**

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Same thing, motion to table.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Same motion, same second, same vote. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries.

**TABLED (VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

Getting to the Introductory Resolutions.

**1030-2007. Amending the 2007 Operating Budget and transferring funds for Moriches Community Center, Inc.**

**LEG. COOPER:**

Motion to approve.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I'll second the motion to approve.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

On the motion.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

On the motion, Legislator Alden.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Just to Budget Review, is this omnibus money.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Yes, it is. It changes the department from Economic Development to Youth since agency intends to do a youth program with the \$2000.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I'll call the vote. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **APPROVED (VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

**1031-2007. Amending the 2007 Operating Budget and transferring Chief Environmental Analyst to the Department of Environment and Energy.**

I'll make a motion to approve.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Can I get a brief explanation on that from Counsel?

**MR. NOLAN:**

I think this resolution is moot, because the similar resolution was passed by a CN at the last

meeting, am I correct on that, Gail?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

I think Mr. Zwirn should speak to this.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

All right. You know, I have a note here from Gail, which I just looked at. It says the resolution can be withdrawn. What I think we will do is withdraw the motion to approve.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Motion to table.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Motion to table by Legislator Alden, I'll second that -- table it subject to call, how's that Legislator Alden?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Sounds good.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

All right. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **TABLED SUBJECT TO CALL (VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

**1047-2007. Amending the 2007 Operating Budget and transferring funds for Sustainable Long Island.**

I'll make a motion to approve.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Seconded by Legislator Cooper. On the motion, I guess it's the same question, Legislator Alden?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Omnibus money, yes?

**MR. LIPP:**

Yes.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

That's fine with me. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **APPROVED (VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

**1048-2007. Amending the 2007 Operating Budget and transferring funds to IGHL for maintenance of the TWA Flight 800 Memorial at Smith Point County Park.**

**LEG. COOPER:**

Motion to table.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I'll second the motion to table. On the motion, Gail, this is not omnibus money; is that correct? This is an additional allocation.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

That's correct.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Okay. Any questions on this?

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Why are we tabling this?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

I'm opposed to tabling.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Okay.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Some questions -- a number of questions, but one is whether this maintenance could be done with County personnel.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Actually, in answer -- through the Chair.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Go ahead, Legislator Alden.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

We had a presentation in the Contract Agency Subcommittee or committee, if you want to call it that, and the type of things that they do and with the type of people that actually go out there and do it, we're getting more bang for the dollar, because they actually spend hundreds of thousands of dollars, and this is a drop in the bucket. But it would take a little bit of the burden off the two groups. There's a Flight 800 Memorial, and that's a not-for-profit. And then there's the IGHL.

And I think it's a -- it doesn't take away jobs from County employees, but the type of the jobs and the type of things that they have to do in there, like resurfacing granite when it gets scratched, and there's all kinds of things that they -- they have these -- and they're disabled, they come in and do, like with the plantings and things of that nature. I think it's a -- this is a great group.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Rick.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I don't dispute that. If I may, I have a question also. And I wasn't on the Omnibus Operating Committee, but my understanding is that this item for this -- this agency was actually discussed in the Omnibus, and it was only put in the budget for the amount that was allocated. This is additional money that's going -- so I'm just curious, number one, am I accurate in that, was this considered in the Omnibus?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Actually, what happened was last year we gave them, I think, \$80,000 of \$100,000, and then nobody knew what they were providing for that, so it was cut down to \$25,000. And this was attempt to restore it up to a little bit closer that what they got last year after they had come in and given an explanation of how everything was working with the Flight 800 families and also with the IGHL and how it's all interwoven. And I'm not saying in the future that I want to go forward with that type of structure, but we have to sort things out a little bit better. But we did short change them for this year.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

All right. Well, we have a motion to table, we don't have a motion to defeat. Legislator Schneiderman, you wanted to make a point.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Yeah. Well, since there's questions, and I don't want really want to hold this thing up, I would just move to discharge it without recommendation then and then maybe we can have the questions answered by the 6th.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Legislator Cooper, go ahead.

**LEG. COOPER:**

I really want to -- we're having another meeting in a couple of weeks. I mean, I was on the ad hoc committee, and my recollection of the testimony of the person from, I guess it was IGHL, was, you know, he didn't want this responsibility, and if the County was willing to do the maintenance, it's a burden off his shoulders. They were just taking it on because they were concerned that the -- the County wouldn't live up to our obligation. So I'd like to just pursue the possibility that the County will step up to the plate and provide the proper maintenance. He'll be thrilled. He didn't want to take this burden on.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

But then you're looking at about a quarter of a million dollars into the budget rather than 25,000 --

**LEG. COOPER:**

I'd like to --

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Because that was the testimony.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Let's just --

**MR. ZWIRN:**

If I might add --

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Hold on, Ben. I just wanted to ask a question before this. This is simply to table this now. This wasn't -- this item wasn't part of the Omnibus, at least the additional money. And I'm just wondering, are there any consequences if we don't pass this today? I mean, what --

**MR. ZWIRN:**

No. They're not doing -- I don't think there's any maintenance going on now. This is mostly --

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

That's what I'm saying. It's not going to stop anything that's going on, it's not going to stop anything that's projected right now, because the allocation is for 25,000.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

No. Most of the work that is done -- the gentleman who heads up this group, John Seaman, is a terrific -- -

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I guess you're getting -- you're getting to your point, right?

**MR. ZWIRN:**

I guess so.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Go ahead, Ben.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

We're concerned -- look, they're a terrific organization. And this memorial, you know, commemorates an awful tragedy that happened off the coast off Suffolk County. And the County had responded in a wonderful as has the Federal Government, spent millions of dollars in taxpayer money to erect this memorial and secure it with bulk heads so that it's not washed away through erosion.

We're concerned with two things. One, we think that the Parks Department can handle the maintenance with the current amount of money that's there through seasonals, through the Sheriff's Department with the program that Sheriff DeMarco has handled -- has started again with some of the trustees who were prisoners in the jail doing maintenance work around the County. They have done wonderful, wonderful programs with that.

We're also concerned about the offset that's being used for this. The County Executive's Office has put this offset forward with the mercury vacancies to add the additional money that was -- that is going to be necessary to buy mercury-free vaccines. That will be coming up later in this committee. But we're concerned that this offset will exhaust the funds for rent in DPW buildings. And we're concerned about the offset as well. So if the committee and the Legislature is going to move forward, we would suggest that we look for a different offset as well.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Okay. Legislator Alden, go ahead.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

It's for \$25,000.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

No it's 45,000 -- additional 45,000.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

And, Ben, just to get back to a couple of points, though, That you made --

**MR. ZWIRN:**

This particular fund is being used for offsets all over the place. It's not necessarily just this one, but it's being used as a general offset.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Okay. And maybe in the long run then, it's not appropriate. But the \$45,000, unfortunately, if you go back to the beginning of our relationship with TWA and with this group, IGHL, they stepped up to the plate, and they put a -- they put a memorial there. We said that we were going to pay them X number of dollars for the maintenance and for their outlays and things like that, because they've changed the memorial. They had to come in with -- last year they spent, I think their testimony was hundreds of thousands of dollars in improvements that they made.

So having said that, also, the way of the future might be the way they're going right now. And this might be the end of our having to fund them, because they're trying to federalize it. And if they can get the Senators and Congressmen to work on that and do the right thing, this is an international memorial, and it should be under federal jurisdiction. It shouldn't be under our local jurisdiction. So if that can happen, then that money really won't have to go in the budget next year.

But I think we made a promise a number of years ago, and I think, you know, we have to stick to that promise until we have changed that relationship. You can't just walk away from people that have gone and put their selves way out. And they've actually -- they're squeezed for money, and they -- this memorial will suffer this year -- and that was the testimony -- is we don't give them the additional money. And right now is when they have to prepare all the contracts and prepare for the plantings and everything else that they're going to do to have this ready for the summertime, because it's gone through, you know, like a tough winter season. So I think that we -- maybe if you come up with another offset, but I don't want to see this just perpetually put off, because we are breaking a promise to people.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

I don't know about -- there was an agreement that was reached, I know, back in 2003, I think, with the Parks Department as to maintenance. And I don't think Commissioner Foley spoke to that in particular, but there is a history goes back with volunteerism that was going into this.

It's a very emotional issue, because, you know, nobody -- this is great organization, these families have suffered terribly. And if we could table this one cycle so that we can sort through it and answer some of your questions, and maybe this would be the last time that it would have to funded out of the County budget --

**LEG. ALDEN:**

I don't have a question. I'm ready to pass it today.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

But I think we have some questions with respect to the offset. And since there is another meeting in the month of March --

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Well, I actually do have some questions. And, you know, I've spoken to Mr. Seaman, I spoke to him last year, I was at the dedication for the memorial, I think it's a great project. But I do have some questions in terms of some of the issues that came up. I think we all want the same purpose.

You mentioned that there's a -- they are exploring alternatives to maintenance of the memorial. You know, my budgetary concern very simply is that we -- you know, the committee went through a painstaking process, this was considered along with many other terms in the Omnibus process, we're in February, the ink really isn't even dry on the budget. And I've said this last year and I'll say it this year again, I'm really not one to just, you know, immediately amend the budget, particularly after all the work that was -- that had gone into it. And I'm just looking -- you know, I'm going to agree to table this for one cycle or maybe more. You know, you can't just agree to table it for one cycle. We'll table it today, but we do want some answers with respect to how does this get worked out. And, you know, I think we're all going in the same direction including you, am I correct on that? Legislator Cooper, did you have any comments on this?

**LEG. COOPER:**

I just wanted to say the question is not whether the work is going to be done or the work's not going to be done. The work is going to be done. The question is are we going to use County employees or we're going to pay IGHL to use non-County employees. And it may well be that that's more cost effective. There's another meeting in two weeks, and I'd rather get the answer to that question before we vote on this.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Just in answer to your statement.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Legislator Alden.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

The work won't get done. It's not work either, it's all encompassing. There's also some thing that have to be bought for that, there's some specialty type of things that our County Department of Parks can't take possibly take care of. We don't have a stone mason on the payroll. So there's a whole bunch of things here that really -- it's not just labor. And they said that they were -- they were actually squeezed because of what happened in the budget process. And it's because we were misinformed in the budget process that we didn't include this in our budget.

**LEG. COOPER:**

But, Cameron, he had made it clear that if this was taken off his shoulders and if the County was willing to make this commitment and do it, he'd be thrilled. I mean, it's a lot of work for them.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

He absolutely didn't say that.

**LEG. COOPER:**

He absolutely did. We can check the record. He did, Mr. Seaman said that.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Well, at this point --

**LEG. COOPER:**

They don't want responsibility on an ongoing basis. He was only taking it on his shoulders because he was concerned that we wouldn't do it. So I'd like to see whether we'll be willing to do it.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Well, I'm going to stick to the tabling for different reasons. If there are no further comments, I'll call for a vote on the tabling motion. All in favor of tabling? Opposed?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Opposed.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Opposed.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Two oppositions, Legislator Alden and Legislator Schneiderman. Motion to table is approved.

**TABLED (VOTE:3-2-0-0 - Opposed; Legis. Alden and Schneiderman)**

**1054-2207. Amending the 2007 Operating Budget and transferring community support initiative funds from miscellaneous to the Legislature to promote accountability and efficiencies for community based quality-of-life programs.**

I'm going to make a motion to approve.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Seconded by Legislator Cooper.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Explanation.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Explanation from Counsel.

**MR. NOLAN:**

This is moving \$595,000 that's set aside for community-support initiatives, district initiatives, into the Legislature's budget from a miscellaneous line so it could be administered by the Legislature.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

General Fund.

**MR. NOLAN:**

Yes.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Okay. Thanks.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Any questions? All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **APPROVED**  
**(VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

**1055-2007. Amending the 2007 Operating Budget and transferring funds for the Retreat, Inc.**

**LEG. COOPER:**

Motion to approve.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I'll second that. Question, Legislator Alden.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Is it omnibus?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Yes, it's omnibus. The department and the agency requested that rather having a total of 10,000 apportioned in two separate lines that it be in one place, and that's what this accomplishes.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Okay.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Any other questions? All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **APPROVED**  
**(VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

**1057-2007. Adopting Local Law No. 2007, A Charter Law to reform the Suffolk County Legislative Grant process.**

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Motion to table.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

It has to be tabled for a public hearing. I'll make the motion.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Seconded by Legislator Cooper. Just so everyone's aware, we received a revised draft of this bill yesterday afternoon. I think it's been handed out to everyone. Has everyone gotten it? Having

said, all in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **TABLED FOR A PUBLIC HEARING (VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

**1061-2007. To readjust, compromise, and grant refunds and chargebacks on correction or errors/County Treasurer by: County Legislature No. 264.**

I'll make a motion to approve and place on the Consent Calender.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Any questions? All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **APPROVED** and placed on the **CONSENT CALENDER (VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

**1064-2007. To readjust, compromise, and grant refunds and chargebacks on real property correction of errors by: County Legislature Control #762-2007.**

Motion to approve and place on the Consent Calender.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **APPROVED** and placed on the **CONSENT CALENDER (VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

**1065-2007. Amending the 2007 Operating Budget and transferring funds for Constantino Brumidi Lodge 2211 - Order Sons of Italy in America.**

**LEG. STERN:**

Motion to approve.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Second.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Question.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Legislator Alden.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Is it omnibus?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Yes, this is omnibus money. It was originally put in Veterans, but what they want to do is put this towards handicapped accessibility. So we are moving it to Handicapped Services.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **APPROVED (VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

**1066-2007. Amending the 2007 Operating Budget and transferring funds for temporary salaries for per diem pathologists in the Division of Medical Legal Investigations and Forensic Sciences in the Department of Health Services.**

**LEG. COOPER:**

Motion to table.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I'll second that.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

On the motion.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

On the motion, Legislator Alden.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

We just appointed a new Medical Examiner. Is your motion to table because you don't agree with her --

**LEG. COOPER:**

Because I want to give her an opportunity to review this and get her comments.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Has she started yet.

**MR. MINER:**

She's starting March 12th.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

She hasn't started yet. Okay.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Good. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Do you want to make a comment on this?

**MR. MINER:**

No.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Do you want to identify yourself for the record.

**MR. MINER:**

Yes. Matthew Miner. I'm the Deputy Commission for the Health Department. We would also ask that this resolution be tabled to provide Dr. Mileuski with an opportunity to comment. And we're also concerned about the offsets and would to propose alternative offsets once Dr. Mileuski has an opportunity to review the resolution.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Okay. Thank you. Any questions. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **TABLED (VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

**1068-2007. Amending the 2007 Operating Budget and the 2006-2007 Suffolk County Community College Operating Budget in connection with transferring funds for the Welfare to Work Mentoring Education Program.**

**LEG. COOPER:**

Motion to approve.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Seconded by Legislator Schneiderman. Any questions on the motion? All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **APPROVED (VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

**1070-2007. Amending the 2007 Operating Budget and transferring funds for Health and Human Service Agencies, Public Safety Agencies, Cultural Activities, and for Senior and Youth Programs.**

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Motion.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Motion to table.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

We have a motion to approve, but we also have a motion to table. I'm going to second the motion to table. Do we have a second on the motion to approve? So we have a motion to table before us. Any questions on that?

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Through the Chair.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Ben, would you like to address this?

**MR. ZWIRN:**

I'd like Allen to address it, and then I'd also like to address it if we could.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Allen, would you?

**MR. KOVESDY:**

Yes. Good morning, again. We reviewed this resolution in detail, and we just wanted to point out to the Legislature that there are 12 agencies on this that receives funding in 2006 and did not ask for the funding in 2006, did not spend the funding in 2006, did not contract for the funding in 2006. So we were concerned that the same agencies that in 2006 didn't utilize the money were put back in this resolution. I have a list that we can supply to you if you'd like.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Would you supply? Do you have it there available now?

**MR. KOVESDY:**

Sure I'll make a photocopy.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Yeah. If you would give it to the Clerk, I think they'll make copies.

**MR. KOVESDY:**

That if you are going to fund agencies, that you fund agencies who will use the money for a purpose. But there were 12 of those in there that -- spread by the departments -- that did not -- did not use

it. Second, we have a concern -- the Legislature, in its wisdom, put in close to \$700,000 in additional money in DPW in -- for rent. At this time, those funds may not be needed, taking a snapshot in time, additional rent for additional buildings. There are many resolutions -- this one takes approximately 258 or \$268,000, I don't have my notes anymore -- 218 out of that. If all the resolutions are passed, the total amount of money within a few dollars will be stripped from that account. So basically, there was some additional money.

What's going to happen is before the first quarter of the year is finished, we're going to take that money out. Again, we, in the Budget Office, speaking of the budget, have concerns about taking that money out when we notice a trend in sales tax and other areas, which at this particular point in time is -- we consider not optimistic. So we would say that before you strip these particular accounts, that we see -- get a general picture of the economy and of all revenues that are coming in, because if revenues take a dip, and we are concerned about that, that we may not have other areas to cut. And if we have to cut, we will be cutting from existing programs. These are programs that have not started. The majority of them haven't been funded. And if we have to make cuts in the future, it's easier to make cuts from programs that never started than areas that have started or cutting in personnel areas and not filling positions. So this is a chance to save money and wait and see. So we would -- we would ask respectfully that you look at this in the entirety as more information on revenues for the County becomes known. Thank you very much.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

We will. Right now we're just looking to table this.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

If I might, I just have some more information I can add.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Ben, make your point and then Legislator Alden, I think, wants to follow up with some questions.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Because I think this could be helpful. One of the -- at least one of the organizations in IR 1070 is being audited currently by the Comptroller's office. I mean, it might be helpful to wait for the audit to be finished. And one of the organizations, Northeast Youth Sports Association, is also listed not only in IR 1070 for \$50,000, but also in IR 1081, the next resolutions for another \$50,000. So I'm not sure if that was done in error or to give them \$100,000 if both resolution passed. We're not sure. Allen talked about the offset that's being used and about the agencies that didn't supply information for previous Legislative grants. So we would ask that this be tabled at least for the time being until the Comptroller can do the audit for some of the ones that are in there.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Procedurally, we're going to table this until the next meeting. We're not going to put, and I don't think we can put, a limit on when we're going to table it to. But we are going to -- if we pass -- if we pass the tabling motion, it will be tabled until the next Budget and Finances Committee Meeting. Legislator Alden, did you have any questions?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Well, actually I have a little bit of a statement and some questions.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Go ahead.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

It just seems a little bit funny, again, that, you know, I'm looking at some of the organizations on here, and, you know, I just got this little document as far as -- this is your list of those people who didn't have a contract in '06.

**MR. KOVESDY:**

Yes, sir. We did this for -- we do this for all resolutions.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Let me just put it to you this way then. I see you've got on here St. Mary's Outreach, no contract in -- no contract in '06, papers not submitted. So for that reason -- and I don't believe that's the truth -- but for that reason, you would okay \$50,000 going to the Jerry Ryan Outreach Program as opposed to this, which serves my district of \$3500 -- I believe it's \$3500. So that's your opposition. And I have a little bit of a problem with --

**MR. KOVESDY:**

I don't have any opposition whatsoever, sir.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Well, I have a little bit of a problem with your statement.

**MR. KOVESDY:**

I didn't even though --

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Your statement was these monies should be expended.

**MR. KOVESDY:**

No. My statement was that in 2006, these programs were funded, they were given the money, and never used the money.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Okay. Then why didn't you make the rest of that statement very clear? And when they're not given the money, what happens to the money? It gets thrown out there and people run away with it? No. It goes to the bottom line. So is there a harm even if the money was in the budget and was not spent? What is the harm? And I'd like to hear your answer on that.

**MR. KOVESDY:**

First off all, I think you misunderstood me, Legislator Alden. I said that if these agencies are not going to be able to use the money, that the funding be given to agencies that can utilize the money. It's your purview how the money is spent as Legislators. It's not mine.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

We're also getting right back to where we were in the budget process where a couple of Legislators were singled out and they were punished, because these groups -- as far I'm concerned, these groups accomplish the same thing that groups that Mr. Levy put in his budget, the County Executive choose to put in his budget. The only thing is they weren't in certain Legislative Districts like mine.

**MR. KOVESDY:**

That's not a fair -- that's not a fair a comment coming --

**LEG. ALDEN:**

That is 100% fair. That's exactly what's happening here. It happened in the budget process, 100% what happens here, because you haven't told me about any harm if these are included in the budget or were included in the budget and they don't get paperwork in, so where's the harm? That money is wasted?

**MR. ZWIRN:**

There's more than -- there's more than just that, Legislator Alden. You have one organization that's listed that's an umbrella organizations that's made up of a lot of smaller organizations that did get funded. Now they're being asked to be funded as an umbrella organization, and that's Northeast

Youth Sports. They're also in the next resolution. I mean, is the intention -- would your intention be to give them \$100,000 in supporting both these bills --

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Ben, if I may?

**MR. ZWIRN:**

-- when they're under an audit from the Comptroller's Office? We didn't ask for them to be audited.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

If I may, Ben? I have a list here. I don't see Northeast -- what's the name of the organization you just mentioned?

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Northeast Youth Sports Association.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I don't see that on this list.

**MR. KOVESDY:**

Because they may have been funded last year.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Excuse me?

**MR. ZWIRN:**

They may not be of that group.

**MR. KOVESDY:**

These were the ones that were in the budget but never used the money.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

In answer to your comment, that's exactly the way it's supposed to work. If they fail an audit, they shouldn't get any money. And by putting it in the budget what you're saying is that the purpose that they go and preach or whatever you want to call it to help, say, a veteran who's homeless or people that don't have money or people that don't have any place to live or people that are victims of crime or people that might need a public defender, by saying that we're going to put money in the budget for those purposes, we're only saying those are public purposes.

If in the process, you find out that the organization is using the money for that or they haven't completed the proper paperwork, yet I'm going to draw your attention to a resolution that was put in in 1999 that said all these kinds of groups, they actually fall in the public purpose. And this resolution went a little bit further even and said that we have made it so that these small groups who provide much needed service for our people in Suffolk County, we're strangulating them through the paperwork that we put out there. So we have caused these groups to jump through hoops and do all kinds of crazy things, and it shouldn't be. And you know who put that resolution in? He wasn't the County Executive at that time. At that time he sat on this side of the Legislative horseshoe.

**LEG. COOPER:**

I know. I know.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

What's the answer, Jon?

**LEG. COOPER:**

Let me guess, Steve Levy.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Steve Levy who is now the County Executive.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Well, some people call that oversight. You know, I mean, you know --

**LEG. ALDEN:**

This is really --

**MR. ZWIRN:**

This is public taxpayer money. This isn't your money, it's not my money, it's the taxpayers' money.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

And you know what?

**MR. ZWIRN:**

It's the taxpayers money, and you have to make sure --

**LEG. ALDEN:**

And my answer to that is --

**MR. ZWIRN:**

-- that organizations use it for right purpose. Sometimes --

**LEG. ALDEN:**

That's exactly what we should be doing.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Sometimes in the past, very good organizations have used the money for purposes they should not have, and they've gotten into trouble. And ultimately --

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Rightfully so.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

And your names are on --

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Here's where I have the problem, though, Ben. It goes right back to the beginning. In the proposed budget, there was outreach programs, there were soccer programs, there were football programs, there were Little Leagues proposed by the County Executive in his original proposed budget. Yet, the ones from my district have all Xs through them. So you draw your own conclusions from it, because I have and the people in my district have also. Continuation of the same stuff.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Ben, I have a technical question either to you or Allen. I'm looking at this list you gave me. For instance, Bay Shore -- Bay Shore Outreach, it says no contract in 2005/2006, Chambers of Commerce of the Moriches, no contract in 2006, papers not submitted, East Islip Youth Football League, same thing, papers not submitted. What does that mean?

**MR. KOVESDY:**

It means they never provided the information to the department, whether it Economic Development, Parks, or Youth requesting funding, documenting how the funding was so they could --

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

They never submitted anything, or they submitted insufficient information or a combination of two, what's the deal here?

**MR. KOVESDY:**

The best of my knowledge, they never submitted the paper work to instigate a contract.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

They never submitted anything is what you're saying?

**MR. KOVESDY:**

Yes. Again --

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Nesconset Chamber of Commerce, papers not submitted. They never submitted an application to --

**MR. KOVESDY:**

To get the money, so, therefore, the money was -- they're not the only ones in the County who didn't do that. There are quite a few of them that go across the board for all Legislative district. This just happens to be on this particular resolution. On a positive side, you know, it's not my place to argue, but if something is worthwhile and we do it -- we were able in four days period -- that they had passed a -- to get that bus -- the van for that group on the East End that you had asked, that the Legislature had passed. Went through hoops. We stopped all the processes and made sure that you got the van for the that group on the East End, because you had asked for a contract.

If there is a contract and the contract has to get executed and there's a problem, we will go through hoops to make sure that happens. We're just pointing out to you, sir, that in this particular case on this particular resolution that there were agencies who had the opportunity to spend money in the past, had the money funded and didn't spend the money. That's all I'm pointing out to you on that, along with the fact that we do have a concern on the offset. It's your judgment as Legislators where you spend the money for these contract agencies.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

On the motion, Legislator Alden.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

And that would be a nice statement, except you went a lot further. You stated that these shouldn't even be in the budget, that we have a shortfall --

**MR. KOVESDY:**

I didn't say that. I said they did not -- they had money last year for a program, whatever the program was, they never spoke to the department, they never submitted the paperwork, and therefore, they were not funded. That's all I'm saying.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Unfortunately, that's a misrepresentation, because some of these groups, especially the ones in my Legislative District, have been complaining all along about the hoops they had to jump through. And they actually with no staff, you require them to do things that really you have to be a magician to do, so.

But before -- let me back up -- and I'm not going to put Donna on the spot because her job is tough enough and she's does a great job. I wish I could actually read back to you some of the statements you said, because you made a little bit of a pitch here just a few minutes ago about keeping control over the spending. And you know what? I agree with you 100%. But when you draw a line around my district and you put an X through all of these groups that you've funded throughout all of Suffolk County, that's when I really take personal affront at it. And that's what you've done, and now

you're continuing to do it again. You did in the budget process and you're doing it again now. Why didn't you come out and speak against all the things that the County Executive had put in his budget that are exact parallels to these funding -- these groups, the services that they provide. I didn't hear one word from you, not one word, about what he proposed in his budget. Yet, now I hear you over and over again coming down because they're in my district.

So I find really what you said, it's an affront, it's an affront to people's intelligence, it's an affront to everything, to this process even. Especially since, what difference does it make? If they were in the budget and they don't submit their paperwork, you know where the money goes? Contrary to what some people want to put out there and have a belief that this money has been thrown and it's away gone with the wind, no, that money goes to the bottom line, the same way with any dollar that's not spent for what the budget is called for. Like, for instance, when we put money in the budget for CPS workers to go out -- you know what they do? They protect little children. So when we don't spend and when we don't hire the people to go out and protect children that are at risk, where does that money go? It goes to the bottom line. Same way with this money. So if you had a problem with it, it's in enforcement, that's really where it should have stopped, right there. But, no, you guys have to keep up with this. After one district or after a couple of Legislators, you're really going to make examples of us. Well, that's fine.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

With all due respect --

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

If I may, I'd like to move the agenda, it's getting late. But with respect to Legislator Alden's comment, I would like to know whether or not some of these agencies did submit papers, whether or not there was any contact. I'm getting the impression that there was no contact. That may or may not be the case. I'd like to know that. We're going to -- the motion is to table this until the next meeting. We'll take this conversation up in the next meeting unless somebody has something that they must say. Legislator Cooper.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Just briefly. I mean, look, I and all Legislators, I think, have had some problems with the process in the past. There are too many hurdles to jump over and there's a lot of paperwork, and that's why we're trying to streamline the process and reform it right now.

But I do have to say that all the contract agencies in my district, whether it was member item funding, CSI funding or whether it was the contract agency funding, my staff followed up with every agency, we walked them through the process, you know, held their hand. If there were issues, we tried to help them resolve the issue. And it was a lot of work, but, you know, my staff took it on.

So I don't know whether it's true or not that these organizations didn't submit the paperwork after they were given the funds, but if that is the case, you know, why should we fund, you know, one particular football league if they didn't fill out the paperwork last time because the process was too onerous, and maybe the year before they didn't fill it out? It's just wasting the money. I'd rather the money go to another football league in the district that maybe would be willing to make that commitment and follow through.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Well, just so I'm clear --

**LEG. COOPER:**

This is the first time I'm seeing this myself, so --

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Just so I'm clear, just for the record, the money that wasn't spent doesn't get spent somewhere else, it goes back into the -- or stays in the General Fund, am I correct on that? So it's not like it

went anywhere. If something was allocated and there was no contract executed, that money simply was not spent.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

That's correct.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

It either goes back into the fund balance, it goes somewhere, but it doesn't -- it doesn't leave the County. So the impression that somehow this money went wayward is not accurate. It just didn't go anywhere. It didn't go to the intended use.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

There was never an intention to say it went wayward.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Okay. I just want to be clear on that. And the other thing that I want to point out is that we -- in my district, we have had some agencies that have needed some assistance in terms of, you know, the paperwork that's required. My question is -- the statement was made and the paper here says that, you know, these agencies did not contact the County to follow through on their allocations. And I just want to verify that that's the case. And I think if they're in Legislator Alden's District or anyone else's district, I think it's easy to verify whether or not attempts were made by these agencies to get the allocation. And this is something that we could take up at the next meeting. Legislator Alden, did you want to respond to Legislator Cooper?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Absolutely.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Go ahead.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

And, Jon, I agree with everything you said almost. You at least had the opportunity to provide funding for certain things in your district that would have benefited people. I didn't have that opportunity, because it was stripped away from me by the County Executive's actions and by your actions in a very unfair manner I might add, because you hurt -- you didn't hurt me. If you guys wanted to hurt me, you guys would take your Chairmanship away or, you know, call me names or whatever else you do. You hurt people. So the same people in your district that have been provided those opportunities, Jon, for outreach, for Little Leagues, for senior citizen programs, for veterans programs, they're not afforded that opportunity in my district, because you guys took the money away. And now this is a continuation of not even providing the opportunity through this -- this is a sham. This is a sham. How much money did you have allocated in your district, Jon? Then answer that question. How much money did you have allocated in your district?

**LEG. COOPER:**

Can I answer?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Mine's about one-tenth of what you had.

**LEG. COOPER:**

I have no idea what was allocated in my district, because a lot of the money -- member item or CSI money, I know exactly what was allocated. It was \$35,000. I don't know what was allocated in the contract agency. I'm sure you don't -- I'm sure no Legislator knows exactly what was spent in their district. That's one thing that we're looking at in the process in the ad hoc committee; we're trying to come up with a better way of addressing this very, very complicated issue.

But I have to give an example. There was an organization in my district, Meals on Wheels, I got them a \$5000, or at least I offered them \$5000. They didn't want to fill out the paperwork. They let me know, my staff followed up, luckily we found out in time, and we were able to reallocate the money to another organization that was able to use it.

But, Cameron, why in the world would you want to give money to -- you know, if this is accurate, I don't know if it is, and you'll have two weeks to find out whether the County Exec's people are accurate or not, but why give money again to organizations that obviously don't want to fill out the paperwork because it's too convoluted? Find another organization in your district and give the money to them.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Give what money, Jon? Because you took the money out of the budget. There is no money for my district, it was taken away.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I'm going to interrupt, take the prerogative of the Chair. I don't want to get into a cross conversation between Legislators. I don't think it's productive. Finish your comments, Legislator Cooper, and then Legislator Alden, if you have anything further to address. Let's just keep it at that level, okay?

**LEG. COOPER:**

Cameron, it's just that your putting -- you're mixing different issues. One issue is if these are the organizations, and I'm sure you're not the only Legislator that put in a request for funding for organizations that it turns out did not submit the paperwork and basically lost the money or your district lost the money. I'm sure that there are many Legislators that had that happen to them. But in this case, this was brought to our attention. We now have an opportunity to vote to restore funding to these organizations. But why should we do that if -- again, I don't know how many organizations were in your district, I don't even know how many of these are in your district, but if half the organization that you're fighting to restore the funding clearly don't want it because of the onerous paperwork requirements, then maybe they should be excised out of the resolution. We'll restore the funding for the others -- but it's almost like wasting the money.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Just clear -- I'm going to say something to that.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Whoa, whoa, whoa. I take a real exception to that.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I do too, by the way.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

That's off the wall.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I'm not going to reach that conclusion. You know, if an agency didn't get money last year, I'm not going to reach the conclusion that they don't want the money, that they don't need the money. And that's not where we're at. Where we're at here is a list -- what I'm at is a list of agencies that apparently were funded last year and did not receive their money. And what you're telling me is that the reason they didn't receive the money is because they never came to the County to ask for it. And that's something that's, you know, fairly verifiable.

The other issue is that if they didn't get their money last year and they're requesting money this year, okay, that's something that's easily verifiable. I'm not going to reach the assumption that

they simply don't want the money, they're walking away from it. But I would like to move on. We're going to table this for one -- go ahead, Legislator Cooper, respond.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Look, if there was a request that they be given money, and they didn't get the money, it's either because they -- the County screwed up or something happened on the County end or for some reason they didn't fulfill their requirements, paperwork requirements, what have you. And someone should go back to the organizations and them what happened?

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I agree with you there. Someone should go and ask them what happened.

**LEG. COOPER:**

It will be very informative. I don't know the amounts of these grants, but if there's an organization that was getting \$10,000, \$20,000 --

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Here's my response very quickly.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Let me finish. Then they didn't get the money, is it because the County made a mistake or -- in which case the onus is on us, or is it because they just decided that the paperwork requirements were too onerous, they didn't want to bother? If that's the case, why give them another \$10,000 if there's a chance that once again they won't fill out the paperwork.

So we'll have a couple of weeks now, there's another meeting on the 20th. I don't have any ulterior motives here, I don't know these organizations, I don't know the grants, I don't know which ones are in your district. It has nothing to do with that. But now that this has been brought to our attention, I'd like to find out why they -- number one, is it true that they didn't submit the paperwork? And if it is true, well, why, what happened?

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Okay. Legislator Alden.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Here's the shame of this whole conversation. If we applied the same scrutiny or the desire for scrutiny, we didn't do that with your district or your district or anybody else around the horseshoe except my district and maybe two or three other Republicans. That's where we went astray. You took and punished a couple of people, and you didn't punish us as Legislators, you punished people in the district. While taking the money and doing whatever you wanted with it in your district, you made sure in that in my district -- now you're going to apply a different set of standards.

So that's all I'm saying. You know what? You want to do something fair next time, don't do this way where you want to punish one or two Legislators. And really what you've accomplished is just punishing groups. You've punished senior citizens, you've punished kids, you've punished veterans, you you've punished seniors. These are the kind of people that you punished in here, Jon. And you know what? You can justify it and try to get off with all this stuff; now we want to find out if they're not going to take the money this year, we're going to take the money that year, because there's no harm. What it is is a Legislator trying to help people in his district and direct some money in his district, the same way you directed money, except your amount of money was a lot different than the amount of money in other districts. So that's really what it boils down to.

And as far as your comments that, you know, we've got to save money. Yeah, we do have to save money. Let's apply a rule though across the board then when we're saving money and not just draw a little line or a big line around the 10th Legislative District and put an X through the people in the 10th Legislative District. Let's come up with some kind of statements that go to a little bit more of a

broad type of application, not just the 10th Legislature district, because this is -- this is actually ridiculous. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I'm going to call the vote. There's a motion to table. All in favor of tabling? Opposed?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Opposed.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Legislator Schneiderman had to leave, so he's excused for the remainder of the meeting. Motion to table carries. We'll take this up in two weeks. **TABLED (VOTE:3-0-1-1 - Abstention - Legis. Alden - Not present - Legis. Schneiderman)**

**1081-2007. Amending the 2007 Operating Budget and transferring funds for Northeast Youth Sports Association.**

I have a question maybe before a motion. Do we need a motion before I can ask the question, Counsel?

**LEG. COOPER:**

I'll make a motion to table.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

All right. I'll ask the question. Is this omnibus money or is this -- Gail, is this omnibus money or is this new money?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

This is not omnibus money. This would be new money. However, as Mr. Zwirn pointed out, Northeast Youth Sports Association is one of the agencies that is included in 1070. However, very specifically in this resolution, it indicates that there is no intent other than to provide the agency with a \$50,000 amount of money capped. So in the event that 1070 doesn't proceed, you could certainly move ahead on 1081.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

All right. What I'm going to do is I'm going to make a motion to table 1081, and we'll take this up in two weeks if the motion passes. Do we have a second?

**LEG. COOPER:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Seconded by Legislator Cooper. Any further discussion? All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Abstain.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

One abstention. **TABLED (VOTE:3-1-0-1 - Opposed - Legis. Alden - Not present - Legis. Schneiderman).**

**1102-2007. Amending the 2007 Operating Budget and transferring funds for the contracted agency Boy Scouts of America.**

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Same question, Gail. Is this new money or omnibus money?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

This is omnibus money. What it does is the contract for the Boy Scouts was in one department, we transferred it from oversight by DPW to oversight by the Youth Bureau since that's where -- it's going to be a youth program.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

On the motion.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

There is no motion, I don't think.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Motion to table.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Motion to table. Could we have a second? I'll second for the purposes of discussion. Legislator Alden, you had a question on this?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

I'll ask a question that's actually on a statement that Budget Review just made, omnibus money. How is that established, and was there a breakdown by Legislative districts as far as how much direction should be given to how much money? I'd like the answers on those then.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Okay. The omnibus provided money for the Boy Scouts of America during the deliberations of the working group. The working group, as you are aware, went through how different contract agencies were treated in terms of the recommended budget; who was funded at the same level, who was funded less, what have you. There were group decisions made. I believe this is one of the group decisions as opposed to the more district-specific monies.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Decision to fund or not fund?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

To fund, to provide \$42,000. At the time, it was envisioned that the project was going to involve renovation work, so we put it in Public Works. This is really -- just changes from it from DPW to the Youth Bureau.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

So this money was in the budget.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Right. This was approved money, we're just moving it from one department to another; is that correct?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

That's correct.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

When we traditionally about omnibus money, that's like either we have five or \$600,000 to direct -- is that what we traditionally think about omnibus, when each Legislator has five or \$600,000 to direct?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

That was not omnibus money designated for district-specific. This was money that was one of the

line items in the omnibus. My recollection was that it came from the group decision making.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

The question is this wasn't in the recommended budget, this came as part of the omnibus budget?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

That correct.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Okay.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

And it was passed.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

It was passed, yes.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

How much was in each Legislative district-specific?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

District-specific was on or about \$130,000.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

But it was different for each district, because when you look at what passed, then that would be complete difference from district to district?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Yes. I don't have those numbers readily available.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Because one district I can think of has less than a third of that number that you just threw out. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

All right. Motion to table. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Abstain.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

One abstention, motion carries. **TABLED (VOTE:3-1-0-1 - Opposed - Legis. Alden - Not present - Legis. Schneiderman).**

**1120-2007. Amending the Adopted 2007 Operating Budget and transferring funds in connection with the provision of Mercury-Free Vaccines.**

Counsel, you want to address this?

**MR. NOLAN:**

Just two drafting things in this particular resolution. First of all, the Second Whereas Clause says this is being done pursuant to Section 4-31G of the Suffolk County Charter, and that is how the Legislators amend the County Operating Budget, which is most of the resolutions here today. But this is a County Executive resolution. So that Whereas Clause just is incorrect, but it's a Whereas Clause.

Also the resolution amends the original resolution that was sponsored by Legislator Stern from last year, which established a policy where we would only have mercury-free vaccines in the County Health Centers. It was supposed to go into affect September 31st, 2006. This resolution would amend that particular resolution to say immediately. I just wanted to point that out to the Legislators.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

What's the significant of the Whereas Clause issue? Is it something that --

**MR. NOLAN:**

I wanted to point out that this is a County Executive budget amendment, not a County Legislative budget amendment. It is a Whereas Clause so it really doesn't affect whether or not you can vote on it and whether or not it will be effective. It really has no practical affect.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Okay.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

On the motion.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I don't think that if we discharged it we would have time to correct it. It would have to come in with a C of N, I believe; is that correct Counsel?

**MR. NOLAN:**

Correct.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Do you want to discharge it and -- we can discharge it. If we don't get a C of N at the next meeting, then we can table it at the next meeting, and we will have time to amend it so that it's passed at the second meeting of this month. Would that be okay, Legislator Stern.

**LEG. STERN:**

Do we know whether or not we would be able to get a CN?

**MR. ZWIRN:**

I don't see why not. I mean, what the County Executive's purpose was just to provide -- the Legislature said that they have -- they want to go with mercury-free vacancies as a policy of the County, the County Executive says no quarrel with you, that's fine, just want to make sure that the money is there for the vaccines. And this is his way of just providing the funds so they could go head and purchase.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

All right. Motion to approve by Legislator Stern, I'll second that. On the motion, Legislator Alden.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Through the Chair, Legislator Stern, what is the effective date of your legislation?

**LEG. STERN:**

The effective date is supposed to be the beginning of this year.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

January 1st.

**LEG. STERN:**

Correct.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

But the resolution says immediately, so it would become effective upon passage, right?

**MR. ZWIRN:**

This is the extra money. The policy is in affect as of that resolution. This is providing additional funding. This is just providing additional funding so they can buy additional serums, because before the end of this year, they would run out of funds.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Do we have a Commission of Health yet?

**MR. ZWIRN:**

No. You would know. It would have to come before the Legislature.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Okay. We have an Acting-Commissioner then.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Yes, Dr. Graham.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

And you are here to speak on the budgetary issue?

**MS. BERMEL:**

I'm Margaret Bermel from the Department of Health. I can address the question on the implementation date. The resolution, 563-06, was fully implemented on December 31st of 2006.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Good. I have a question then. Not to put you on the spot, since you might not be able to answer this.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

I was almost a doctor. I can answer some of those medical questions.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

I'm going to direct some to you too, because I got some medical questions.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Dr. Harper taught me a lot in the short time he was here.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Ben, what you want to do with that is forget everything you learned then. Just some advice. I wouldn't want to pressure you. Has anybody done an analysis of -- because I'll tell you where I'm going with this. When Legislator Stern initially brought the proposal forward, some doctors and some people had come forward and said that we have trouble getting the kids in for more than one appearance. And what this will do is make it that they would have to come back for more than one appearance at the health center to get more than one vaccine, because you can't combine them all in one shot. Has there been an analysis done? Is that -- is our fear being realized, or do we have to worry about that, or is it just going smoothly, they're coming back multiple times to get all their vaccines? And if you're not ready to answer that today, don't just guess.

**MS. BERMEL:**

In response to that question, we do have with us today a public health nurse who works at the clinics, and she can respond to that. She has some information. It's a limit time, because the resolution has only been in affect for almost two months. So the data is very limited at this point,

but she does have some information on the impact of the resolution on some of the mothers and their children. So if you would like her to come up, she can certainly address that.

**MS. PETRACO:**

I will start off by identifying myself. I'm Mary Beth {Koslov} Petraco, and I'm the coordinator of Child Health for Suffolk County Department of Health Services. And my answer to you, Legislator, is that the -- we have a study in progress. So I don't have any firm data to give you, but, yes, it is causing mommies to have to come back more often. But numbers I can't give you yet.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

And that's okay as long as they come back and the kids get all their -- you know, all their vaccines. But what I'd be more interested in is -- that data is important -- but are we causing kids to forego certain types of vaccines because now they can't be bundled. And if you're -- if you're conducting that and you're putting that information together, then please, when you do have something that can show a trend, through the Chair, if you could get that information to us, it would be very important I think.

**MS. PETRACO:**

I think it's really too early to give you any kind of data at this point.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Thank you.

**LEG. STERN:**

In fact, through the Chair, Legislator Alden, that a request that I was going to make of Chairman Mystal of the Health Committee after six months, if we could get in contact with the Health Department to see what kind of trend. And we figured that six months might be the appropriate time.

**MS. PETRACO:**

Legislator, may I give you any kind of anecdotal information at this point? Anecdotally, yes, children are missing shots, but it's very early, I don't have firm numbers. Just in the children that I see in Maxine Postal, I'm having difficulty getting them back.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I had a question. I wasn't part of the Health Committee, but one of the issues that came up was the fact that the mercury-free vaccines require more than one visit to the center; is that accurate?

**MS. PETRACO:**

Correct.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

And, you know, you say that you're missing shots or kids are missing shots, are they missing the initial shot or are they missing -- you know, are they coming -- they're not coming in for the mercury-free because it's not available; is that correct?

**MS. PETRACO:**

It's totally unavailable.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

All right. And assuming that we have this process approved, is there a mechanism in place to ensure that those that come in are, you know, followed up on and that they get the second and the third or whatever shots are required?

**MS. PETRACO:**

Yes. We have a Reminder Recall System in place, and we continue to try to get the children back. But it's really not -- I cannot give you firm numbers until I have, like, a longer period of time so I can tell you how many children we've lost that we have tried to contact. But we have a very good Reminder Recall System in place to try to get the children back.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

All right. And you have a plan to notify or let us know exactly how the progress is being made under the implementation of this; is that accurate?

**MS. PETRACO:**

Correct.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Okay.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Legislator Alden.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

One quick follow-up. You said that the mercury-free vaccine is not available?

**MS. PETRACO:**

Mercury-free -- we have no mercury in any of the vaccines that we are giving the children in the health centers.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

But we have the vaccines that are mercury-free.

**MS. PETRACO:**

Yes. Yes. Absolutely.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Okay. I misunderstood what you were saying.

**MS. PETRACO:**

Oh, okay. I'm so sorry.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

All right. We have a motion to approve and a second. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **APPROVED (VOTE:4-0-0-1 - Not Present - Legis. Schneiderman)**

**1129-2007. Delegating authority to refund certain erroneous tax payment to the Suffolk County Treasurer.**

I'll make a motion to approve, I need a second.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

All right. Brief explanation, Counsel.

**MR. NOLAN:**

This is a resolution we are doing annually, which gives the Treasurer the authority to refund erroneous tax payments under \$2500.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

All right. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **APPROVED (VOTE:4-0-0-1 - Not Present - Legis. Schneiderman).**

**1133-2007. To readjust, compromise, and grant refunds and chargebacks on correction or errors/County Treasurer by: County Legislature #259.**

I make a motion to approve and place on the Consent Calender, I need a second.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Motion to approve and place on the Consent Calender, 1133.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Seconded by Legislator Cooper. All in favor? Opposed? Abstention? Motion carries. **APPROVED and placed on the Consent Calender (VOTE:4-0-0-1 - Not Present - Legis. Schneiderman).**

**1134-2007. Transferring funding for the Division of Insurance and Risk Management back from the Department of Audit and Control to the Suffolk County Department of Human Resources, Personnel and Civil Service.**

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Motion to table.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Motion to discharge without recommendation.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I'll second the motion to discharge without recommendation. On the motion, the reason I'm going to do that is that we have a companion -- first of all, the Department of Risk Management was, through the budget, sent over to the department of Audit and Control. There's a bill in the Ways and Means Committee that changes the Charter so that we can comply with the budget. I'd like to get this issue before the Legislature -- before the full Legislature so we can make a decision on Tuesday. I'm on Ways and Means. I'm actually going to also vote for discharge without recommendation the other resolution so that the Legislature can take this up as whole on Tuesday. That's my reasoning for not tabling at this point.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

On the motion.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

On the motion, Legislator Alden.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

I don't see any merit in this. Actually, we discussed at length in the budget process the transfer over to Audit and Control, and we also discussed the continuation of the present system. And I thought that the merits were fully discussed at that time. This is just --

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Well, they were fully discussed by the committee. And I don't disagree with you. All I'm doing is discharging -- seconding the motion to discharge without recommendation simply so that we can have the discussion on this bill and the companion bill, which is the one that complies with the omnibus process. So we're not really -- we can deal with it on the merits, but I would prefer that we deal with this on the merits on Tuesday and there's no recommendation coming from this committee to either approve or disapprove this bill if we pass this resolution.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

If you look at the merits, though, this is meritless actually.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

It might will be.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

And counterproductive to what we had talked about during the budget process where 18 Legislators agreed on the budget. So I'm not in favor of even discharging it.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Okay. There's a motion to discharge without recommendation. Any further discussion? All in favor? Opposed?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Opposed.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

One opposition. Motion carries. Legislator Schneiderman is not here, and I want that noted for the record. **DISCHARGED WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION. (VOTE:3-1-0-1 - Opposed - Legis. Alden - Not present - Legis. Schneiderman).**

**1135-2007. Amending the 2007 Operating Budget and transferring funds in connection with contract agencies in the Department of Social Services.**

I'll make a motion to approve.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

On the motion, can I have a brief explanation?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

This is really tantamount to housekeeping. Social Services contacted us after the '07 budget was adopted and said that -- requested that certain agencies be placed in different sections of Social Services based on what these contract agencies do with the money. I believe there's one or two that are actually going to Youth because it's child care and Economic Development. Again, it's to line them up with the proper administrative department for oversight.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Okay. Thank you any further discussions? All those in favor? Opposed?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Abstention.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

One abstention. **APPROVED (VOTE:3-0-1-1 - Abstention - Legis. Alden - Not Present - Legis. Schneiderman).**

**1136-2007. Amending the 2007 Operating Budget and transferring funding for the contracted agency William Floyd Community Summit.**

Before the motion, is this a program that was funded in the omnibus, Gail? Is this omnibus money?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Yes. This just transfers the oversight from economic Development to Youth.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Motion to approve. We need a second.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Seconded by Legislator Cooper. Legislator Alden, you want to address this?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Yeah. On the motion, did they get money last year? And seems like the William Floyd Community Summit, that seems like something that's school-based, and I'm not so sure we want to spend County taxpayers' dollars for something that might be just school-based and should be supported through the school taxes or probably is supported through the school taxes right now.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I think this was something that came through the Omnibus Committee, of which you were a member.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

I don't really regard the omnibus as being anything now. If that was an even distribution of funds for your district, then it wasn't, so.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Lets get the answer to the question from Gail.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

I'm checking.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

The other questions I'd like to -- and maybe you can look at the same -- or look them up at the same time is how much money goes to operating expenses, do they pay anybody, any people involved in this summit get any kind of cash contributions or pay for any type of services at all and what our money is actually going for here.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

We're still waiting for an answer to the first question, Cameron.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

No, I just threw a couple of things -- if they could pull it all up at once.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Mr. Chairman, in terms of money in the budget, the William Floyd Community Summit has been funded since 2004. The 2004 funding was \$35,000, 2005 was 35,000, 2006 was 10,000 and 2007 was 2,000.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

And what did they do with that money?

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Two thousand dollars?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Well, that's a lot of money when you add it up. That's a lot of taxpayer dollars. We're getting close to \$100,000 now.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

I'll have to check that for you.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

Is there a question there? I didn't hear the question.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Yeah. What is the money going to be used for or what if was used for in the past. What the purpose was for this.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

I'd have to get back to you on that.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I don't think that information is going to pop out of her computer. We can ask those questions of the agency. And also, I think the County Executive's Office who handled -- or the agency that handled the contract. All right. We have a motion to approve on the floor.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

We really should be scrutinizing where the taxpayers' dollars are going then. Rules should be applied across the board.

**CHAIRMAN MONTANO:**

I'm sure Ben is -- leave that alone. All right. We have a motion to approve. All in favor? Opposed? Abstention? One abstention. Motion carries. **APPROVED (VOTE:3-0-1-1 - Abstention - Legis. Alden - Not Present - Legis. Schneiderman).**

I believe that ends the agenda. Motion to adjourn.

(\*THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 11:38 A.M.\*)

{ } DENOTES BEING SPELLED PHONETICALLY