

**BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE
OF THE
SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE
MINUTES**

A meeting of the Budget and 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 September 30, 2014.

Members Present:

Legislator Lou D'Amaro - Chairman
Legislator Sarah Anker - Vice-Chair
Legislator John Kennedy
Legislator Monica Martinez
Legislator Steve Stern
Legislator Robert Trotta

Also In Attendance:

Presiding Officer DuWayne Gregory - Legislative District No. 15
Legislator Al Krupski - Legislative District No. 1
George Nolan - Counsel to the Legislature
Lora Gellerstein - Chief Deputy Clerk, Suffolk County Legislature
Michael Pitcher - Aide to Presiding Officer Lindsay
Paul Perillie - Aide to Legislator Gregory
Christina DeLisi - Aide to Legislator Schneiderman
Kevin LaValle - Aide to Legislator Muratore
Greg Moran - Aide to Legislator Nowick
Ali Nazir - Aide to Legislator Kennedy
Tom Vaughn - County Executive's Office
Nick Paglia - County Executive's Office
Robert Lipp - Director, Budget Review Office
Sharen Wagner - Budget Review Office
Marlene Gregory - VIBS Family Violence and Rape Center
John A. Carpentiere, Jr. - South Fork Natural History Museum
Frank Quevedo - South Fork Natural History Museum
Rick Brand - Newsday
All Other Interested Parties

Minutes Taken By:

Gabrielle Skolom - Court Stenographer

Minutes Transcribed By:

Kim Castiglione - Legislative Secretary

*(*The meeting was called to order at 12:47 p.m.*)*

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the Budget and Finance Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature. Please rise and join the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance led by our Vice Chairperson, Legislator Stern.

*(*Salutation*)*

Once again, welcome. And for the record, looking at our agenda, we did receive some correspondence during the week. First is an e-mail from Legislator Cilmi dated September 25 of 2014, which was submitted in support of IR 1819 and that e-mail will be included in our record. The second correspondence is an e-mail from Joseph Pecorella dated September 26, 2014, and that provided more information with respect to the administrative percentage of the remaining agencies on the Comptroller's noncompliance list, and we'll be discussing those two agencies this afternoon.

Next is the public comments portion of our meeting and there are two cards that I've received. If anyone would like to address the -- three cards. If anyone would like to address the Budget and Finance Committee, please fill out one of these yellow cards and we'll be happy to hear what you have to say within the three minutes of allotted time. The first individual to come up this afternoon, Frank Quevedo. Sir, good afternoon and welcome to the committee.

MR. QUEVEDO:

Thank you for the opportunity. Appreciate it.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

What would you like to --

MR. QUEVEDO:

Well, we're not in compliance to receive funding.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Okay. What organization are you with?

MR. QUEVEDO:

South Fork Natural History Museum, also known as SoFo in Bridgehampton, New York.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Okay. Go ahead.

MR. QUEVEDO:

I'm here in the request of the County to be in compliance to receive funding for 2014. From what I understand, we're three percent over the threshold at 23 percent to receive approval for financial support. What I have -- who I brought is our accountant, John Carpentiere, in case you have any questions relating to program expenses, in relation to administrative expenses as well.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

All right. I appreciate your appearance here today. Is there anything else you want to add?

MR. QUEVEDO:

Well, I'd like to present, if there's anybody that would like them, I have program newsletters to give credibility to the organization as to show how much program we offer throughout the year, as well as brochures and fliers indicating what we do as an organizations.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

You can hand them over to our Aide and we can take a look at that as well.

MR. QUEVEDO:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Now, you're at 23 percent of cost is going towards administrative?

MR. QUEVEDO:

Correct.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Did the organization work with the Comptroller's Office?

MR. QUEVEDO:

I believe we have. Maybe I can bring John up here to explain that in more detail?

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

All right. Is there anything else you want to add?

MR. QUEVEDO:

No, I'm just here to represent the organization.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Right. I appreciate that. So if you'd have a seat -- or you can stay there if you like. We'll call John Carpentiere.

MR. QUEVEDO:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

You're welcome.

MR. CARPENTIERE:

Hello.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Hi.

MR. CARPENTIERE:

So what was going on was we take care of the books for the organization. Previously we had just taken the expenses, put them in and had the auditors come in and prepare their financial statements accordingly. We were recently under -- advised by Joe Pecorella over at the Comptroller's Office that there is a certain kind of requirement as far as program expenses verses administrative expenses and a ratio in relation to total program revenue. We weren't accounting for that properly. So what we did was when we were in doubt as far as the coding of the expenses, they were put towards the administrative instead of properly allocated and to be segregated against the -- sorry, am I not speaking clearly? Sorry. Instead of allocating them accordingly to the respective program expense. So what we did was we actually inflated our administrative expenses. One of the main areas that we worked on preliminarily this year that we thought would be a fix was to allocate some salaries. We are going to review those expenses more thoroughly this year for the 2014 year so that we are in compliance with that, and making sure that program expenses are

recorded correctly on the financials so that we'll raise our program expenses and reduce our administrative expenses.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Yeah, and that's very reassuring, because the purpose of that legislation and that requirement was just to ensure that the funding that the County's providing is, in fact, going towards programs as opposed to, you know, administrative items. This is a good system to kind of put a check on that and it forces us to take a look at it. There were at least ten, maybe more, organizations that were not meeting that threshold requirement. I have to say we have it down to two. You're one of the two, but you were able this year to get it down to 23 percent.

MR. CARPENTIERE:

And if we were more keen on allocating properly that percentage wouldn't have been --

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Right. And I appreciate your cooperation in working with the County on this. You know, it's a \$5,000 grant from the County. It's not an exorbitant amount of money, but nonetheless, the law is the law and we have to comply.

MR. CARPENTIERE:

And it does help the organization, you know, immensely.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Focus on that as well. All right. Is there anything else you would like to add?

MR. CARPENTIERE:

No. You know, just to reiterate that we are going to review the records for 2014 and make sure we allocated and go over it with the auditors so that when the financials are prepared we get the right percentages. We got the financials a little late this year, otherwise we would have been able to do it for 2013 in a more thorough area.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

All right. Legislator Stern has a question.

LEG. STERN:

Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. So you had the opportunity to work with the Comptroller's Office.

MR. CARPENTIERE:

Correct.

LEG. STERN:

And the Comptroller's Office had the opportunity to take a look at your specific numbers and you feel comfortable that going forward, based on I'm presuming the Comptroller's recommendations, that you are now well aware of what they're looking for --

MR. CARPENTIERE:

Absolutely.

LEG. STERN:

And will be able to meet the threshold going forward next year.

MR. CARPENTIERE:

Yeah, and what we're going to do is as the expenses come we're going to, you know, speak to the

Executive Director and make sure that we do have -- if there's any doubt as to whether it's an administrative or a program expense, make sure we get a better understanding of that. Because like I said, previously when in doubt we just turned it into administrative. So we definitely -- I feel we should have no problem with being in compliance.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

All right. And speaking of the Comptroller, Legislator Kennedy, did you have a question?

LEG. KENNEDY:

Oh, just a few. We've had an opportunity previously to see what the overall expenditures and things are, but quite candidly I can't remember that now, sir. This is a \$5,000 grant. What is your annual budget? Put this in perspective or frame a little border for me what we're looking at.

MR. QUEVEDO:

Our annual budget for general operations and program expense combined is around \$670,000 a year, and that's what our budget allows us to use through the year to operate the organization.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Mr. Chair, I don't recall, but in being compliant there are a couple of other parameters, I believe, that are involved with those groups as well. Not only the ratio for admin to programming, but we have some caps on salary lines and levels and things like that for organizations? A buck and a half or something? No, we don't have that?

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Not that I recall.

LEG. KENNEDY:

I thought we did. So I suspect that you do great work here and that, you know, we have similar types of organizations up here on the North Shore. As a matter of fact, I was just at Sweetbriar I think it's probably very analogous as far as giving children the opportunity to be exposed to nature, the nature trails and all those types of things, and, you know, I believe the Legislators wanting to support that type of continuance in the district, that all makes sense.

MR. QUEVEDO:

Well, just to reiterate a little bit, maybe it's not clear, but we did expand a lot of our programs to the public the last few years, so that also increased staff requirements in 2013 and in this year. So that could probably be a symbol of why administrative expenses are a little more this year than last year.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Again, we have had many groups in front of us and, you know, to be only over three percent seems like it's de minimus, although that's three percent out of an annual budget of 670,000. So we're talking about 6, 12, 18, what, roughly 20 grand, 20 grand that you're over. And how many -- what's your measure for delivery of service? Is it visitors or is it instructional?

MR. QUEVEDO:

It's combined.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Give me an idea, what are you doing in a year.

MR. QUEVEDO:

Well, we had about 11,000 visitors come through the museum in 2013. We cater to school groups, we cater to second homeowners out on the East End of Long Island. We do a marine science

summer program for the second year. We do after school programs for children who need a couple of more hours before their parents pick them up. We have, you know, a variety of renovation for program space at the museum.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Do you have a tuition for attendance? Is there like a fee?

MR. CARPENTIERE:

There is a \$7 admission for non-members, \$5 for -- \$7 for adults who are nonmembers, and \$5 for children under the age of 12, who are nonmembers. If they're a member -- a \$60 family membership for a year, that entitles children, parents, grandparents for one year to come to the museum and programs for free for the year. So for \$60 they can come for one year annually.

LEG. KENNEDY:

So you're active in your, you know, solicitation of admission revenues and you must cultivate other grants. Do you have private grants or community support?

MR. QUEVEDO:

We have an annual fundraiser each June and July that gives us probably about two-thirds of our budget for the year, and then we have small fundraisers, but the majority of our funding comes from small grants, museum memberships and private donations.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. All right. Thank you. I appreciate it. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Thank you, Legislator Kennedy. I have a copy of your handout here, the nature walks and workshops, January, February and March, very impressive, and I appreciate you giving us that information. So 23 percent, again, I appreciate that you are focused on that. That's off the form 990 we're talking about, right,

MR. CARPENTIERE:

Yes, that's correct.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

I think Legislator Stern made the point that going into next year you'll be more aware of what the County is looking for and how you need to budget in order to meet the criteria for County funding.

MR. CARPENTIERE:

Yes, we will, definitely.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

I'm going to ask the committee, since you're here now, if we can take this bill out of order. I'll offer a motion to do so. Is there a second? Legislator Martinez. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? That motion carries.

1434-14 - Approving County funding for a contract agency (South Fork Natural History Museum) is now before the committee. Based on the testimony that we've heard here today, what I would like to do is discharge this bill from the committee so it can go to a full vote on Tuesday in front of the Legislature. That would require, I believe it's a two-thirds vote, if I'm not mistaken. So what I would encourage you to do is to come back on Tuesday. The full Legislature will be in session. At that time the bill will be considered if we get it out of committee today.

I'll off a motion to discharge 1434 of 2014 without recommendation. Is there a second? Second by Legislator Kennedy. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? That motion carries. **(Vote: 5-0-0-1 Not Present: Legislator Stern)**

So now you'll at least get your full vote, which is required by the law that we're talking about. You'll get a full vote. You need two-thirds of the Legislature to get your funding approved. But if you come down and explain it to my colleagues I'm sure they'll be more than willing to listen to what you have to say.

MR. CARPENTIERE:

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Thank you. Okay. The next speaker is Marlene Gregory of VIBS. Marlene, welcome.

MS. GREGORY:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Thank you.

MS. GREGORY:

I have sent with one of the secretaries, it will be in your mailbox, a letter from me and my Executive Director. And I also wanted to give you all these posters that maybe you can put up somewhere as well. I need help with education and that's why I'm here today. My name is Marlene Gregory. I'm the Director of Rape Crisis and Community Services at VIBS Family Violence and Rape Crisis Center. The County Executive has recommended that our aid to victims of domestic violence funding be maintained at the 2014 level, which is five-hundred thirty-one thousand something-something. The Department of Social Services is now recommending for this funding to be reduced by 20,000. That's so concerning to us right now because that would mean that VIBS would no longer have community education and outreach services. As we have maintained funding cuts over the years while the demand for victim services has been constant, the agency prioritized maintaining direct services for victims and their children in order to keep them safe. And this has left us with only one full-time community educator. We used to have four; now we're down to one.

This staff person's role is to help young people in schools and colleges, professionals across the spectrum of disciplines and Suffolk County's members, learn how to identify signs of abuse, identify access services for themselves and loved ones, and most importantly, learn how to prevent abuse before it starts.

Our community education work includes Evidence Based Center for Disease Control and New York State Department of Health approved primary prevention programs. Like we do a 10-week mentors in violence prevention program with YouthBuild, which is college age young men. We also do a program of safety. It's in William Floyd School District, and there we are working on prevention. These take ten weeks to do.

Cases of domestic violence and sexual violence are making headlines nationally and locally, so it's clear that as a society we have a long way to go to help prevent violence. We are asking your help in doing it by supporting the County Executive's recommendation that VIBS funding for aid to victims of domestic violence be minimally maintained. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Okay. Thank you. Can I ask you, you said that it was reduced -- your organization's funding was

reduced by 20,000 in the budget that was just submitted by the County Executive?

MS. GREGORY:

It's the recommendation of the --

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Department of Social Services?

MS. GREGORY:

Department of Social Services.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

So that was recommended by the department, but the County Executive's budget submitted to the Legislature kept your funding at the 2013 -- '14 level?

MS. GREGORY:

Correct.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Okay. All right. Thank you.

MS. GREGORY:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Is there anyone else present who would like to address the committee this afternoon? For the record, there's no response.

We'll move to Tabled Resolutions.

Tabled Resolutions

1431-14 - Adopting Local Law No. -2014, A Charter Law to authorize Reserve Fund transfers (Pres. Off.). I'll offer a motion to table. Second by Legislator Stern. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **(Vote: 6-0-0-0)**

1433-14 - Approving County funding for a contract agency (Shinnecock Nation Cultural Center and Museum) (Schneiderman). This is another one of those bills where administrative expenses are exceeding the 20 percent threshold. This agency has not ever appeared before the committee or responded to our request to do so. I'll offer a motion to table. Second by Legislator Stern. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **(Vote: 6-0-0-0)**. 1434 of 2014 was already moved.

Introductory Resolutions

Under Introductory Resolutions, **1758-14 - Amending the 2014 Operating Budget to provide funding for the Post Morrow Foundation (Browning).** This is transferring \$5,000 in hotel/motel funds from the one civic association which lost its nonprofit status to this organization. I'll offer a motion to approve. Second by Legislator Stern. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **(Vote: 6-0-0-0)**

1771-14 - To readjust, compromise, and grant refunds and charge-backs on real property correction of errors by: County Legislature (Control No. 970-2014) (Co. Exec.). I'll offer a

motion to approve and place on the Consent Calendar. Second by Legislator Stern. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **(Vote: 6-0-0-0)**

1772-14 - To readjust, compromise, and grant refunds and charge-backs on real property correction of errors by: County Legislature (Control No. 971-2014)(Co. Exec.). Same motion, same second, and without objection, same vote. **(Vote: 6-0-0-0)**

1775-14 - To readjust, compromise, and grant refunds and charge-backs on real property correction of errors by: County Legislature (Control No. 972-2014)(Co. Exec.). Same motion, same second, and same vote. **(Vote: 6-0-0-0)**

1776-14 - To readjust, compromise, and grant refunds and chargebacks on correction or errors/County Treasurer by: County Legislature No. 412 (Co. Exec.). Same motion, same second, same vote. **(Vote: 6-0-0-0)**

1779-14 - To readjust, compromise, and grant refunds and chargebacks on correction or errors/County Treasurer by: County Legislature No. 413. Same motion, same second, same vote. **(Vote: 6-0-0-0)**

1780-14 - To readjust, compromise, and grant refunds and chargebacks on correction or errors/County Treasurer by: County Legislature No. 414 (Co. Exec.). Same motion, same second, same vote. **(Vote: 6-0-0-0)**

And the last is **1807-14 - To readjust, compromise, and grant refunds and charge-backs on real property correction of errors by: County Legislature (Control No. 973-2014)(Co. Exec.).** Same motion, same second, same vote. **(Vote: 6-0-0-0)**

1813-14 - Amending the 2014 Operating Budget to provide funding for Family Service League - East Hampton (Schneiderman). Again, this is a transfer from one organization to another. The resolution is offered by Legislator Schneiderman. I'll offer a motion to approve. Second by Legislator Stern. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **(Vote: 6-0-0-0)**

1819-14 - Creating a Taxpayer Protection and Notification Program (Cilmi). This directs the County Treasurer to create an e-mail directory of property owners who want to receive e-mail notices in advance of the January and May 31st property tax payment due date. It's my understanding on this bill that if the list is created it would be voluntary, where a taxpayer can get an e-mail notification that your taxes are due, but the failure of the County to make the notification would not result in any liability on the County's part with respect to paying the taxes.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Mr. Chair, I'm going to make a motion to approve on this bill, and I know that Legislator Cilmi has circulated his requested to all of us in the committee. And once again you hit on the salient points that Legislator Cilmi did work with the Treasurer, had the opportunity to find, you know, vet with her would this be something that would be able to be implemented, and she felt comfortable with it. And you know, again, with that caveat that this does nothing to waive or impact the requirement to timely pay taxes. So I think it makes sense.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Is that a motion, John? I'm sorry.

LEG. ANKER:

I'll second.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Motion to approve. Legislator Anker offers a second. Question from Legislator Stern.

LEG. STERN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps to BRO. Has there been any kind of a cost estimate?

MR. LIPP:

It would -- no, not really. It would be internal funds included in the Operating Budget already. So it's opportunity costs. There's nothing that we see right now as an additional cost.

LEG. STERN:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

All right. Any other questions? If not, there is a motion pending to approve the resolution. It's received a second. I'll call the vote. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries.
(Vote: 6-0-0-0)

1830-14 - Reducing Pipeline Debt by authorizing the County Comptroller and County Treasurer to close certain capital projects and transfer funds (Co. Exec.). This closes approximately \$80.1 million in capital projects and reduces our so-called pipeline debt. This was submitted after the work of the Debt Reduction Committee, and that committee selected the projects to be included within this particular bill. And, you know, before we get to a vote or a motion, just I'm going to ask Budget Review to just quickly explain to us exactly the effect of this bill, if any, it would have on our budget or on interest payments or what is the impact.

MR. LIPP:

Okay. So the capital closeout part is like almost 6.7 million, and that impacts revenue, actually it increases revenue. Basically the amounts that are closed out are approximately equal to what was in the 2014 budget. So if they weren't closed out then there would be a budget shortfall. So it's a good thing that we're doing this. You can create a budget hole by not adopting this in any sense.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

So that increases revenue.

MR. LIPP:

Correct. There's actual revenue codes for capital closeouts. Revenue Code 2954.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Those are projects that have been completed?

MR. LIPP:

Correct.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

And the residual amount.

MR. LIPP:

Yes, and the amendment here is -- require an explanation if it's above a certain threshold as to why it's being closed out. And the Executive's Budget Office, Nick Paglia in particular, who is their, their capital guru, is here if you have an specific questions on that stuff. Hi, Nick. The pipeline debt as we had in our capital review, the General Fund portion was 429.7 million in pipeline debt, and most of the remaining over 200 million of sewers comes over 600 million as overall pipeline debt. So this

helps to reduce that amount by a little over \$80 million.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Okay. So what we mean by pipeline debt are projects that were included in the Capital Budget, but have not received funding authorization.

MR. LIPP:

So actually what it is, is over prior years the Legislature adopted resolutions to appropriate the money, so that's in the pipeline debt. The Comptroller has authorization to actually issue bonds for and these are projects that we're saying let's rescind them so that will be prevented from happening.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

So the authorizing resolution has been passed.

MR. LIPP:

Correct.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

So theoretically the bonds could be issued because the authorizations are already in place.

MR. LIPP:

Correct.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

And that's what we call pipeline debt. We're not yet incurring interest on any of this because the bonds have not been issued, but they're ready to go.

MR. LIPP:

Exactly. Some of them are, you know, they're not ready to go, they're not going to happen. Others they actually could, but we're rescinding them so that won't happen.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

So by this one resolution, in effect, we would be rescinding all of the authorizing resolutions for all of the projects listed.

MR. LIPP:

Correct.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Does anyone have any questions?

LEG. KENNEDY:

Mr. Chair, if I can just make a comment, and a number of us sat in with that and worked on the efforts with the County Executive's Office to identify what were -- how many open projects, Robert? Several hundred I believe, right?

MR. LIPP:

I believe so.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Yeah. And, you know, to the County Executive's Office's credit, they came forward and identified projects and issues that they felt, you know, were now right for a second look. Of our time here we

have done this previously, but my recollection is that it was usually a reso that was near the end of the year and it would be something brought forward exclusively by the Administration. I believe this time was somewhat different with the degree to which we were all engaged and the work that the Presiding Officer did. So I definitely think we're on the right track and I'm going to ask to cosponsor it.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Okay. In looking at the list of projects that's included there is some explanation. Projects may have been completed or discontinued or not pursued. Joining us today is Legislator Krupski, who would also like to comment. Al, welcome.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Appreciate that. In going through the process of the Pipeline Debt Reduction Committee, and I was able to work with that committee, and I think it was a very good exercise working with everyone involved, including Budget Review and the County Executive's Budget people. There's one item here that I did advocate for keeping, and it's a Multifaceted Open Space Preservation Program. It's a little over -- well, it's 8.8 million. The reason I advocated for keeping it in play is because there's a parcel of land that has been on certainly the County's list for acquisition. It's an important environmental piece and now it is quite possibly active as far as preservation goes. Many attempts have been made in the past unsuccessfully, and now the parcel could be active. And I know that we're going to -- we're on the verge of borrowing another \$20 million for open space acquisitions.

However, to keep this money in play, and I'm only asking for it to keep it available for one year, because I'd had to lose the opportunity to preserve this parcel. And I'm not saying it's definite, but there is a possibility now, and if we could keep this money available for one more year at least we wouldn't lose that. Even though we're supposed to borrow the 20 million, we're obligated to, not necessarily that money is going to be available immediately. And that's why I would ask this committee to remove that one line of the multifaceted preservation line for 8.8 million and keep that available for one year for possible use.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Thank you, Legislator Krupski. What page is that on in the listing? Do you know offhand?

MR. LITTELL:

Three.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Yes, it's on page three. It's line 7177. And it doesn't -- 7177 231. It doesn't cost the County any money to keep that available for an extra year, it's just that at least you'd have that money in your pocket and if we decided that this parcel was appropriate for preservation, we could act on it. And I respect the work of the, you know, the committee and all, and we did have a long discussion at that Debt Reduction Committee. However, I just wanted to bring this up again. I didn't want to let this go that quickly and that easily because of -- well, because of recent developments with the parcel.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Right. In the comment section here it says discontinued program, but I don't know who is making that comment.

MR. LIPP:

That comment was put in there by the Executive's Budget Office.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Okay. Now, the parameters of this project are that the participating municipality has to put up 50 percent funding as well?

LEG. KRUPSKI:

No, that's the Legacy Program.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

So what you'd like to do is take that off the list, the Suffolk County Multifaceted Preservation Program.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

If we could take it off the list for a year and at that point in time, like I said, land preservation is a voluntary program. If this happens it would be -- it's a valuable parcel. There's no guarantees, but at least it's available. It would be available for us for a year.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Now, this is a bill that was sponsored by and brought by the County Executive. So I guess in order to accomplish that, well, first we would have to table this bill and have it revised or resubmitted somehow. I mean, it's not costing the County anything to keep the funding in place, and what you're saying is that if there's a parcel that becomes available where we could use this funding as opposed to other funding, you'd prefer to use this funding.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

I'm not saying I would prefer to use this funding. This just gives us more flexibility.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Mr. Chair, can I weigh in here for a moment? Legislator Krupski does make good points. As a matter of fact, we vetted this out when the committee talked at length and, in fact, as we went through project by project and item by item, we did basically go with a straw vote. The balance of the folks that were on the committee felt that notwithstanding the arguments that Legislator Krupski brought forward in an effort to try to get to a level or a number that actually had some impact on what overall is, as we all know now, a \$2.2 billion debt level, ultimately the majority felt that we should take it out.

That's not to say that I think that we don't have an overall ultimate commitment to purchase property, that sensitive property or critical property to keep. We've done it time and time again and we've done it through a variety of different mechanisms. But when all was said and done in the committee, we basically did a thumbs up or thumbs down. So while I applaud Legislator Krupski for continuing to make the case and to bring the argument forward, there was that additional process that did go on with the Working Group.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Okay. Is there anyone else who would like to add anything on that? I don't really see the harm in keeping the funding available as long as it's not at taxpayer expense, so I don't have an issue with that. I mean, in effect, we had a budget -- we had a committee that looked at all of this. There's one out of several pages of projects that are being deleted that have already received authorization. There's one project that maybe would be utilized and not discontinued. I would be willing to keep that in there by taking it off the list. But in order to do that, we would have to table this resolution today. So I would be willing to offer a motion to table.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Can I ask -- so let me just see procedurally. If we were to want to be able to move this in this next

cycle, then ultimately what we would be doing is, is asking, I guess, the County Executive's Office. We're beyond the point for amendment, George? What's our amendment deadline?

MR. NOLAN:

It was Monday.

LEG. KENNEDY:

We passed it, okay. So then I guess pragmatically we would be looking at table, but I would be more inclined to table if, in fact, we had at least some inquiry to the Exec's Office to see if they would be willing to go ahead and amend and bring forward a revised CN.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Thank you. That was going to be my suggestion, if everyone is comfortable with this, that we could go with a CN on Tuesday, just to remove this one line and vote on the rest of the package.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Well, would there be --

MR. NOLAN:

I would just mention, I guess there was a committee that was formed that recommended these cuts or these removals.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Yes.

MR. NOLAN:

So I don't know if there would be -- the Presiding Officer would want to reconvene that committee or not, but I think that's an additional reconsideration.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

That's fair.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Yeah, but what's going to change?

LEG. KENNEDY:

Nothing.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

You know, I think at this point the committee made its recommendations but they're just that, and they're subject to legislative approval and acceptance or even modification. So the question, however, to the Administration would be whether or not there is any flexibility or consideration of removing that one program from this list.

MR. VAUGHN:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would offer perhaps another suggestion or a compromise, and the compromise that I would offer to Legislator Krupski would be this. I would be more than happy to go back to the Administration and found out how we feel about removing this one item. The item does not impact the revenue portion of the resolution, the six point something million dollars that Dr. Lipp referred to.

But at the same token, Legislator Krupski, I know that we do discharge petitions. Maybe there would be a way for you to see if a majority of the people who sat in on that Commission would be

willing to sign something that they agree with, with your position on removing this one item, seeing as that this was the work of people who came together as a committee. So I would be happy to bring this back to the Administration if you would also pledge to please go forward and see how the rest of the committee members feel at this point in time about removing this one item.

You're right, Legislator D'Amaro. This is something that is being asked for consideration. If there's a way to discharge this without recommendation to allow everybody to kind of go back and continue doing some additional inquiries on this we would certainly appreciate that. And if everybody could come to an agreement I think perhaps a Certificate of Necessity could be generated in order to kind of go forward with this on Tuesday.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Thank you. That's a very good suggestion, and that does pay the proper respect that's due to the committee that worked on the pipeline debt.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Would that impact our ability to go ahead and vote for it on Tuesday.

MR. VAUGHN:

Legislator Kennedy, what I'm saying is this. We have the measure in front of us as it stands, which represents the culmination of work from everybody.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Yes.

MR. VAUGHN:

My thought would be this, that if Legislator Krupski can speak with the committee members and see if there has been a change of heart, I will go back to the Administration and do the same. If there is a consensus, then we will bring -- then we can bring forward a Certificate of Necessity to amend it at that time. I'd ask that it be discharged without recommendation because if it is the will of all those parties involved that no, we had an agreement and we think the agreement should stand, we would at least like the opportunity to vote on the legislation as it is on Tuesday.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. Thank you, Tom. So then, Mr. Chair, I guess what I'll do is I'll make that motion to discharge without recommendation. And Legislator Krupski, three of the seven committee members are actually sitting here right now. You know, that's a pretty quick conversation I guess you could have, right?

LEG. KRUPSKI:

That's why I'm here.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okie doke.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Well, what's interesting here is that once again it's the dilemma of the up or down vote, the take it or leave it, very similar to what we do with other budgets, the Operating Budget. You know, if it's the culmination of this committee that came up with this, and they did great work and I understand that, but, you know, speaking for myself and not Legislator Krupski, if I had issue with four projects on that list, again, I'm being told take it or leave it on recommendations, nothing certainly -- the work of that committee was not binding, but yet we're put in a position of perhaps not supporting the committee's work because of one line item in that particular bill.

So as a result of that, if we discharge this without recommendation and then the committee -- I mean, I guess what you're going to do is speak to the committee members and see if you get a consensus. So in effect what you're doing is you're asking the committee and then the Legislature to amend the resolution. I'm just trying to understand the Executive's standpoint here. In other words, you stand behind the bill, but you are willing to amend it if what; what needs to happen.

MR. VAUGHN:

Legislator D'Amaro, to be clear, I have only promised to bring Legislator Krupski's concerns back across the street to say -- and to illuminate what he's asked for. I don't think that it's fair -- I did not sit on the committee. Both Deputy County Executive Jon Schneider and our Budget Director, Connie Corso sat on the committee. So I really do need to speak with them.

We do stand behind the bill as it is today. If there is a willingness or a desire to see that legislation amended because it does not impact the six million dollars worth of revenue, we are willing to entertain those conversations as a courtesy to both -- to Legislator Krupski. We feel that -- my only point on asking for him to please speak to the rest of the committee is that I don't think that it is fair, as I said before, I did not sit on the committee. I don't think it's fair for us to pledge that we would change the work of the committee based on the fact that -- I don't think it's fair for me to pledge to change the work of the committee based on the fact that these were their recommendations.

P.O. GREGORY:

If I may, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Yes, Presiding Officer.

P.O. GREGORY:

I only caught part of the conversation. I know Legislator Krupski has some concerns about the Legacy Funding and that's what we're talking about?

MR. NOLAN:

Multifaceted.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Multifaceted.

P.O. GREGORY:

Multifaceted? Okay. If I may speak generally for the committee, there was support to include both of those programs, the Multifaceted and the Legacy, into the resolution and that was -- stems out of a commitment from the Capital Program where we increased spending over the recommended budget by 30 million. Legislator Kennedy and myself had a conversation about establishing a bipartisan committee to review our pipeline debt, which we would try to target the reduction of \$30 million or more of pipeline debt to -- so that our overall debt would be -- remain at 2014 levels or 2013 levels. To our surprise, we came up with 80 million.

Separate and apart from that, my discussions with Dick Amper, with some of the conversations that we had regarding the referendum, I told him that there is a hesitancy to increase pipeline debt. The Legacy and the Multifaceted Programs have been used for some years, and that we were going to be establishing the committee in looking to eliminate the programs. Obviously, of course, he was against that, but I think I would be violating my commitment to him to include either one of those programs, because if the referendum fails, you know, they're going to be taken care of, for lack of a better, you know, term. We're going to have increased deficit or, excuse me, increased pipeline

debt if these funds remain in our -- on our books. So, you know, I would encourage the committee to pass this out or discharge it if you are not comfortable with it, but to leave the resolution intact with Legacy and the Multifaceted Programs. Thank you.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Mr. Chair, maybe if I can chime in and then we could yield to Legislator Krupski. You know, your point is well taken that yes, what we're looking at is a microcosm of what we really are forced to do many times, and that's why I referenced what we did previously in the committee, and Legislator Krupski acknowledged that. But it does occur to me that preservation of land is one of those, I don't know, a complex task that we attempt to be, you know, get to promote on occasion and I don't know -- I would be willing to consider, if I heard a little bit more about what this particular parcel is. As a matter of fact, and I have shared this with Legislator Krupski. I'm disinclined to commit to buy anything more. Agricultural rights, I'm inclined to support, but I'm of the mind now that we've probably purchased -- well, let me stop there. I just think that maybe there's a little more to hear here that we may not be able to do in this fashion. Maybe we need to hear it in Executive Session. I don't know.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Thank you. And again, I do respect the work of the committee, and we did have a lengthy discussion about this and we did have a vote on this line, and I don't think we had a vote on any other line, but -- on any other item here. But --

P.O. GREGORY:

Yeah, we did.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Did we?

P.O. GREGORY:

The precinct.

LEG. KENNEDY:

That's right.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Okay. But as far as -- and this is -- the only reason I'm bringing this up is because, and I rarely advocate for borrowing money for either open space or farmland preservation, and I have been involved in land preservation for a long time and I have a lot of experience in that and I think a lot of success, but the other times that I've advocated borrowing for open space were large waterfront parcels. One on Peconic Bay and one on Long Island Sound, because those are parcels that, you know, once lost would never be available to the public. And because this is land preservation I can't mention the parcel or its location. All I can tell you is that it's a, you know, it's an important parcel, it's waterfront and it's -- I'm not advocating to keep this money to borrow it just to buy anything. I'm advocating it just because of this one specific parcel. And like I said before, this might happen, it might not happen, it's a voluntary program. But if we have this, it just keeps our options open.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Okay. Well, you know, I tend to agree with Legislator Krupski. I mean, these are projects that are -- were approved as a matter of policy by the Legislature. They went into effect. The authorizing resolutions were passed for the bonding, which was 12 votes or more, in order to authorize the bonding for it. And even though there's a note here, discontinued program, the fact is that the policy considerations for each of these programs has already gone forward, already been voted on, already been approved. And I'm not comfortable, then, with delegating the authority to

rescind approved projects approved by County Government down to a committee, and then making those recommendations and then being told that it's an up or down vote and you can't pick what projects you agree with or disagree with. I think just based on that principle alone I would prefer to just table this bill.

We have a sitting Legislator here telling us for an authorized and approved project that's already received policy debate and considerations and then passed through the Legislature, that there is specific property in mind that would fit into the parameters of this program. I think the policy decision is way past. I think we've already made that decision and I would like to give him the opportunity, and that district the opportunity to take advantage of a policy and a program that's already been approved.

So I'm not comfortable with having the up or down vote precisely for this reason. It doesn't provide any flexibility with respect to whether or not this can be taken off the list, other than to go and reconvene the committee, I guess, and talk about it some more. But if the committee already voted once, I don't know that a week or two later that anything is going to change. I think ultimately it's not so much about reconvening the committee, it's ultimately now about 18 Legislators deciding whether or not they believe all of these programs should be discontinued and deauthorized, for lack of a better term.

So with that said, was there a motion to discharge without recommendation? Did that receive a second, to the Clerk.

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

No.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

It did not. Is there a second on that motion?

LEG. TROTTA:

Second.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Legislator Trotta.

P.O. GREGORY:

Mr. Chair, if I may.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Yes, Mr. Presiding Officer.

P.O. GREGORY:

I understand your concern. This is an opportunity for us to send a serious message to the taxpayers of Suffolk County that we're looking at our debt, we're looking to reduce our pipeline debt and that we take our operating expenses very seriously. Eighty million dollars is nothing to sneeze at. This is a serious message that we're going to send to the taxpayers. I have spoken to Legislator Krupski about this several times. Given the nature of the type of funding, you know, if there is a -- you know, we could look at, you know, by case-by-case basis. Because it's a bond fund you can always put up a resolution and ask the Legislature to bond it at a future point.

If I can go back in history, I mean, this fund is not -- has not been used for some time. The County Executive Levy was proposing to use this, to switch the purpose of this funding so we can buy the IRS building if you remember four years ago, which the majority of this Legislature had supported if

it weren't for some hang up, and I forget what it was. So we've looked at that. We've reevaluated this particular program and, you know, so we're just kind of following through on that. And, you know, I just -- I think it's clear that, you know, going forward with this bill would send the right message, given the fiscal climate, so I ask for everyone's support.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Okay. So there is a motion to discharge without recommendation and it has received a second; correct?

MS. GELLERSTEIN:

Yes.

CHAIRMAN D'AMARO:

Okay. And I'll call the vote. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. The bill is discharged without recommendation. **(Vote: 7-0-0-0 - Presiding Officer Gregory is included in the vote)**

The last resolution on the agenda is resolution **1846-14 - Amending the 2014 Operating Budget to provide funding for the Children's Museum of the East End and the Parrish Art Museum (Schneiderman)**. This bill was amended to change the title. I'll offer a motion to approve, second by Legislator Stern. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **(Vote: 7-0-0-0 - Presiding Officer Gregory is included in the vote)**

There's no further business before the committee today. We are adjourned. Thank you.

(*The meeting was adjourned at 1:39 p.m. *)