

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HIGHER EDUCATION

and

ENERGY COMMITTEE

of the

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Minutes

A regular meeting of the Economic Development, Higher Education & Energy Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York, on Wednesday, December 13, 2006.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Legislator Wayne Horsley - Chairman
Legislator Rick Montano - Vice-Chair
Legislator Tom Barraga
Legislator Jon Cooper
Legislator Lynne Nowick

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

George Nolan - Counsel to the Legislature
Joe Schroeder - Budget Review Office
Joe Muncey - Budget Review Office
Rich Baker - Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
Ben Zwirn - County Executive's Office
Carolyn Fahey - Economic Development
Charles Stein - Suffolk Community College
George Gatta - Suffolk Community College
James Morgo - Commissioner - Economic Development
Robert Gaffney - President of Dowling College
All other interested parties

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Donna Catalano - Court Stenographer

[THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER, SALUTATION AND INTRODUCTION OF PRESENTATION OF MR. GAFFNEY WAS COMMENCED OFF THE RECORD]

MR. GAFFNEY:

-- there's nothing more important that I have to do today or any day than addressing the Suffolk County Legislature. I wanted first to share a few, you know, personal reflections with you, because as many of you probably know, I had never had much of a connection with an academic -- other than being County Executive and having overall responsibility for Suffolk County Community College. My interaction with colleges and universities had been somewhat limited.

And so when the opportunity arose to become President of Dowling College, I thought the first thing I need to do is fully emersed myself in a culture and an environment that's different than what I'm used to. It's been about ten weeks now, and I have to tell you, that started out as a tentative process to learn about a world that I was not that familiar with, has turned into, in many ways, a love affair with a institution that has renewed a lot of -- and inspired a lot of additional interests that I had not thought about for a while about the economy of Suffolk County.

One of things that this process has stimulated for me is a renewed -- a renewed look at the relationship between education, higher education and the economy of Long Island. As many of you know, Long Island has been through a number of cycles through the years and has always managed to come -- come through them looking very well. It's perhaps the most interesting dynamic, creative and regenerating economy of any place until the country. It's the kind of economy that could reinvent itself after the loss of the defense industry. It's the kind of economy that when people were told in this, you know, business community that when people were told it would take ten years to redevelop, they did it in five.

It's a very, very interesting economic climate in Suffolk County. And in many ways, if Dowling College didn't exist, Long Island and Suffolk County would have had to almost invent it, because Dowling College I have learned is so much a reflection of the people of Suffolk County, so much a reflection of the economic ability of the power of the Long Island economy. It's the place where so many Long Island leaders have gotten their MBA, where over 5000 teachers have gotten their certificates, their Doctorates, their Masters Degree.

It has quite through the years been an incredible resource for the Long Island community, particularly in Suffolk County. As I said, 80% of our graduates stay in Suffolk County. Now, why is that significant? Because we're all steeped in this process of how as a result of the lack of affordable housing, any number of impediments or disincentives for growth on Long Island, young people have found it a difficult place to live. So we're in the process of experiencing a brain drain.

I have to tell you that one of the things that jumped out at me in my experience in these last ten weeks with Dowling is that we're in many ways the cure for the brain drain. The students who come to Dowling learn great skills, learn the kinds of things that they need to be the leaders of this economy, the leaders of this region, and they don't go elsewhere. Many of us, myself included, have sent children to colleges outside of this region and watched them not return. You know, it's a very disconcerting process for those of us who are, for instance, baby boomers or a little bit older. You know, it's not great to be visiting your grandchildren by plane. It's nice to be able to have them in the region.

So it's a problem that's being felt at all different levels. And certainly as the Vice-Chairman of the Long Island Housing Partnership, I'm uniquely aware of what the problem is and how it's developing and many of the solutions to it. And I would suggest to you that colleges like Suffolk Community College and Dowling College are in many ways the brightest -- you know, our best opportunity to reverse that process.

I told somebody recently that the John Cannis, the next Chuck Dolan, you know, the Charles Wang

are probably already born. They may well be living in Suffolk County. And for all we know, they're right now attending Suffolk Community College or Dowling College, and we need to nurture that. This region produces some of the most determined, some of the most creative, imaginative and entrepreneurial people of any place in the country. But we need to nurture that, and we need to keep as many of them here as possible.

For those of us who have been engaged in economic development issues, and I see my former colleague from County Government, George Gatta, who's now at Suffolk Community College, we know as well as anybody that this region have thrived because of the skill, the determination and the ability of its business economy. You know, we in many ways are an imperialist economic, And I'll explain that, a colonial economy, if you will. Long Island has never grown by having people or businesses move here. Nobody moves to taxes, nobody moves to transportation issues, nobody moves to areas where there are affordable housing issues.

We have grown because we've developed companies that are so skilled and leaders that are so skilled, using a workforce that's the best in the world. And we've been able to grow. And businesses that can compete anywhere in the world, those businesses then reach out and by divisions, the buy -- they go out and by virtue of their ability to compete economically so well, they acquire things and bring them back. Now, that's essentially what a colonial power, an imperialist power used to do historically.

So in many ways, our ability to continue to thrive is directly dependent upon our ability to continue to do that. In order to do that, you can't export all of the young people that are so important to create that kind of a climate. And Dowling in many ways is the institution that understand it, that's geared to deal with that, that can take a young person and get him a Bachelors Degree in Applied Mathematics, in English, in Science, can create the teachers, the doctors, the business leaders that this region is going to need in the future, in fact, that it needs now. And we can participate with institutions like Suffolk County Community College and all of the other colleges, who for the most part, educate the students of Long Island, the students of Suffolk County and turn them back into -- into the business community, into the education community, into the health sciences community so they can continue that growth process.

So for me, the examination of what Dowling College is has renewed a lot of my interests and a lot of my contacts in the economic development area, because I happen to think it's perhaps the most or one of the most affective economic development tools available to the people of Suffolk County. And with that, certainly, you know, you may have read that we've developed another program at Dowling College, the Long Island Institute for Economic and Social Policy. It's going to be headed by Marty Cantor, a former Suffolk County Commissioner of Economic Development, economist and a frequent commentator on both the economic and social climate in Suffolk County and Nassau County as well.

We're in the midst of an effort to be more relevant to our economy, more relevant to the -- to the community and to be part of a decision making process and be a resource for Suffolk County Government, to be a resource for our educational community and to be the kind of a college that doesn't just talk about things that need to be done, but that actually gets its hands dirty, that goes in and gets involved in the major issues that confront a region like this. That's what our plan is to do.

Now, in furtherance of some of those things, we have had contacts over the last several weeks with the Town of Islip and the Town of Brookhaven in an effort to make -- to create synergies between Dowling College and those governmental -- those municipalities. So we're talking to Brian Foley and the people at the Town of Brookhaven about how we can participate in and be part of the economic redevelopment of the William Floyd corridor, how Dowling College and its athletic fields can be shared with the community as a community resource, and how we can be a more fully integrated process, how we can be part of the solution to solving some of the economic and social issues in a very -- in a community that hasn't always thought as well of itself perhaps as it ought to. So we

want to be part of that.

We've also spoken to people from the Town of Islip, and with their Planning Director. I have a meeting scheduled new supervisor. And what we want to talk about is how Dowling College can be the linchpin in the economic redevelopment in many ways of the Oakdale corridor, how we can be part of a community redevelopment program that could create a downtown for Oakdale from the railroad station along both sides of Montauk Highway down into Dowling College, how we can create something that's unique and special that doesn't really now exist. And that's a community interrelated with its college, a community that has the resources of a college that's adjacent to it. The cultural affairs matter -- the Cultural Affairs Programs shared with the community, dealing with planners, creating a walkable and a modern community that includes elements of all of the things that people from Sustainable Long Island, Vision Long Island have long talked about, and how we can make it happen in Oakdale. Those are meetings that are coming up.

We're going to be participating with Vision Long Island in a visioning session on how to join the community of Oakdale, Dowling College and municipality together in creating something that needs to be created, and it would benefit everybody. So we haven't been sitting around pondering the esoteric academic issues alone, although in order to be involved fully as a college with all of the things we want to be involved in, we need to have a good product. And one of things that has come out of my emerging in Dowling's culture and its academic process is a whole new awareness of just how good we are at what we do. It's an incredible resource.

We have the ability to take students who in some cases might not have been in the top third of their high school class, but who are able, intelligent, may not have yet found out exactly what it is they want to do, and we can focus them, we can -- to the extent that they didn't get everything from high school that maybe they should have, we can do that too. And we can take this raw material, and again, create and nurture the John Cannis, the next -- the next person or the next group of people who will lead this County and this region to the places where even now we probably can't imagine it will go. So that's the Dowling story in a way.

And what I'm here today to suggest to you is that we want to work with you to accomplish our mutual goals. We all know that certain kinds of academic programs are more adaptable, are more necessary, that are more commensurate with the kinds of jobs and skills that are needed in today's economy. So we've instituted a program leading to a Bachelors Degree in Applied Mathematics. We have got Science Degrees, we have a curricular that's geared to do the kinds of things that this region is going to need. And what I'm offering today is to work with you and to work with Suffolk County Community College to provide dramatically reduced tuition, which we will be able to accommodate by obtaining independent grants for those kinds of studies.

We're looking to the Legislature. Think about whether, in fact, Suffolk County would like to participate in a program where we could provide reduced tuition opportunities to people going into those areas that we as a region will need the most. We will match any money in privately raised grants that the County would be willing to put into a program like that. There are ways to even insure that the people who benefit from such reduced tuition programs will stay in the community, much like the old {Perkins} process.

We can make sure that our teachers who learn Math and Science -- and there's a desperate need for Math and Science teachers. You can't produce a fully evolved and complete economy unless the young people know Math and Science and languages. And it's hard to get those kind of teachers. The competition is enormous. We're willing to work with you and Suffolk County Community College to create a process that encourage those, even to provide benefits as long as they stay in Suffolk County. These are some of the things that we'd like to explore with you.

And I guess in summation, one of the things that I have learned as all of you have learned in your years of public service, and going back from public to private services, is that Suffolk County, Long Island is littered with dots. They're all over. And someone needs to connect them. I think this

college is in a unique position to take a lot of those dots that are out there that are not being as productive maybe and create those synergies and those programs and those opportunities to make Long Island a better place and to make us able to compete in the rest of this century and the centuries to come.

So that's what I've been doing for the last ten weeks. It's the most exciting thing I've ever done. It began almost as an academic experience and turned into a love affair, a passion if you will, because it touches on all the things that have always been important to me; affordable housing, economic development, the continued growth of this region, and has reminded me to the extent I may have forgotten just how special Long Island is, how competitive, how unique, how creative and what an amazing place it is to live in.

There are a lot of people who don't go away to college. There are a lot of people who go back to get their advanced degrees at a later date. And they stay on Long Island because they know what we know. There's no place like it. And we want to be the college for that kind of community. So thank you. And if there's anything that we as a college can ever do for you in assisting in research or anything that the County needs or you individually as Legislators need, don't hesitate to call. We want to be part of this process. Everybody there is invested fully in the growth and development and the success of this region. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Sure. Legislator Nowick.

LEG. NOWICK:

Hi, Bob. How are you. How nice to hear to from you. Your enthusiasm is wonderful. And let's hope that one of these young people who are out there become the next Bob Gaffney. Why not?

MR. GAFFNEY:

Actually, I'd like them to become the next John Kennedy.

LEG. NOWICK:

You know, you were talking --

MR. GAFFNEY:

We need the business leadership too.

LEG. NOWICK:

But you know what? Everything falls together. I don't know that you can discuss this, but you were talking about the affordability of the college and trying to get grants and maybe bringing down tuition. What is the average tuition per -- I'll say per year at Dowling College?

MR. GAFFNEY:

Seventeen thousand dollars.

LEG. NOWICK:

What is it?

MR. GAFFNEY:

Seventeen thousand dollars.

LEG. NOWICK:

Oh, I thought you said 70.

MR. GAFFNEY:

Oh, no. No.

LEG. NOWICK:

Seventeen thousand per year. And then if they -- of course, room and board is -- would be -- there are dormitories?

MR. GAFFNEY:

That's part of that.

LEG. NOWICK:

That's part of that? That's not bad actually.

MR. GAFFNEY:

Our tuition is sort of in the mid range. Long Island University is slightly higher, St. Joseph's is slightly lower. But the thing that we're prepared to do and commit to is to go out -- and I will independently raise whatever money I need to do from private sources and individuals who care deeply as all of you do about the strength of the Long Island economy and the growth of this region and match whatever funds are available from governmental sources with a view toward focusing entirely on creating and teaching the skills that will be needed in the years to come. So Math, Foreign Languages, Science -- the harder -- you know, the things that the business community will be looking for and that will provide the skills so that we can continue to compete in a global environment. So we're prepared to make that kind of a commitment to match those kinds of -- whatever money comes from other sources.

LEG. NOWICK:

Well, you're even going further than the tuition compared to a lot of other schools is very reasonable.

MR. GAFFNEY:

I would hate to think that there's a young man out there or a young woman who would like to pursue a career in Applied Mathematics, Science and technology, and because of their inability to access the kinds of money, they don't have that opportunity or an opportunity that -- or they defer that opportunity to a later time, and then with the pressures of raising a family and all of the -- they never get to do that. And that's a resource that could have been put to work for us in helping us be competitive. I hate to see --

LEG. NOWICK:

I think one of the most important things for you as a college, not that this is what we were talking about, but you're on the subject, is to make it known, this is how you can afford this college, this is what there is out there, this is important. And again, and I understand what you are saying, your love of college, what you've learned. I think since I've been here as a Legislator, that Suffolk Community College has become a love of mine, having seen what they have done. And where ever I go, I manage to tell people, "Don't forget Suffolk County Community College, because it's wonderful." So I understand what you are saying.

MR. GAFFNEY:

Absolutely. In my presentation, whenever I mention Dowling, I usually mention Suffolk County Community College, because --

LEG. NOWICK:

Absolutely. Two wonderful institution.

MR. GAFFNEY:

-- probably the single largest -- one of places where most or a large number of Suffolk County Community graduates go upon finishing their two year program is to Dowling College.

LEG. COOPER:

Funny, they never mention you.

MR. GAFFNEY:

No. They forgot. No. The fact is that we're involved and just completed discussions with the college to provide seamless arrangements where we have joint and shared programs, so that when you start at Suffolk County Community College, upon finishing there, you go directly to Dowling and finish with a Dowling degree.

LEG. NOWICK:

And that's important too, because people that need --

MR. GAFFNEY:

It's critically important.

LEG. NOWICK:

-- you know, a few credits for their Master's Degree may could go to Dowling at night or whatever and them transfer them over. So I wish you lots of luck. I think that Dowling College is very fortunate to have you and your enthusiasm.

MR. GAFFNEY:

Thank you. You know, one of the things about that relationship with Suffolk County Community College, I probably know as much as about it as many people do, because of the involvement that I had from a budgetary -- you know, and it was always an important process, an importance priority for the County Executive's Office to make sure that the college could -- was everything that it could be. And it has become a wonderful institution.

And it's our hope that every student who wants to go to college, some will go to Suffolk Community College, and that's wonderful, some may start directly at Dowling, and that's wonderful too. But the fact is we share the same mission, we share the same purpose. We have the same goals. And we actually proceed on parallel paths to producing the same results. And I look forward to working far more closely with Suffolk Community College than perhaps Dowling has in the past. And we're in the process of doing that.

LEG. NOWICK:

Great. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Thank you. Thank you very much, Legislator Nowick. Bob, it certainly is -- the comment about the brain drain and how we are going to preserve our young people to -- being that baby boom generation that you speak of and having my children some in California and elsewhere, I understand. And I appreciate that.

So the next step would be for -- to make this marriage between Suffolk Community, Suffolk County and Dowling is to meet at some future date, possibly you would be willing to put that together to make sure that all of us -- and certainly members of this committee would like to participate in that -- in that quest for -- to see if the synergies work.

The other question I had -- that I had, I know that you have reached out to Brookhaven as well as you've reached out to Islip Town, and I understand that you've had conversations with Suffolk. In your -- in your vision of where the school is going, I know you have the Shirley Campus, do you see -- do you see any synergies working with the County of Suffolk of how the two can work together as -- in future possibilities?

MR. GAFFNEY:

Absolutely. You know, we all have the same objectives and the same goals. And, in fact, I've met with Jim Morgo and with Tom Isles in connection with the impending RFP process for the

development of the Yaphank area. Now, that's basically in our backyard. I mean, we're not far from there in our Brookhaven Campus. And we're in the process, we just did the groundbreaking, for a series of athletic fields and an athletic complex. It would be our hope that we can share those facilities with the Town of Brookhaven and with the County and that we can develop and explore synergies that might exist in some of the County's plan for the Yaphank area.

There's a desire on the part of the County, as I understand it, to create recreational and athletic facilities for community purposes. Well, you know, a college in that area can provide synergies that need to be explored. For instance, if it's the intent of the County to build an arena, we can -- we can keep the lights on in that arena and make it more profitable more often. We could use that as a home field. We could create athletic programs to full utilize it. We can bring people in. We can make county -- County projects more profitable. We can make a difference on whether a project is profitability or not. So we've explored those kinds of options with the County.

And, in fact, as a result of my meetings with Jim Morgo and Tom Isles, the RFP process that's going out at this point for the Yaphank, of the 11 people who are receiving those, who have expressed further interest, they are being requested to, as part of their proposal, suggest how a college might be able to -- not Dowling College, but a college, it is -- we're not the only college in Suffolk County -- but to suggest how a college might be integrated into the planning process for the benefit of the community, how a college's sports programs could be used, again, to enhance or make possible athletic or recreational opportunities that might not otherwise exist, but for those synergies. So that's part of it at this point. When that RFP goes out, it will keep -- it will have that piece.

Now that's wonderful for us, because that means people will want to come to us and say, "Would you be interested in working with us to develop that kind" -- and that's a home run for us. But more importantly, it's a home run for Suffolk County, because it creates opportunities to develop programs and resources that, but for that, would not be available. So we think that we can play an important role in helping the County -- the County achieve its objectives in the development of the Yaphank property. And we think that that process is one that we are very much anxious to proceed with. I think that's it.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

That's well put. And thank you very much for those comments. And good luck in the RFP process. We wish you the best in that, because we as a group are always looking forward to working with Higher Education. Legislator Cooper.

LEG. COOPER:

Hi, Bob. You had spoken about plans by Dowling to -- goals set to dramatically reduce your tuition rate, and I was wondering whether you saw the feature article -- it was either in Time this week or Newsweek -- but they had an article on a different approach that's being taken by many colleges across the country where instead of reducing tuition, in an effort to attract more students, they've actually dramatically increased base tuition rates, and they've offset that with increased scholarships, either merit-based scholarships or income-based scholarships. And what they found -- what these colleges found was that there are many people that think that the higher priced colleges are necessarily higher quality colleges. And if they're lower priced, therefore, they can't be very good. And they profiled a number of colleges, small, medium-sized colleges in particular, across the country that dramatically increased their tuition rates, 50%, 100%, and they found -- it sounds counterintuitive -- but they found that enrollment dramatically increased. So what is the approach that you're envisioning -- I know you've only been there eight weeks, but what is your --

MR. GAFFNEY:

We've had these discussions, I am familiar with it. And it's an interesting concept, because people want to be part of something that's selective, that's expensive. So if you wanted to buy a car, and if you could buy a Mercedes that retailed for \$80,000 but you could get it for 30,000, that's a deal. You know, if you were going to get -- a lot of -- that's the college's way of marketing a process. What we're talking here is the same concept.

We're not going to be saying, you know, our tuition is not less, but we will provide tuition assistance, which would reduce the actual tuition cost. I probably could have been clearer in the way I -- we're not going to reduce Dowling College's tuition, we're going to provide assistance through aid funded by grants and other things so that part of their tuition is reduced. They're getting the same -- they are not getting a reduced cut-rate education, they're getting the same education, but they're paying less, because others are picking up some of the cost. It's essentially the same thing that we are talking about.

LEG. COOPER:

But as you said, and that's exactly the point of the article, that's there's a perception out there that they're getting a better deal, and therefore, they're more likely to want to attend that college. I'm glad you're taking that approach.

MR. GAFFNEY:

In many ways, what that article was talking about was almost a collegiate form of bait and switch -- not bait and switch, but they're raising the price artificially, but then dramatically reducing what the actual cost to the person is by supplementing with aid. Now, the fact is when you see college tuition at 30 to \$40,000 a year, take a look at how many people are actually paying that. There's a limited number of people who are paying that. The vast majority of it are paying significantly less because they're accessing financial aid in a whole range of issues. You know, some of them -- if you have SATs over a certain percent, a certain level, you will get a President Scholarship of \$10,000.

What people pay and what the list price is dramatically different. However, if there's someone who doesn't fall into those areas where they're still -- where they're not getting that dramatic aid for either scholarships or other forms, and they are paying the full list price, well, for a college, that's not a bad thing. You know, that leaves more money. And the people who are paying the full tuition are subsidizing everybody else who isn't, and that's the intent of the process so that colleges can go out and recruit some of the better students who would not be able to afford it otherwise. It kind of skews the numbers, because very few people paying are that top number anywhere.

LEG. COOPER:

And another point that -- well, I'm certainly going to now apply for a scholarship for my daughter who is applying right now to college. I didn't do it for my son, but now I'll have no qualms whatsoever applying. And, now I've got thrown off track. Thanks, Lynne. Jeez, what was the point I was going to make?

MR. GAFFNEY:

About your daughter coming to Dowling.

LEG. COOPER:

No, unfortunately, she wants to move off Long Island.

MR. GAFFNEY:

Well, hopefully, for all of our sakes, comes back after she gets her education. All of them don't.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

The brain drain.

LEG. COOPER:

I had another great question, but.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

While you think about it, Legislator Barraga.

LEG. BARRAGA:

While Jon is thinking about that great question he wants to ask, I would hope, Bob, in your interaction with different levels of government, one of things you have to make sure you feel comfortable with is that a particular level of government is supportive for additional education for its public employees. I mean, there are certain levels of government, you know, the way they're structured, especially at the State level, specifically in the Legislature, it was very, very difficult to get tuition assistance from the State for a given employee. I mean, they almost laid down a rule that said unless this person was seeking a degree that had a direct relationship with what he or she was doing in your particular office, we are not going to do any reimbursement as far as tuition goes.

As a result, many public employees, at least in the State level, who wanted to pursue advanced education could not do so. You know, so I certainly understand you reaching out to different levels of government. I don't know how -- what the procedure here is in the County with reference to tuition reimbursement, but I always had the impression that private sector, corporations, are much more amenable to tuition reimbursement. They don't care what degree you go for. If you're out there and you get a C or better, we'll give you 80 or 90%. But not necessarily at the State level. They have a whole different viewpoint. I mean, it's one thing to go and say, look, you know, we're Dowling and we're in a position now if they pursue certain degrees, we'll give some sort of tuition assistance or help to make it easier. And you're speaking to a person who is part of a bureaucracy that is not really into advanced education for their employees for whatever reason, maybe from a cost perspective. But I know at the State it was very, very difficult to do.

MR. GAFFNEY:

You know, those trends that, you know, are ebb and flow. I mean, there was time when many County officials, probably some people in this room that, you know, were able to participate in programs where a Master's Degree in Public Administration was partially paid for by County Government and similar programs in local governments. You know, because there's a recognition that that's other people's money, you know, it's County dollars being used in that way. And that's a decision -- so, you know, I'm not going there. You know, that's a decision that each municipality and each government makes.

What I can tell you is that I think it's probably money well spent. Money spent to educate a municipality's employees, to give them greater understanding, to make them able to compete at a level they might not otherwise be able to do is a benefit that inures to all of the County. It's a good thing to have County and municipal employees at the highest -- functioning at the highest possible level. The hard part is, you know, is it the responsibility of the municipality to provide that money. That's a policy issue that -- that's going to have to be decided at your level. I don't make those calls anymore.

But the fact is that many businesses have reached the point where they understand that for them to be affective, they need to train their people in the skills that are needed to compete globally. And so they pay for or partially subsidize, you know, the education of their employees. Dowling College has something called "Dowling Institute," and we have off-site training that we do at locations throughout the country where we offer advanced degrees in business primarily for corporations who want to make sure that their -- their people get that kind of training and get those kinds of degrees. We would be -- I'd be thrilled to sit down with -- with the Legislature and with the Executive Branch to explore ways in which that -- ways in which we can work cooperatively with County Government to provide similar benefits at a level not now being done.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Legislator Cooper. He is back.

LEG. COOPER:

I just wanted to correct something that I said on the record. I said I had a great question, but that's probably not accurate. It's probably maybe more mediocre. Maybe on a scale of one to ten it's maybe a three. Now, that I remembered what the question was. That same article that I had read had mentioned that even for students that got no sort of a scholarship and paid full tuition they were

still often getting a very good deal, because the cost of providing their education at the typical college, maybe they're paying \$20,000 in tuition costs, but the actual cost of providing the education is \$35,000. And the difference is made up through the endowment of the college. And I had read somewhere that Dowling's endowment, I think, at the time was about 10 million, thereabouts.

MR. GAFFNEY:

That's correct.

LEG. COOPER:

So what efforts -- I don't know what efforts can be undertaken to try to increase the size of the endowment, but is that a goal of yours, and do you have any --

MR. GAFFNEY:

Absolutely. There are three -- three major objectives that I undertook when I became President of Dowling, and someone described them as "Three Es." The first and foremost in every academic institution is excellence. I mean, so that's -- that goes to the product that you sell. That goes to the end result, what it is that you are about. But beyond that, there are two other Es; one is enrollment, which is part of what we're talking about here today, and the other is endowment, which is also part of what we're talking here today, but perhaps a little bit more subtly. Everything that I do as President of Dowling College for the most part is geared toward those three things; raising the profile of Dowling College, raising the standards of Dowling College, providing that excellence, raising the endowment, which means bringing people on board to have them invest in both emotionally and economically in Dowling College, to recognize its value to the community, to recognize the quality of its education, and to recognize that an institution like Dowling is critical, that economy can't survive and can't thrive without institutions like Dowling working, you know, to produce the kind of students and graduates that it needs.

So it's really interchangeable in many ways. This discussion today has elements of excellence, it has elements of endowment and it has elements of enrollment. If I can do those three things, I would have been successful. If I had to pick out one of those things, it would depend upon what time of year it is, what my immediate needs are. You know, endowment is a part of it, because endowment is the money that comes to a college that permits us to remit part of the tuition for a particularly attractive student, you know, the next person who's going to develop, you know, a theory in Applied Mathematics that will make a difference for the world. We need to identify them, recruit them. And one of the ways you do that is to make -- is to give them -- to make it worth their while to go to Dowling as opposed to some place else. Competition for those kinds of students is enormous.

The problem, of course, and this is where they're not always easy to identify. The kid coming out of high school with a 4.0 average who's been participating, I mean, there's a pretty good chance that that person is going to be very successful in life. But what we found is that there's a lot of other people who haven't shown those indicia yet who may be a late starter, who's got good marks, is working two jobs in a deli.

Let me give you an example. One of our alumni, Bill McDermott, who is the -- is the charge of SAP North American, South American, Latin America, probably the fastest rising star in that kind of business environment. He's a Dowling graduate. He graduated from Dowling. While he was at Dowling, he probably could have gone away, but he had too many things keeping him here. He had family obligations, he was -- he was working in a deli, and then while he was still a student, he bought the deli, and then he sold the deli. And here's a guy who is probably the poster child for Long Island success stories. He out-worked, he out-hustled, he out-thought everybody else in the competition. He didn't go to Harvard. He didn't get his MBA from Wharton. He went to Dowling, he worked hard, he got it. And at this point, he's hiring people from all of those places.

The unique thing about Bill is that he's a Long Island guy, a Suffolk County guy. He came from here. He learned his ability to -- he learned his skills and competition on how to compete, on how to get things done, because he is part of an environment on Long Island that's second to none. So you

can't always identify who people that are going to lead you are. Sometimes they evolve, sometimes in your presence, sometimes after they get out. But we need to take every one of those and nurture them, and we need to make sure that nobody is missed in that process. And Dowling plays a major role in making sure that that doesn't happen.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Legislator Montano.

LEG. MONTANO:

Good afternoon, Bob.

MR. GAFFNEY:

Hi.

LEG. MONTANO:

Congratulations.

MR. GAFFNEY:

Thank you.

LEG. MONTANO:

I wish you well. I guess, there is life after politics, and you're proving that, which is good. Observation though, you said the tuition at Dowling was about 17,000 a year for the undergraduate.

MR. GAFFNEY:

Right.

LEG. MONTANO:

And I think at Suffolk it's about a little more than 3000.

MR. GAFFNEY:

Yeah, about four.

LEG. MONTANO:

Particularly in my district, as I've gone out the last couple of years to attend a lot of the graduation ceremonies, I've talked to some of the students, and, you know, we have a lot of first-generation college students. You know the area, Brentwood-Central Islip. And I find invariably that when I ask a student what are you doing when you graduate, where are you going after high school, they tell me Suffolk Community College, which is great. I try and encourage a lot of them to go off Long Island for the education because I think it's a good experience, but a lot of them, you know, just simply can't afford to be anywhere else. Sometimes the parents, you know, want to keep them closer to home, you know, for a number of reasons. But it's a quantum leap from -- and a lot of the students are struggling for the 3000, a lot of the families, even though it's low tuition. When I went to City College, the tuition was \$54 a semester so I was able to go. Three thousand seems like -- you know, back then I don't know that I would have been able to go. But the thing is it seems like a quantum leap from 3 to 17. And to keep these -- and I don't know what the State University rate is. I would imagine it's in the 7000 range, something like that. Do you know, like, Stony Brook, what the tuition would be there?

MR. GAFFNEY:

I think that's --

LEG. MONTANO:

I would think it's in that range. So for those students that are, you know, academically able, want to stay on Long Island, would like to go to Dowling College, may not have the full means, you know,

where are you going with that in terms of tuition assistance -- go ahead.

MR. GAFFNEY:

A lot of our students --

LEG. MONTANO:

And that's more an observation than a question.

MR. GAFFNEY:

-- are getting benefits from a whole host of governmental sources, some are HEOP students, which is, you know, a part of that process. There is an a lot of grant and a lot of funding from both the State and other sources and Federal sources that enable people from our communities, your -- you know, from Brentwood, from Centereach, from Selden, from Huntington, from all over to access higher education at a price that's significantly less than what it would appear on the surface.

The college receives the money, but it's being supplemented. And it gives -- it gives students an opportunity that they wouldn't otherwise have. One of the things that Dowling College has been and will continue to be regardless of what other directions it may pursue also is a college of opportunity. It's part of who we are. The faculty has invested and bought into that idea, the administration has, I have. We intend to be and will never not be a college that will reach out to non-traditional students, students who for the most part may not even be thinking about college or who may not feel comfortable in -- with that.

A significant percentage of our students are the first person in their family to go to college. And I really think that's great. I like that. At the graduations, it's a celebration of not just their academic achievement, it's a celebration of their families making it. And that's make you feel good. Same feeling you get if you to Suffolk County Community College. I used to love to go to the Brentwood, especially, because there was a big percentage there. And the joy on the part of the not just the graduate, but the whole family as this person now, they made it. You know, my daughter, my son is a college graduate. Many people, you know, struggled with English, they've struggled with immigrant status. And they have fully invested, and now they know they're part of -- they're Americans, they part of -- and they've got people in the system now. That's something you never want to lose. I never want to see that lost.

On the other hand, there are students who may not have come -- had all the same opportunities. It's a great school -- best schools in the world on Long Island. But it is geared toward the better students. And if you're not -- if you don't look like and don't sound like and don't feel like a top-of-the-class student, even though you may be emotionally and in other ways able to do the same kind of work, you just either different priorities, different cultural -- there's a lot of reasons why kids aren't in the top third. And a lot of it has nothing to do with their ability or their -- you know, or their desire. They're just not channeled that way yet.

We pride ourselves on being able to take that student who hasn't maybe found them self yet, giving them the skills they need and make them as proficient as anybody else. Sometimes it takes a little longer. Sometimes they -- you know, they grow up at different rates. We have the ability to deal with that probably better than anyone else. And we've been very, very successful with that. So that's part of who we are never, and we'll never not be that. But we also need to be able to take students who are traditional students and take graduated students who are traditional and non-traditional graduate students and produce for this region the kind of educated workforce that they need.

So we need to be all of those things. A story that occurred to me while I was thinking about all of this months ago, I grew up in Brooklyn. And I came from first -- I was the first person -- I have an older brother, two years older, he was the first person in our family to finish the eight grade. He was the first person in our family to go to high school. I was the second. And, you know, my family was so proud of the both of us. And when it came time to go to college, we were both given

options. I was fortunate. I had a gotten a Regent's Scholarship, so money wasn't -- I mean, I could go anywhere basically. But my family had constraints. And I came from somewhat of a constrained family. My mother and father said you have -- you can go anywhere you want, just to provisos, it's got to be a Catholic College, it's the environment I grew up in, and you have to be able to get there on the subway.

I was no less able than anyone going to Columbia or any place else. And, in fact, able to perform and compete and accomplish and achieve as much as they did. It wasn't what I wanted to do. It wasn't within my experience. Nobody in my family went away to college. Nobody went to college. Hardly anybody went to high school. So, you know, it doesn't mean you can't, it doesn't mean -- you know, what it means is that you need to have a place that you can go to where you are comfortable and they are willing. And Dowling is that. It's a place that can take raw talent and turn it into a polished contributing part of the business and the economic life of this County.

You need a Stony Brook, you need a Hofstra, you need a Columbia, you need a Harvard, you need a Fordham, you need all of those, but I would suggest to you that the one thing that this County needs right now is a place like Dowling, because our kids are staying here. You know, some day take a look at the statistics of people who go away to college and how many will come back. When they go away and they get their degree in Applied Mathematics, are they coming back to Long Island? Not as many as we would like. But if you get a young person from Suffolk County who went to Sachem or went to Harbor Hills, went Mattituck, anywhere, and they to Dowling and they get their degree and they're motivated and they're -- they are molded and shaped and they get their degree in Applied Mathematics, they'll be working over at Renaissance. You know, they'll be here. They will be the people making the decisions and putting Long Island in a position to be competitive, you know, for generations.

So that's part of what I've learned in the last ten weeks. I've learned how good we are at Dowling, how good we are at what we do, how important we are. And it's also reawakened an appreciation of Suffolk County and just how good a place this is, and Long Island in general, that things get done on the back of a place mat in a diner in Long Island that would take a generation to get done in Ohio. There's something very, very unique. Maybe it's because when -- you know, may when Leroy Grumman opened -- started Grumman in a garage in Baldwin, you know, he captured a spirit that still is here, and it needs to grow and it needs to be nurtured. And we can do that, and you can help us do that.

LEG. MONTANO:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

All right. If there are no further questions from the Legislators.

LEG. NOWICK:

Quick comment.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Just a comment. Well, please.

LEG. NOWICK:

When you do excellence, enrollment, endowment, you might on the brochures at the top add education, excellence.

MR. GAFFNEY:

Good point. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Bob, we want to thank you for being here today. And we are certainly happy to welcome you home.

And we were anxious to take this -- your conversation of today, your challenges of today, working with Suffolk Community College, working on your RFP for the Yaphank area, we're here for open discussion and see where we can take it to the next level. Thank you very much for being here.

MR. GAFFNEY:

Thank you very much. A footnote, because the Athletic Department would really get angry if I hadn't done this. Dowling College recently had the National Champion Division II soccer team. We won the National Championship, and did it with not a single field of our own. We practiced on other peoples. I mean, how typically Suffolk is that? We don't even have our own fields, and we can play on other people's fields and get --

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

So you need an arena, is that what you're saying?

MR. GAFFNEY:

We're building that. But it's that spirit. And the other thing is the Dowling College Lacrosse team came in number two nationally in Division II. It lost in a close game in the presence of 55,000 people. No one know who Dowling was. Where is this place? Nobody really knows where Suffolk County is. You tell them it's on Long Island. The fact is that it is so typically Long Island, so typically Suffolk County that people have excelled that way. And just take it as a matter of course. It's what we do. I mean, we're good at things like that. But the Athletic Director would probably be angry if I didn't tell you that both the men's soccer team was national champions and that the lacrosse team came in number two, and that all of our teams are among the highest ranked in the country. I have some Athletic Department pins, and I'll leave them here. We're proud. We don't have any other national champions in Suffolk County. I'll leave that for you. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Go Dowling.

LEG. COOPER:

Thank you, Bob.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay. As Mr. Gaffney is leaving, we 're going to be moving to the agenda. I want to add that we're running a little over on time today, so anyone that is here for the Labor, Workforce and Affordable Housing Committee scheduled for 2:00 p.m, we'll be beginning that at the end of this committee meeting. All right. We'll move to the agenda. And for those on the committee, we're going to go into Executive Session after the agenda for a few moments to talk about the Broadwater litigation issues. All right.

Starting with **2090, To impose moratorium on aviation related construction at Francis S. Gabreski Airport pending Master Plan adoption. (Schneiderman)**

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Mr. Schneiderman, did you want to make a comments on this before we make a motion?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

If I could. This bill basically holds of on the approvals of projects until of the completion of the Master Plan. As you know, the County's been actively involved in working on a Master Plan for the airport. This exempts emergency types of things like the Medivac Helicopter. In fact, it only applies to jet aviation facilities. It even exempts aviation facilities that have already submitted an application, though it doesn't exempt the jet facilities. And the community in that area, obviously, is very concerned about the airport.

I believe we are close to having at least a draft to look at in terms of a Master Plan. I think it's good prudent planning, to allow that check mechanism to stay these things won't be approved until we

can look at the cumulative impact of everything that's proposed at the airport and make some wise planning decisions. And that's all this does. There is an exemption procedure, so if you did want to move forward with something that was caught up in a moratorium, you could do that. You could make a finding that it was compatible with the interim findings of the -- of the comprehensive plan or the Master Plan for the airport, so.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Thank you much -- very much, Legislator. Carolyn Fahey, I know that you are going to address this issue as well.

MS. FAHEY:

Yeah. There are six resolutions on that we'll be talking about today. But this one goes back to the FAA's concerns that they expressed back in January when the Legislator submitted a similar bill. Any aviation that is discriminated against could be deemed unreasonable. If you leave it jet or if you leave any sort of condition on the types of aviation that could be built, it could be deemed unreasonable.

The Master Plan is moving along. You know, we hope to have it to you by the end of the spring, beginning of summer for your adoption along with environmental that we're going to do on it. We're asking that you table this again and let us move forward with that Master Plan. We don't want to cause any more issues with the FAA. We're working with them on a land use plan that limits the aviation that has been agreed to by the community. That will be part and parcel of the Master Plan. The community has been working diligently with the airport manager to create a layout plan that limits the aviation development. So we just don't want to do anything that will fly in the face of the progress we made with the community and the FAA.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

So to speak.

LEG. COOPER:

No pun intended.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

No pun intended. Okay. Thank you very much.

LEG. COOPER:

Motion to table.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Motion to table by Legislator Cooper, I'll second the motion. All in favor? Opposed? So moved. It has been **TABLED (VOTE:5-0-0-0)**.

Carolyn, did you want to go through some of these, or do you want to go as we go through it?

MS. FAHEY:

It's your call, Mr. Chair. Whatever you want to do.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

All right. Why don't we go through them, and then if you want to make a comment, we'll take it as such. Okay. Introductory Resolutions.

2491, Accepting and appropriating a grant award for a New York Economic Development Capital Program (NYEDCP), for facility renovations and purchase of equipment, administered by the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York, 100% reimbursed by State funds at Suffolk County Community College. (Co. Exec.)

LEG. COOPER:

There is no way the stenographer got that. Be honest. Motion to approve.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Motion to approve and place it on the Consent Calender?

LEG. COOPER:

Please.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

And place it on the Consent Calender, seconded by?

LEG. MONTANO:

I'll second.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Legislator Montano. All in favor? Opposed? So moved. **APPROVED** and placed on the **Consent Calender (VOTE:5-0-0-0)**.

2492, Accepting and appropriating a grant award from the State University of New York for a Community College Workforce Development Training Grants Program for a retail skills center 90% reimbursed by State funds at Suffolk County Community College. (Co. Exec.)

LEG COOPER.

Motion.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Motion to approve by Legislator Cooper, seconded by Legislator Montano. All in favor? Opposed? So moved. **APPROVED (VOTE:5-0-0-0)**.

2497, Accepting a grant award from the New York State Department of Transportation - Aviation Bureau, amending the 2006 Capital Budget and Program and appropriating funds in connection with the purchase and installation of perimeter fencing for the Department of Economic Development and Workforce Housing, Aviation Division (CP 5721). (Co. Exec.)

LEG. COOPER:

Motion to approve.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Motion to approve and seconded by?

LEG. MONTANO:

I'll second it.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Legislator Montano. Carolyn, did you want to say anything on this? Did you have a question on that?

MS. FAHEY:

No.

LEG. COOPER:

We're on a roll.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay. All in favor? Opposed? So moved. **APPROVED (VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

2498, Accepting a grant award from the New York State Department of Transportation - Aviation Bureau, amending the 2006 Capital Budget and Program and appropriating funds in connection with the tower renovations at Gabreski Airport (CP 5709). (Co. Exec.)

LEG COOPER.

Motion to approve.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Motion to approve by Legislator Cooper, seconded by Legislator Barraga. All in favor? Opposed? So moved. **APPROVED (VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

2502, Amending the 2006 Capital Budget and program and appropriating funds in connection with incubators for businesses in distressed areas (CP 6413). (Co. Exec.)

LEG. COOPER:

Motion to approve.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Motion to approve, I'll second that motion. All in favor? Opposed? So moved. **APPROVED (VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

2509, Appropriating funds in connection with the replacement/relocation of the existing maintenance facility at Gabreski Airport (CP 5733), Town of Southampton and adopting a SEQRA determination. (Co. Exec.)

LEG. COOPER:

Motion to approve.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Motion to approve, seconded by?

LEG. MONTANO:

I'll second it.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Seconded by Legislator Montano. All in favor? Opposed? So moved. **APPROVED (VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

2510, Amending the 2006 Capital Budget and Program and appropriating funds in connection with the redevelopment to create a Homeland Security Technology Park at Gabreski Airport (CP 5735). (Co. Exec.)

LEG. COOPER:

Motion to approve.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Motion by Legislator Cooper, second by -- I'll second. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved. **APPROVED (VOTE:5-0-0-0).**

2511, Accepting a grant award from the New York State Department of Transportation-Aviation Bureau, amending the 2006 Capital Budget and Program and appropriating funds in connection with aviation utility infrastructure at Gabreski Airport

(CP 5734) and adopting the SEQRA determination. (Co. Exec.)

LEG. COOPER:

Motion to approve.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Motion by Legislator Cooper, second by -- I'll second the motion. All in favor? Opposed? So moved.

APPROVED (VOTE:5-0-0-0).

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

I think that ends our --

MR. NOLAN:

We'll come out and do the Procedural Motion after Executive Session.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay. What we'll be doing is we're going to now be going into Executive Session. I'll take a motion to -- motion by Legislator Montano, seconded by Legislator Cooper to go into -- All in favor? Opposed? We're now in Executive Session. We'll be back out in a few moments to finish the Procedural Motion.

(*AN EXECUTIVE SESSION WAS HELD FROM 2:07 P.M. UNTIL 2:51 P.M.*)

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

My apologies for our overextension of time. The Economic Development, Higher Education and Energy Committee is now back in session. And we have **Procedural Motion Number 10-2006, Procedural resolution authorizing continued funding in connection with the opposition to a proposed liquid natural gas project in the Long Island Sound. (Horsley)**

LEG. COOPER:

Motion to approve.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Motion to approve by Jonathan Cooper. I'll second the motion. All in favor? Opposed?

LEG. BARRAGA:

In the negative.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

In the negative. The motion carries. **APPROVED (VOTE:4-1-0-0 - Opposed - Legis. Barraga).**

I think that's it, right? Okay. We will entertain a motion to adjourn.

LEG. COOPER:

So moved.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Seconded by myself. All in favor? Opposed? We are adjourned.

(*THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 2:52 P.M.*)

{ } DENOTES BEING SPELLED PHONETICALLY