

**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, August 15, 2007.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Legislator Wayne Horsley - Chairman  
Legislator Steve Stern - Vice-Chair  
Legislator Tom Barraga  
Legislator Ed Romaine  
Legislator Vivian Vilorio-Fisher

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

George Nolan - Counsel to the Legislature  
Joe Schroeder - Budget Review Office  
Joe Muncey - Budget Review Office  
Renee Ortiz - Chief 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  
Debra Alloncius - AME  
Linda Bay - Aide to Minority LEader  
Carmine Chiusano - County Exec's Budget Office  
Michelle Isabelle-Stark - Citizen's Arts Council  
All other interested parties

**MINUTES TAKEN BY:**

Donna Catalano - Court Stenographer

(\*THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 2:43 P.M.\*)

**LEG. STERN:**

Please rise. The committee on Economic Development, Higher Education and Energy will come to order. I'd ask everyone to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**SALUTATION**

I'd ask everybody to please remain standing and join us in a moment of silence as we keep all of our very brave men and women fighting for our freedoms overseas in thoughts and prayers.

**MOMENT OF SILENCE**

**LEG. STERN:**

Thank you. Commissioner, step up.

**COMMISSIONER MORGO:**

This is the public portion, right?

**LEG. STERN:**

This is the public portion.

**COMMISSIONER MORGO:**

Good afternoon. I am here before you on a resolution that isn't before you. I'm going to be addressing a resolution that was introduced to the Workforce Housing and Labor Committee on Monday. But the reason it's germane to Economic Development is that -- well, really it's the whole reason that my department exists. It's because there is an understanding that the need for homes that workers can afford is an integral part of the economic sustainability of our County and, in fact, the whole region.

I'm talking about Introductory Resolution 1748. It would call for the establishment of a task force on community land trusts for housing. I was before the Workforce and Labor Committee on Monday, and I was particularly polite and deferential as I usually am. But I made a mistake. The reason that I was polite and somewhat indirect was that I did not think there would be any chance that this legislation would be voted out of committee. In fact, when I first saw it, I thought that it was so incredibly counterproductive and it really would do more harm than good, that no one would ever vote it out.

My first reaction is, well, after we have this committee -- this task force on community land trust, we'll then have one on the use of nails in affordable housing, which I realize is rather flippant. But I want to tell you why establishing such a task force would be counterproductive. Let me first say that community land trusts to maintain affordability for workforce -- workforce homes are effective. They are a good method for perpetuating affordability. If you don't know how they work, I'll give you the Reader's Digest version. A not-for-profit organization will own the land on which the homes are built, will retain ownership of the land and then will control the resale of the land.

There is one particularly effective community land trust functioning on Long Island since 1991, and that is the Walsh Park Benevolent Corporation. It's on Fisher's Island in the Town of Southold. It has both for-sale homes and rental homes, and it works very effectively. Community land trusts are one method to control the resale of affordable homes, something that's necessary. Community land trusts are only one method. We have, and it was prepared for the Workforce Housing Commission, a whole file on different ways to maintain affordability; land trusts, a method for the pros and cons of them, are mentioned in here.

The legislation that I spoke about calls for creating with the -- creating a partnership with the

community land trusts that are in the County. There are two; the Southold Community Land Trust and the South Country Community Land Trust in Bellport. The department now is working with both of these land trusts, and they have the concept that it would be good for their community to create homes affordable to workers and have the not-for-profit control the land and control the resales. We're working with them on the same thing. We're getting close with Southold particularly. We're looking for the thing without which you can't do affordable homes and that are developable sites. We're close. In fact, the principals of both land trusts may come to the General Meeting on Tuesday.

The key thing that I think we all know is that creating and preserving workforce homes on Long Island, and really in all the suburbs of New York State and the country, is not easy. I'll often make the comparison between acquiring land for workforce homes and acquiring land for open space or farmland preservation. Once you do the -- once you do the acquisition for open space or for farmland preservation or keeping the development right of farms, you're finished. That's the thing you have to do. You have to do the acquisition. When you do the acquisition for workforce homes, you're just beginning. There are all kinds of issues to deal with.

And, as you know, my department does that along with the Community Development Division in my department that's headed up by Joe Sansaverino and the Director of Affordable Homes, Jill Rosen-Nikoloff. Jill has no one helping her. In fact, one of reasons that Marian Zucker, who was so effective in the role, left, because she would -- not had any help for the clerical, the ministerial factors. It's difficult. You have to deal with everything from zoning to title to the selection. It takes a long time, but it's worth it. And acquiring land is only one of the ways we are -- only one of ways that we're creating more options for workers in Suffolk County.

If you look at this legislation, it calls for a six month period of meetings. It calls for four public hearings. It calls for the assignment of a land-use attorney from the County Attorney's Office. This task force that would meet for 6 months and then issue a report would spend time and County dollars, and all it would be doing would be talking about one method to preserve homes for affordable housing. You would have to hire stenographers for the hearings. The report would have to be written. It is incredibly counterproductive.

Ironically, and the biggest irony of the whole thing, is that it would not have us pursue the sites that we're working on now, it would not have us do the other kinds of housing opportunities, preserving those affordable homes that currently exist. It would be an incredible waste of time. It would hurt, it would impair our efforts for workforce homes, and it would impair the establishment of community land trusts.

You know, I know task forces are popular and I know good things come out of them, but a task force that is so narrow, that would require as much time, would not be good for economic development, or as I said, for community land trusts. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Thank you very much, Mr. Morgo. My apologies for missing part of your public statement.

**COMMISSIONER MORGO:**

You want me to repeat it?

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

I could tell the level of angst in your voice that you're --

**COMMISSIONER MORGO:**

I don't know if it's angst. I just hate the idea of a lot of talk with -- that doesn't result in productive action. Most people I know are Legislators because they want to get something done.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Can I just -- Mr. Chair?

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

On that note.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

I'm a member of that committee. And I was very disappointed that as a Commissioner you asked for something to be tabled for one cycle -- and Mr. Romaine and I are both on the Parks Committee, and when Commissioner Bellone asked for something to be tabled so that she could take a look at it, there was a courtesy to table that. And I was disappointed in the committee that that courtesy was not granted you. My motion to table was not even granted a second, and that was unfortunate.

**COMMISSIONER MORGO:**

Having been a Legislator, Legislator, I wasn't offended at all. I didn't even -- you know, I really didn't take it personally. I was -- I know -- I know that sometimes things are not what they are about and they are other things going on. But what we're going to prepare, you're going to get before the next meeting, is all you ever wanted to know and all you need to know about community land trusts. We are going to prepare a paper for you. I have to tell you, I just thought it was the most absurd thing. I wasn't this direct on Monday, but I just thought it was a name. And the fact that we're going to assign a lawyer, then we're going to have stenographers, to talk about the issue. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Thank you for your lack of angst.

**P.O. LINDSAY:**

Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Yes. Legislator Lindsay.

**P.O. LINDSAY:**

Yeah. I wasn't here the other day when this was being debated, but just for my colleagues, a perspective here. We've had a young man working as an intern here all summer, and he was a wonderful young man. He just went back to school the other day and we had a cake for him and everything. His mission was to examine how many commissions, advisory boards that we have, and how many of them should be disbanded. And he's prepared a list for me, and I'm going to introduce legislation to do that, because the proliferation of boards and commissions and things that we do here that some of them never meet, some of them don't really know their missions, some of them have members that have never been -- taken an oath of office. It's really kind of gotten out of hand.

In light of that, you know, that's one avenue. But in light of that moving forward, we should really make -- discipline ourselves a little bit to make sure that before we go down this road that there's a purpose and there's an end game and that we're not just doing -- creating a commission or -- for the purpose -- a political purpose or whatever purpose. I'm not saying that's the purpose here. But I think it's something we really have to look at.

And I would ask Commissioner Morgo to come back on Tuesday, you know, to voice his objections again to this -- to the creation of this group in terms of housing. And I agree with him wholeheartedly, I don't think -- I think we all know what the problems are in creating housing. I don't think we need anybody to tell us. It's a matter of putting the resources and getting the local communities to agree to this type of housing. So that's my two cents.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Thank you very much, Legislator Lindsay. Anyone else like to be heard? Very good.

I'd like to just make an apology for my tardiness. The reason why I was not here is that we were announcing the new vendor for the Wi-Fi Long Island across the street. We now have a vendor called e-Path who is going to be joined by KeySpan and Cisco in making Long Island the first bi-county wireless county in probably the world. So, I thought it was a big deal and I'm very proud that this -- a lot of the stuff came out of Economic Development and this committee.

All right. Let's move on. Presentations. I'm going to bring you back, Jim. Economic Development and Workforce Housing Commissioner, Jim Morgo, and Michelle Isabelle-Stark, Citizen's Arts Advisory Board Program Coordinator.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

I'm sorry, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Yes.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

May I ask if it would be possible with your indulgence if we could do the agenda first? The reason for that is that unfortunately it wasn't put on my schedule that this was starting at 2:30, although your office had warned us, and it was also not on the schedule of some of the people who are here as appointees and they also have commitments to other things. If that would be possible I would really appreciate that.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Sure. We'll do it short. Mr. Morgo, do you have any objection?

**COMMISSIONER MORGO:**

No.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

I'm so glad that you are going to be coming back on Tuesday so I can hear that once again. All right. Let's move forward to the agenda and then we'll come back to Jim and Michelle.

#### **Tabled Prime**

**1171, Adopting Local Law No. 2007, A Local Law to establish the Gabreski Airport Conservation and Assessment Committee. (Schneiderman)**

Motion to table.

**LEG. STERN:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Second by Legislator Stern. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved. **(Vote: 5-0-0-0).**

**1658, Adopting no tax increase, fiscally responsible, Suffolk County Community College Affordable Education Operating Budget for 2007-2008. (Co. Exec.)**

Do I have a motion on that?

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Motion to table.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Motion to table by Legislator Viloría-Fisher. I'll second the motion. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved. **(Vote: 5-0-0-0)**. Moving down to the Introductory Resolutions.

**Introductory Resolutions**

**1759, To appoint Allan H. Varela, Jr., as a member of the Suffolk County Citizens Advisory Board for the Arts. (Losquadro)**

Do I have a motion to approve?

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

I'll make that motion and I'd like to be a cosponsor, Mr. Clerk. Mr. Varela is here.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Very good. Would Mr. Varela -- has he been here before? Do you want to come up? Have a seat.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

There's no second to my motion.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

I'll second your motion. The second is on the floor. Ms. Fisher, would you like to talk to Mr. Varela?

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Well, I thank you for the tremendous amount of service that you've provided for the citizens of Suffolk County. The tremendous work you have done in arts, the networking that you've developed so that all of the cultural arts, groups across Suffolk County have been able to network with one another technologically, and the many, many hours that you've spent in developing it. I certainly think that the greater Port Jefferson Arts Council has done a tremendous amount of work to forward the cultural arts in Suffolk County. I highly recommend Mr. Varela for this position. I think he would be a great asset.

**MR. VARELA:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Are there any other questions of Mr. Varela?

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Sorry. That wasn't a question.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

That's all right.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Do you think you are pretty good, Allan?

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Allan, please. I didn't mean to --

**MR. VARELA:**

I'm looking forward to hopefully bringing some of my experience and expertise, and I have a strong technical background, to the Advisory Board and I'm looking forward to working. I'm one of the people that has another commitment and has to run, but I would just like to say parenthetically, before you hear the proposal that you are about to hear, that I believe that the proposal you are

going to hear is very enlightened. It provides a pathway which I am very excited about and in favor of for the smaller groups to receive aid. I don't know if you know what the proposal is, so I'll just let it go there. I don't want to give the plot away here.

I just -- we can't do more than help the smaller groups that actually are the seeds for artistic and cultural activity. They bring in the little-known, they bring in the beginners, they provide the workshops, they provide all of those other things. They are a vital, necessary component of developing the arts and culture, therefore economic development. When people come out to these programs they spend money. I'm very happy that this proposal is up there. As you can see, I'm very equivocal on this. You know, I just like -- this is the right thing to be doing, so.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

It's the right thing to do, eh?

**MR. VARELA:**

That's it.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

There you go. Is there anything else? Is there anything else anyone else would like to ask Mr. Varela? All right. Thank you very much.

**MR. VARELA:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Thank you for your service. We have a motion to approve and seconded on the floor. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved. **(Vote: 5-0-0-0)**. Congratulations. Welcome aboard.

**MR. VARELA:**

Thank you.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Thank you, Allan.

**1760, To amend Adopted Resolution No. 552-2006, to extend the deadline for the "School District Expenses and Efficiency" Commission. (D'Amaro)**

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

Mr. Chairman?

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Yes.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

I see the Presiding Officer has left. Does anybody know whether or not this commission met the intern hit list?

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

I don't believe so. I can speak just because I know that they are so active. This is Legislator D'Amaro's committee and they've been meeting over the last several months, often. In fact, to the point where he says these are a pain in the neck.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

They have been in existence at least seven or eight months, right?

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Well, yeah. I think so.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

And they already, if I recall correctly, didn't they make their recommendations?

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

No, I think that was Legislator Lindsay's. One was on the revenue side and one was --

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

They haven't made any recommendations at all?

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

No, not as yet. They are finishing up. Oh, please, Mr. Lipp.

**MR. LIPP:**

Yes. I happen to be on the Commission so I can speak to it. The Commission had its public hearings, has met not as frequently as the Commission would like. There is a highly preliminary draft report that needs a lot of work still and therefore it wasn't ready to meet the current deadline of September first. This introductory resolution is proposing to extend it until the end of the year and we're hopeful that there will be some useful recommendations coming out of the Commission.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

Can you finish your work by December 31st?

**MR. LIPP:**

Most definitely.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

So you won't be back for a further extension?

**MR. LIPP:**

I would sincerely hope not.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Okay. Mr. Romaine.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

In essence what you are saying is the Commission has done all of its work. All that needs to be done is to have the draft study that is in rough form finalized out; is that correct?

**MR. LIPP:**

Almost. It's a little more -- it could use a little more work than that. That would be a generous statement. But --

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

So let's say there's a lot of work in redrafting some of the findings into a -- why would the Commission need to exist, continue in existence. They can go out of existence and the report can be issued when it is finally done without the Commission being in existence since it is not going to meet again.

**MR. LIPP:**

Good question. The Commission will be meeting again and in particular one reason why the Commission has to meet is because the recommendations, the proposed recommendations were not reviewed by the Commission as to which ones that the Commission would actually recommend. So there's a laundry list of potential recommendations, good, bad and indifferent, that the Commission still has yet to make a --

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

So they are drawing a consensus is what they're --

**MR. LIPP:**

Correct.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

And frankly, I was listening to Legislator D'Amaro lament the other day that he tried to get the group together this summer and because of disparate schedules and things like that it was just impossible to do, because I guess a lot of them are educators and probably off studying. As a fellow educator I can say that. But we'll leave it at that.

I'll make a motion to approve. Is there a second?

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Second by Legislator Viloría-Fisher. Is there any other motions on the floor? We'll vote on the motion. All those in favor? Opposed?

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

Opposed.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Opposed.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

And two opposed. So that would be three-two. Okay. And that passes. **(Vote: 3-2-0-0 Opposed - Legislators Barraga and Romaine).**

**1761, To reappoint Patricia Snyder as a member of the Suffolk County Citizens Advisory Board for the Arts. (Romaine)**

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Motion.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Is she already a member?

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

It's a reappointment.

**LEG. HORSLEY:**

Okay. There's a motion to approve.

**LEG. STERN:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Second by Legislator Stern. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved. **(Vote: 5-0-0-0).**

**1775, Amending prior Capital authorized appropriations for site safety improvements Eastern Campus - design (CP 2146.111) to site safety improvements Easter Campus - construction (CP 2146.311). (Co. Exec.)**

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

May I have a motion on this?

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Motion for purposes of discussion and then just an explanation of what one code means as opposed to the other.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Okay. We'll see if we can get that. Motion to approve, seconded by Legislator Vilorio-Fisher. So it would be Romaine, Fisher. Would someone like to explain Mr. Romaine's question? Is there anyone from the college? Mr. Stein, would you like to -- Ben, would you rather? Either or.

**MR. STEIN:**

It's moving money from design to construction.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Okay. I'm going to let Mr. Romaine ask the question again. Mr. Romaine.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Okay. 2146.111 as opposed to 2146.311. Difference, Carmine, the code?

**MR. CHIUSANO:**

Basically what's happening in this resolution is they're taking an appropriation, a prior appropriation, and shifting the money from planning to construction. So they are reallocating a dollar amount that has been previously appropriated under one capital project.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Right. And this project is for?

**MR. CHIUSANO:**

It's for --

**MR. STEIN:**

Sight safety.

**MR. CHIUSANO:**

Sight safety improvements at the Eastern Campus. The same is true of the next Capital Project, 1786. That would be for fire sprinkler infrastructure and there the prior appropriation portion of the construction money is being moved for additional planning.

**MR. STEIN:**

If I might. It's not changing the cost of project. It is not increasing the cost. It's just redeploying the monies.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Right. Shifting the money from one account to another, right. Got it.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Are there any further questions? Mr. Romaine, are you done? Any further questions? Okay. We have a motion on the floor to approve. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved. That is approved. **(Vote: 5-0-0-0).**

**1786, Amending prior Capital authorized appropriations for fire sprinkler infrastructure - construction (CP 2129.310) to fire sprinkler infrastructure - planning (CP 2129.110). (Co. Exec.)**

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Same motion, same author -- is everybody okay with that? Okay. You guys are good? Okay. We have a motion to approve on the floor. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved. **(Vote: 5-0-0-0).**

**1796, To reappoint Ronan Mulvey as a member of the Suffolk County Citizens Advisory Board for the Arts. (Caracappa)**

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

I'd like to make a motion to approve. Mr. Mulvey is here.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Good.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

I would like to be listed, Mr. Clerk, as a cosponsor. Mr. Mulvey does a lot of great work in my district.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Okay. Mr. Mulvey, did you want to come up and say hello? Welcome. I think I need a second on that, right?

**LEG. STERN:**

I'll second.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Okay. Seconded by Legislator Stern. Are there any questions of Mr. Mulvey? Any statements?

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Thank you for your service.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Mr. Mulvey, anything else you would like to add?

**MR. MULVEY:**

It's been a pleasure serving on the board and we have accomplished great things.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Oh, you were already on the board itself. I wouldn't have called you up then. Except now that you are here, thank you very much for your service. We do appreciate it.

**MR. MULVEY:**

Okay. Thank you. Thank you for allowing me to serve.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

There you go. Good luck on your next term.

**MR. MULVEY:**

I'm looking forward to it. Thank you.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Ronan, you don't have to come Tuesday to the General Meeting.

**MR. MULVEY:**

Okay.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

You are welcome.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Unless you are having a lot of fun.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

You can hear Mr. Morgo say what he said before. That'll be a treat. We have a motion to approve. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved. Thank you, Mr. Mulvey. **(Vote: 5-0-0-0).**

**MR. MULVEY:**

Thank you.

**1809, Amending prior Capital authorized appropriations for life safety alterations - planning (CP 2167.111) to life safety alterations - construction (CP 2167.311). (Co. Exec.)**

I assume that's more of the same.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Motion.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Motion to approve by Legislator Viloría-Fisher.

**LEG. STERN:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Second by Legislator Stern. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved. **(Vote: 5-0-0-0).**

**1828, Amending Adopted Resolution No. 703-2007, to appropriate General Funds for Capital Project 5739. (Co. Exec.)**

I'll make a motion to approve.

**LEG. STERN:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Seconded by Legislator Stern. We have a motion on the floor. I understand BRO -- Mr. Lipp would like to make a comment.

**MR. LIPP:**

This was a CN at the last General Meeting. What it does is it changes funding for pavement at the Gabreski Airport, \$4,500. The funding is changed from bonds to pay-as-you-go. The offset was the Legislature. So it's your option whether or not you want to use the Legislature as an offset. There are other alternatives to that also.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY.**

Oh, Okay.

**LEG. STERN:**

Motion to table.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Didn't you vote for the first one?

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Motion to table.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

We seem to have a motion to table by Legislator Stern, as well as Legislator Romaine. Table takes precedence. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved. The motion is tabled. **(Vote: 5-0-0-0)**. Find a new \$4,500 I guess it is -- 35 or 45?

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Forty-five hundred.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Forty-five. There you go. All right. I believe that completes the resolutions. We're going to move to Mr. Morgo and Michelle Isabelle-Stark.

**COMMISSIONER MORGO:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Welcome back.

**COMMISSIONER MORGO:**

I think you will find my delivery angst-free.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

I love your angst, Jim. Don't take any offense.

**COMMISSIONER MORGO:**

This actually is a very positive presentation and it's advisory for you for now. Not-for-profit cultural arts institutions are often an overlooked subset of the full economic development picture in Suffolk County. They contribute to our, number one, economic engine, tourism, the four billion dollar tourism industry. In fact, the recent Arts and Economic Prosperity Study that was nationwide indicated that Suffolk County's arts and cultural not-for-profits generate \$54 million to our economy every year.

The Citizens Advisory Board for the Arts, which you folks appoint the members, as you just appointed one and reappointed others, have a suggestion for the use of the grant money that you approve that comes from both the General Fund and the Hotel and Motel Tax. Your first appointee alluded to it, but I would like to ask Michelle Isabelle-Stark, who does a terrific job in coordinating our arts work across the county. She's a maestro at all the coordination of the disparate groups. And, in fact, it was at a meeting of the members of the group that this idea was hatched. I heard about it, I thought it made a lot of sense. It reflected some of the same principles that we worked with at the Downtown Advisory Panel of your appointees. So I would like to call Michelle and representative members of the Council to come up here. As I affectionately refer to Michelle, her highness, and the other members of the Council.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

Good afternoon. Sitting with me is Diana Cherryholmes, who is the Executive Director of the Huntington Arts Council, and Ray Zaccaro, who is the Executive Director of the Babylon Arts and Humanities Council. He also serves on the Citizens Arts Advisory Board.

Every year when we're about to create the grant applications for the upcoming year I meet with the

Arts Advisory Board to discuss what's worked well in the previous year and what's not working well. Over the four years I've been here the contract process, which has become very -- I would say it is an obstacle for very small groups. There are Legislative attachments such as living wage, lawful hiring, union organizing, which are very important I understand for contractors with the County, but for small arts groups it poses a real obstacle. They find the whole contract process, the contract template, highly intimidating. And these small groups are volunteer run. They don't have lawyers, they don't have accountants. They are volunteers that work in our communities.

We started -- I think four years ago we were getting 100 applications in for our grant program. That's down to about 70. There have been public statements by groups such as the Peconic Chamber Orchestra and the Folk Music Society of Huntington, which do great work in the County and actually draw audiences to their performances, and they have decided not to continue with the contract process in the County. They find just the requirements overwhelming.

So the Arts Board, in trying to find a solution to this problem, suggested that we adopt a model that's done through the State, through the New York State Council on the Arts. The New York State Council on the Arts provides what is called decentralization funds to local administrative sites throughout the State. These administrative sites actually regrant monies to small community groups that are not being funded directly by NYSCA.

I see the County in a perfect position to adopt this model because we have seven highly qualified arts councils that are geographically dispersed. We have Babylon represented, Huntington, Islip. I would also like to point out that Alison Cruz, from the Smithtown Township Arts Council is here. We have the Greater Port Jefferson Arts Council, the Brookhaven Arts Council and Mary Capasso is represented here. She is the Executive Director. And also the East End Arts Council. I think I have gotten them all, seven.

So what we are proposing is that the County allocate or appropriate monies to the seven arts councils who then in turn would regrant to the small community arts group directly. In order to do that we are proposing that a resolution be put forward in December after the budget is adopted so that we can get the monies to the arts council executive directors in the middle of the -- at the beginning of the year so that they can quickly act on and get the money to the community groups.

The larger organizations, including the arts councils, our theaters and our museums, would continue to go through the competitive process we developed, focusing on cultural tourism and downtown revitalization. So that would continue. But these groups are audited by CPA's. They do have professional staff, and they have people who understand the grant writing process, follow-up, reporting, and etcetera. So we think it is a win-win situation.

The entire -- it's unanimous. The entire Citizens Arts Advisory Board believes this is the way to go. And actually Fred Dufay is here as well, from Arena Players Theater. He is on our Arts Board. So I hope I -- I think I got everybody.

So Diana Cherryholmes, the Executive Director of the Huntington Arts Council -- Huntington Arts Council is the administrative site for the decentralization program of NYSCA, New York State Council on the Arts, in Suffolk County. She is going to tell you how that program works.

**MS. CHERRYHOLMES:**

Good afternoon.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Good afternoon.

**MS. CHERRYHOLMES:**

First of all, I want to thank you very much for your ongoing support of the arts in Suffolk County. Your support is very meaningful to all the arts groups that you do support. And on behalf of all the

groups we very much appreciate all that you do for us.

I'm here today to support this new proposal of the community block grant for Suffolk County. I think it's going to be a really terrific move on the part of Suffolk County.

The Huntington Arts Council has administrated the New York State Council on the Arts decentralization grant since 1978. And we also, since the year 2000, have been administrating J.P. Morgan/Chase regrant funds. This year, in 2008, we're going to be including an artist fellowship award for an environmental artist. The total grants that we're going to be regranting in 2008, not counting the potential funds for Suffolk, will be \$118,000.

The NYSCA decentralization process is structured with clear priorities, criteria. We allow certain flexibility within the program so that our panel members can have an opportunity to voice their opinions about the trends and the needs that they see in the arts community throughout Suffolk County. Decentralization of grants are awarded to individual artists that are sponsored by a not-for-profit organization. These artists are required to work within a community context, so often you might see them working in a library, with a social group. Grants are also awarded for not-for-profit organizations that present a program -- music program, dance, visual arts, and they all must contain a public component.

The Consortium of Arts Councils in Suffolk County is membership defined by the New York State Council on the Arts, and this group identifies panel members to adjudicate these applications. We have three separate panels for each year in the decentralization program. Each application is looked at individually. It is competitive. We don't look at the history of how they have been funded in the past and we like to look at each individual application in its own context, in its own geography and who they are serving as well as the quality of the program. That's very important because the grants that we receive range from very sophisticated organizations to some that are all volunteer driven organizations.

In J.P. Morgan/Chase funds we also award funds to the individual artists, again, working in a community context. Then we also award funds for capital purchases. These are for not-for-profit art organizations with an annual budget of \$300,000 or less.

So in the past we have funded awards to -- in Port Jefferson at Theater Three a retractable screen. Arena Players received awards to purchase new seats for one of their theaters. In Huntington, the {Crawl} Society received awards to purchase a keyboard. These are just some brief examples. And these are very important for these small organizations to get to another building block in their own organizational capacity.

Yes, there are many arts councils on Long Island and this is actually an asset to what we have here in our life in Suffolk County. We often work together and often consult with one another. Just in the past couple of weeks I have had conversations with Patricia Snyder in Riverhead and Lillian Barbash in Islip. Allan Varela is assisting the Long Island Dance Consortium in obtaining a 501C3 status for not-for-profit.

My point is that the proposal to bring together the Executive Directors of arts councils is not a new notion. And it is good that this is not a new idea because we already work together. Our mutual understanding and respect will enhance this new project of the community block grants. There are a number of counties in the State of New York that regrant their funds through arts councils and it just makes sense. It makes sense because it saves the County money, the arts councils are closer to these small individual arts groups, these not-for-profit arts groups. We can provide faster service and make the process much more friendly and easier for them, at the same time obtaining the necessary data that we need from these groups.

So I want to thank you again, thank you for your time for considering this proposal, and thank you for your support in the past.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Mr. Zaccaro.

**MR. ZACCARO:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's always fun to come back to the Legislature and see some of my old friends here and to keep in mind what a progressive body this has been throughout its history, specifically on areas of improving already preexisting policies such as this.

I heard some commentary earlier about a lot of the boards and commissions, and I would remiss if I didn't say that I had plenty of head scratching days here thinking about what some of these commissions do or don't do. This change out of our board I think is probably one of the more positive movements I've seen out of a County board in a while, at least in my experience.

One of the things that's appealing to the Cultural Advisory Board, I think, about this change in the granting process is that it will democratize the system a little bit and spread out some of the cultural activities throughout the County in a way that will promote and create new audiences for arts groups that need them desperately. Some of the organizations -- we're talking about groups that receive less than \$5,000 grants from this competitive application. For some of these organizations, that's all they need; that's their years programming. Five thousand dollars, \$2,500. They do one program a year, they get \$2,500 from someone privately, they get \$2,500 from this grant, and together they have a bang up year. That's what they're looking to do.

What I think this opportunity does is it creates a new avenue where the local arts counsel, being a representative of a region, can have these smaller groups and organizations have a spotlight opportunity that they wouldn't have otherwise had in their region. There are groups that are existing in the East End that might come to Babylon, and Babylon audiences might be developed for that group that otherwise didn't exist. So I think that that is the great democratizing factor here.

Also, the arts councils are set up in a manner that we can handle the administrative functions that these smaller groups can't handle, which is just touching on what Michelle spoke about earlier. We administer grants, that's what we do. We also look for new cultural programming all the time and our resources are getting more and more scarce as time goes on. This body is uniquely generous to the arts. And Legislator Horsley and Legislator Stern, being from the Town of Babylon, both of you have been generous to the Babylon Arts Council because you recognize the value of -- and not just the Babylon Arts Council but other arts organizations within the Town of Babylon. I know Legislator Horsley and I spoke about the Airmid Theater Company, an organization that he has supported in the past, and Arena Players in the town.

These organizations are vital drivers for the vibrance and cultural enrichment in our communities. We can now support them and act as an emissary to them, of the arts in the community creating new opportunities, not just for the smaller organizations, but also for the arts councils. Our programming base will grow, the audiences that we're serving will have new and better programs and more programs to enjoy. It will provide professional and artistic development opportunities for the organizations that are involved.

We will also have an opportunity to have a little bit more oversight, I think, over the quality of cultural programming. Some of these groups send in applications to us, the applications are nearly impossible for them, first of all. I can tell you having struggled through, with a full staff, having struggled through some County paperwork myself, that you could pull your hair out of your head before you get it done. It's not an easy process to get through. These groups are going to have better opportunities to learn about the grant making process by working with professionals in the granting system. We can help guide them to other opportunities down the line and just create more and more growth opportunities for them. I think that's another positive aspect to it, and we'll actually get to see what they do.

You know, there is an auditing component of being on the Cultural Advisory Board, and it would be almost impossible for the representatives to see every single program that gets granted from the County to approve whether or not these programs are actually going on, how useful they are, how functional they are, what kind of value they have. Well, when they are in our own backyard and I have a new theater company coming into Babylon Village to perform at the Conklin House let's say, I'm going to see it. I'm going to be a direct witness to the value of the cultural affairs funding that's going to come across.

And not to mention the fact, and this is something I'm sympathetic to having worked for the County, this alleviates some stress from the County. It's an extraordinary amount of administrative dollars that gets -- and time and energy that are expended on each grant. It's almost painful to even think about it. More painful when you are the one who is filling out the paperwork on our end and, you know, definitely have some temper tantrums over that. That's revealing too much about my personality.

The fact is I think this is a very positive movement. I think this is something that we should look at down the line as an example. I think it sets a great precedent for how to handle smaller dollar amounts in a more efficient way. I am fully in support of it. I also want to thank you again for your support of arts organizations, in particular Babylon Arts Council. You two have been phenomenal since you have come on to the Legislature. It's been great. Thank you very much.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Thank you, Ray. I do appreciate your comments. Is there anything else you would like to add at this time?

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

No, just if anybody has any questions?

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Yes, I just have a quick couple -- I know Mr. Romaine, also. I understand that there are seven arts councils. My understanding is that each is going to get 1/7th of the pie. Is that fair? Are they all the same? I mean, some councils I'm sure must be smaller than other arts councils. How does that work? How do you build fairness into the system?

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

Well, before -- I would argue that the system before this was not fair. If you look -- I actually distributed these which show where the groups that received under \$5,000 grants are from and where they are performing. You should have gotten a copy.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

I was tardy.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

It's up there. I would argue that even though there is a disparity in population size and in environmental characteristics and performing venues, I think this is actually going to provide more geographic diversity. We decided, the Arts Board, decided that the amount should be the same for each arts council. Before I would say that a lot of performances weighted towards Huntington and the East End just by virtue of the fact that they are known for their arts activities, actually in the metro area. I think this, as Ray pointed out, there are wonderful venues, like the Conklin House in Babylon and other places in Islip these groups don't even know about. And I think what it does for Suffolk County residents, it gives them more of an opportunity to experience the arts in their own neighborhoods rather than having to travel to where these groups have performed before.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Interesting.

**MR. ZACCARO:**

Actually, if I could just pick up on that. My reference to democratizing the system really is that we see routinely and is a great amount of frustration, and I think that it is something that I have discussed with you in the past, where we want these groups to know that we are here, the other arts councils that have sometimes maybe smaller budgets, maybe smaller staffs, but we still have the same ability and knowledge on how to administer quality art programs.

I think this goes further along the way to doing that by making it a equal system, by saying that the way these organizations are broken up regionally also through population density it really does work out. We wind up having kind of a similar audience. To move audiences from region to region, these things don't have to be stationary. The audience is not a stationary factor either. You know, we live in an area where people get in cars and go places. It would be great if we wind up having audiences experience the different areas throughout Long Island and that just adds to the goals of economic development in our downtowns and tourism throughout the Island, homegrown tourism.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

And one thing that I am requiring from the arts councils is an inventory of performance spaces and galleries that would be available for arts groups. We have a database of performing theaters that we know about, but I think in this way since the arts council directors know intimately their own areas and they know non-traditional places to perform, it is just going to add to the inventory of performance bases that groups have access to. So I think that's another positive aspect of this.

**MS. CHERRYHOLMES:**

This is really about audience development. I mean, at its core improving the artist marketplace.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Even if Huntington gets less?

**MS. CHERRYHOLMES:**

Well, you know, it's about -- this grant is talking about where the performance is located, not the home residence of the performing group. So that doesn't mean that the Huntington groups will get less. Our service area is greater than Huntington, obviously serving Nassau and Suffolk Counties with our existing regrants. What this will do, it will improve the artist marketplace. So let's say identifying additional communities in the Patchogue area so that our artist groups will have that opportunity. But it is not just about finding the venue. It's going to be about outreaching to those audience members to come and see the performance.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Okay. I come to Heckscher all the time, so.

**MS. CHERRYHOLMES:**

Good.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

There you go. One more question. The issue of member items. That is outside of this system all together?

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

Yes. This has nothing to do with member items. This is our cultural grant programs, the competitive program that's --

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

It's tourism dollars and --

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

Well, yeah. We get funding allocated to this office and that's what I administer. So it is nothing to do with that.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Okay. Just double checking. Mr. Romaine.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Let me start off by asking how much money, let's take this year, the Operating Budget year of 2007, has the County allocated for cultural arts?

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

The entire amount or just for those under 5,000?

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Because your group is going to deal only with those under 5,000?

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

Correct.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Okay. Let's do the entire amount, and then the amount under 5,000.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

The entire amount was approximately 700,000.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

So the County government in its \$2.8 billion budget is spending \$700,000 on cultural arts.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

Correct.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

For one and a half million people.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

Right.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Okay. Now let's proceed from that 700,000 and change budget and how much of that is for agencies under \$5,000.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

Seventy-eight thousand.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Seventy-eight thousand dollars. And what you want to do is take the seven cultural arts situations and divide that 78,000 up seven ways, and correct me if I'm wrong.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

Actually we want it to be 105,000 divided seven ways.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Have you got the County Executive to be more generous?

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

No, this is coming out of the \$700,000 budget.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

I thought you said there was only \$78,000.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

That was in 2007. For 2008 we are proposing 105,000.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Okay. That is your requested budget.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

Correct.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Do you know what the County Executive's recommended budget is? Do you think it is going to be the same?

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

I think it is going to be the same.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Okay. Optimism springs eternal.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

I would also like to point out that we have two sources of funds for cultural arts. One is the General Fund, which has been about \$200,000 per year, the other is the Hotel/Motel Tax which last year was \$458,000.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

And you think the Hotel/Motel Tax will be greater --

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

Yes, it will be because we have more rooms in the inventory and demand I guess is going up and so prices are going up.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

So you think you will have more money. So you are going to deal with about \$105,000 for those 5,000 and under, and you'd like to split that seven ways.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

Correct.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

And the reason you feel that you could do that is because by doing that the Arts Council could provide administrative oversight that a lot of these small organizations could not provide.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

Exactly, at a much cheaper rate than we can.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Right. And you think that to get a \$5,000 grant, so much of that grant -- let's say it's \$5,000. Let's be generous and say that's the top level. So much of that grant has to be dedicated to administrative services because the current regulations that are in effect.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

You can -- it's going to be up to 20 percent. You can allocate up to 20 percent towards

administrative costs.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

And you think that's enough to comply with the contract regulations as spelled out currently by the Chief Deputy County Executive Mr. Sabatino.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

Yes.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

And the contracts that appear on his desk.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

Right.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

And you think that by doing this you can expedite the approval of those contracts, provide the administrative oversight for the small organizations.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

Well, the contracts would be -- the way I'm looking at the contracts would be with the arts councils. We would contract with the arts council and they would then regrant. So these organizations would subcontractors to them.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Right, okay. I understand, I'm supportive of the concept. I'm just concerned that we're so concerned with procedures that it makes me wonder about the efficiency of government. Although I guess we shouldn't have to wonder about government efficiency. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

It's exhilarating. Any other questions from my colleagues? Just a quick question I would have. If you are filling out the paperwork and the like, the different seven organizations, is there -- and one of your clients, smaller groups grew up and they -- they get audited and you do the -- you're the ones that filled out their paperwork, responsible for their paperwork. What kind of liability does this organization then have?

**MS. CHERRYHOLMES:**

I'll address that. As I understand what the process will be is through the regranting if a smaller organization somehow misuses or doesn't use the funds appropriately, it needs to be returned back to the organization. This is what we do in decentralization. If the organization for whatever --

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

And that would be your responsibility to go get it?

**MS. CHERRYHOLMES:**

Yes, and they do return it, because then they lose the opportunity of receiving future grants through the decentralization pool. So, for instance, they will give it back to us, we'll hold the money, and then we'll role it over for the future year. And that does happen occasionally. Sometimes the actual project will shift in minor ways, that needs to be approved. That's usually never a problem. I highly approve of auditing. Any public funds that are being spent in any kind of not-for-profit agency or otherwise should be audited. I think that's terrific that you are doing it. The Town of Huntington is now doing that.

**MR. ZACCARO:**

I just want to pick up on one aspect of that. I believe we dealt with this on the Cultural Advisory Board, too, where it was an organization that did not comply with what their grant was from the

previous year and they were forced to return the money to the County. I don't expect that these boards, that the arts councils would really operate in any different way.

But I also want to address something that Legislator Romaine said just briefly, which is that you hit upon something really important. Number one is that the County is only spending \$700,000 out of a two billion dollar plus budget on cultural affairs, and I think that's a very -- that may be a little bit of a minimal number because there are member item grants that come into play. So it just might be slightly more than that but not much. And in consideration of how much, as Mr. Morgo spoke earlier, how much money we drive into the economy, this doesn't seem to be an appropriate offset. So it is something I would encourage you to consider in your operating budget next year.

But also just on an application issue. We have -- we already are reporting on grants that we receive as arts councils from this Cultural Advisory Board. We receive much larger grants on our applications, our competitive applications. I think most of us are in the 20 to \$30,000 range, somewhere around there, and so we're already very familiar with how to handle the final reports. I would imagine, and I think in our discussions on the committee the idea would be that this new allotment would be parlayed into our existing final report, so it doesn't create a new mound of paperwork. If anything, it eliminates dozens of organizations' paperwork. And the idea was also to create an application process that was much more convenient to the smaller organizations. That, I think, is vital because they're intimidated by this application. I'm intimidated by the application. I don't even like to look at it.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Could I suffer the Chairman to ask a quick question?

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Sure.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

I'm sure you get money from the State, the State of New York.

**MR. ZACCARO:**

Correct.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Could you compare the State of New York contracting and payment processes to those currently employed by Suffolk County government? Would you say that the State processes -- payment processes might be easier and the payments might be more timely than that of Suffolk County?

**MR. ZACCARO:**

Actually, more timely I wouldn't necessarily say. I can say that for State money it's taken us at times months and months and months beyond when we were supposed to receive money. We've also run into, at least from my organization, and I have heard other horror stories, too, when the State budget runs late, which we are all much more accustomed than when it comes on time. I mean, we've only had two opportunities of that so far. It varies. But there are some efficiencies built into the State system that I don't think the County has managed yet. At the same time, there are some efficiencies built into the County system. The accessibility to contact the appropriate people and move items along in the County is miles ahead of anything in the State. Calling the State is like throwing raindrops into the ocean. It just doesn't really get you anywhere.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

So the lesson is behold those who depend on government revenues to fund arts because it could be slow, it could be cumbersome, and it may not even show up at all.

**MR. ZACCARO:**

I think Michael Angelo experienced that with the Sistine Chapel, too, so I don't think it is anything

new.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

He constantly complained to the Pope, the Pope didn't listen. I hope that our pope over there, P.S. II, is listening.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

From the Legislature to the Pope. I love it. This Legislature is ever reaching. Ms. Viloría-Fisher.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Interesting thinking about things having to do with Rome. I am thinking of the Center for Italian Studies last year where they didn't find out that there was something missing in their application until it was too late for them to get a grant and spend the money. So I'm hoping -- and that's a small group. So I am hoping that with this kind of scenario that that umbrella group would be able to get the information as to what might be missing in an application or -- but -- well, they wouldn't have to be doing individual applications.

**MR. ZACCARO:**

Well, they would be doing individual applications, but I think it would be a much more streamlined application process than what currently exists.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

And would they be doing that application to Suffolk County or to the umbrella group.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

Well, it's a combination of the two. The application for the community groups is being modeled after the decentralization application, which is much simpler than the one that I require that they fill out. And -- but we will be -- I will be looking at the applications and our Arts Board will be reviewing them. The arts councils will be administering them and they plan on meeting, you know, having these meetings to discuss where the different groups are going to be performing because they could be performing in multiple jurisdictions.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Legislator Stern.

**LEG. STERN:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And anything that we can do, that you can do to facilitate the process obviously is most welcome. I have a question. I think we've already decided that, and it is pretty clear that these are for the grants that are going to come -- the working number is 105,000. That's the money that we are talking about here. What about for those groups that might be on this list or any other groups that might receive member items or funding from other sources through other programs in the County.

I guess my question is what, if any, assistance would you provide to those smaller groups to handle that application process which is not coming through the 105,000 that is going to be administered by your organization and are we essentially now setting up two different processes because you're streamlining your efforts and you're modeling it on something else and yet these small organizations, when they have perhaps these even smaller grants that they're trying to work on, they are going to have to now go through the same process that we continue to employ here at the County.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

Unless you want to turn your member items over to the arts councils. I mean, the idea is it is a

different process. They are going through a competitive process. These are judged. They are applications that are judged. So it is already a different process to begin with. And I -- you know, they can't -- I mean, they are already doing -- the arts councils are already contracting with the County. So they are the ones that are absorbing all of that administrative paperwork and the living wage. That's what they are taking on. So they are kind of buffering the smaller groups from that.

**LEG. STERN:**

And I think it's the right idea. I guess my question would be what, if any, assistance could the organization continue to provide those smaller groups that are continuing their efforts for their funding. Could they look to you in the future to help them with that process as well.

**MS. CHERRYHOLMES:**

Possibly. We do offer grant writing workshops. And when it comes to specific grants that are unrelated to the direct grants we do try to assist, and I think every arts council in Suffolk County that I am aware of does assist these non-profit organizations and individual artists because individual artists are -- do apply for other grants. That kind of hand holding that they need, that's what we are here for, down to using our copy machine and computer if need be.

**MR. ZACCARO:**

There's also another piece of this which is that the current system as it exists is a competitive system which its very nature pits a smaller organization applying to the same pool of money as a larger organization, and I think that -- although we all work together very closely, I think that there is kind of a veil of competition there that would be eliminated here through this program that might create the kind of relationship and open door policy that don't otherwise exist. Where some of these groups, even though they are very informed about the arts councils and they approach us for programming opportunities, I don't think they really realize to some extent, I mean, some of them do, the value of the arts councils as advisors to them because one of the most significant grants in this County is a competitive grant.

So the very nature of the grant makes it almost an adversarial relationship between these organizations and I think this might help break that down and give us the opportunity to show these smaller organizations new future funding opportunities and maybe create the relationship that would say you need help filling out that final report for your Legislative member item grant? Sure, come down to the office, we do them all of time. But I think that this is the foot in the door in establishing that kind of relationship, so.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

And that's a really good point because there are other government sources of funds that -- with grant workshops. The Foundation Center in New York City does great workshops. We could have them come out. So, yeah, that's -- and using the equipment of the arts councils to make copies and their computers is also a value to the smaller groups who don't have that necessarily.

**MR. ZACCARO:**

It gives us the opportunity to be more service oriented, which is kind of what our charge is from the State. You know, the State Arts Council really looks at us and says you guys are supposed to be a service organization to the smaller arts groups. Some of us have the facility to do that, some of us don't because the arts groups don't necessarily know that that's what we're here for. This will kind of force the hand in that.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Thank you.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

I just have one more question for Michelle and Robert Lipp. Michelle said one way that you could do that and make it part of this, I guess, kind of consortium, is that you have your member item money that's going, or CSI's, go through this system. Bob, is that a possible way to do this? If we have

CSI's that are going to arts groups, can we direct them to the councils to go through the same kind of system and add money to -- you know, there are smaller art groups here that I know that I give CSI's -- who I provide CSI's for. They are already in this group. They are getting cultural arts money. But can that money be commingled?

**MR. LIPP:**

I don't like the term commingled, but I believe it's --

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

It's just something Michelle said and I was just wondering if that were a possibility.

**MR. LIPP:**

I don't think there is a definitive answer. I think it is a Legislative policy, and I think that since the CSI process is new this year it's up to the Legislature how they want to continue with that process. It's a very difficult thing. I think, you know, what is being observed as we go along is groups are coming in and thinking that they are here to get funding and they discover no, we are just trying to see if this is the appropriate place to go. So it may be, you know, may be a way that the Legislature wants to go. I think you have to construct the policy yourself. It's a policy issue.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

I know my office spends quite a bit of time walking people through what they have to do and calling them up and reminding them, and sometimes when it is an all volunteer organization you can't reach somebody. So I just thought that that might facilitate.

**MR. LIPP:**

One thought that comes to mind, though, is because you have this large group of agencies that you are trying to bring together, one possibility would be, you know, your oversight could be of their organization as opposed to of the plethora of sub-organizations. The problem always is with the contract agencies it's hard to figure out, you know, what they're really doing. There are always going to be cases where, you know, money might not be spent properly. So if you could like sort of hold this organization's feet to the fire and be satisfied that they are doing a good job, then that might take some of the burden off of you.

**MS. ISABELLE-STARK:**

There is one -- I'm thinking of the Long Island Community Fund which is kind of a model, I think, for what you are talking about where foundations or philanthropists use the fund to actually funnel money to groups that they want to receive the funds. It's the Long Island Community Fund that provides the administration and oversight because for the smaller philanthropist it doesn't make sense to set up their own private foundation. It sounds somewhat similar to that.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Keep in mind we'd have to work on -- there's administrative cost on this that these art councils would be taking out of each and every one of our CSI's, which would make them smaller yet. There you go. Anything you would like to add? It's been very illuminating. Okay. Everybody good?

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Motion to adjourn.

**CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:**

Motion to adjourn.

(\*THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 3:55 P.M.\*)