

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, November 12, 2008.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Legislator Wayne Horsley - Chairman
Legislator Steve Stern - Vice-Chair
Legislator Cameron Alden
Legislator Lou D'Amaro
Legislator John Kennedy

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

George Nolan - Counsel to the Legislature
Joe Muncey - Budget Review Office
Renee Ortiz - Chief Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
Ben Zwirn - Deputy County Executive
Carolyn Fahey - Economic Development
George Gatta - Suffolk Community College
Jim Whitten - Suffolk Community College
Lenny Stucker - Suffolk County Film Commission
Michelle Isabelle Stark - Economic Development/Workforce Housing
Debra Alloncius - AME
All other interested parties

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Donna Catalano - Court Stenographer

MINUTES TRANSCRIBED BY:

Denise Weaver - Legislative Aide

(*THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 2:34 P.M.*)

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Good afternoon everybody. I feel like we're on -- here they are. I was just going to start. Is the rest the gang coming?

LEG. D'AMARO:

Yeah, the meeting broke up so they should be on their way.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

All right. I guess I -- we'll now that we have a quorum, why don't we stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

SALUTATION

And may we stand for a moment of silence particularly in light of being the day after Veterans Day for all those who protect our freedoms both here and across the sea.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Thank you very much. Please be seated. All right. We have one card from a Harvey Kamil. Harvey, why don't you come on up concerning 1867, which is the reference to Empire Zone.

MR. KAMIL:

Yes, sir. Again we're -- I think we've been before the Legislature again we've -- we have built in the process of building a bar plant, a protein bar plant in Amityville. We've told you the amount of jobs we'll be creating. I believe we've submitted those records. NBTY is a Long Island based company and committed to developing Long Island employment and making sure that we keep industry here on Long Island.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay. Thank you very much. Is there anything else you'd like to add at this point in time?

MR. KAMIL:

No, but the bars -- those high calorie bars are right in front of you. That's all. And they are -- and just to make sure they are current bars, you know.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

They are, we -- I wasn't going to say anything.

MR. KAMIL:

Never again.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

They are very good. We were eating them in the office the other day.

MR. KAMIL:

Good.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

So -- high -- they come with high recommendations from my staff. Is there anything -- Carolyn, where are we at with this?

MS. FAHEY:

Good afternoon. The public hearing was closed. It's the last meeting. It's back in front of the committee for consideration.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

That's why it's back, okay. I just wanted to make sure I understood that. All right. Very good. Well, thank you very much. And why don't we do this, I know that Mr. D'Amaro's got to leave a little early, he's got another appointment. So why don't we do the agenda first and then we'll move into the presentations which are very important and enlightening. The -- on the agenda I have a tabled prime

TABLED PRIME RESOLUTIONS

1770, Reappoint member to the Suffolk County Community College Board of Trustees (Frank Trotta) (Browning) Do I have a motion on that?

LEG. D'AMARO:

Motion to table, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Motion to table, I'll second that motion. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved. **Tabled. (VOTE: 3-0-0-2 Not Present: Legislator Stern and Legislator Alden)**

1866, Adopting Local Law No. -2008, A Local Law to establish uniform procedures for issuance of film permits. (Co. Exec. Levy) I'll make a motion to approve.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Second.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Second by Legislator D'Amaro. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved. **Approved. (VOTE: 3-0-0-2 Not Present: Legislator Stern and Legislator Alden)**

1867, Adopting Local Law No. -2008, A Local Law amending the Suffolk County Empire Zone Boundaries to include NBTY, Inc. (SCTM No. 0100-126.01-01.00-004.050). (Co. Exec. Levy) And we'll put Mr. Kamil maybe out of his misery here and I'll make a motion to approve 1867. Do I have a second on the motion? Mr. Kennedy, second on the motion?

LEG. KENNEDY:

No. I don't want to second, but I do just want to ask a question on it, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay. Do I have a second on the motion, Mr. D'Amaro?

LEG. D'AMARO:

For discussion purposes, Mr. Chairman, I'll be happy to second the motion.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Should I have waited for the full committee to be here?

LEG. D'AMARO:

I don't know. Why don't you ask Mr. Kennedy?

LEG. KENNEDY:

Mr. Chair, I just want to ask, I know that Carolyn had forwarded some material to me recently and I wanted to just discuss with her or again, Mr. Kamil, maybe we covered this the last time, I understand I think, the magnitude of the project, the volume certainly, you know, think it's commendable that you're looking to go ahead and expand. And, yes, as a matter of fact I'll say your bars are good stuff.

My question is simple, is the work done -- has it been completed? Is it underway and are you using prevailing wage contractors?

MR. KAMIL:

It's underway. It's for the most part is just about completed and the answer is we -- when we say we've gone through the listing at your request, by the way, and thank you very much because I really never focused in it. And in focusing in and I have the listing in front of me, of a project of more than \$3 million, approximately \$2 million is being done by union companies.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay.

MR. KAMIL:

But it's -- so it's both union and nonunion. It's being -- it's in union wages I assume union wages, but more than two-thirds is the union.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Just so that you know, I appreciate you taking a look at that and bringing that information to us. For the department, as a matter of fact, I don't know if the Commissioner's ever had an opportunity to hear me with this conversation before. Clearly as a Legislator, I cannot direct any contractor to whom you should use. All I ever ask with any contractor who's coming before us seeking this benefit, is that you provide an open forum for all contractors out there to bid. Previously we've had occasions were some proponents or applicants for the benefit have purportedly not kept an open platform when soliciting bids for construction work. In this case, clearly you must have, you've got a mix, I guess, between union and nonunion entities.

MR. KAMIL:

And they work very well together. And we always keep it open.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Good.

MR. KAMIL:

And when you look at the major jobs, the HVAC Union, the Plumbing Union, so when we go through all the major projects are union jobs.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. I appreciate that. I appreciate you taking the time to go through that. That helps me with some of my decision making.

*(*Legislator Stern entered the meeting*)*

And again, it goes to the notion that if there is a public benefit that's sought and a public benefit to be had, then it should be an open and fair and aboveboard bidding process that all entities can participate in.

MR. KAMIL:

We're total agreement.

LEG. KENNEDY:

If you were a private entity electing to construct without seeking this public benefit, I would have no ability to suggest anything to you, but here we are in the public forum so I appreciate that. Thank you very much.

*(*Legislator Alden entered the meeting*)*

MR. KAMIL:

But thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

All righty. Are there any further questions? Mr. D'Amaro.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think we've -- where did the gentleman go? I'm sorry, I had a couple of questions, thank you. I know we've been through this before, but one of the problems I have is we hear a few of these and I'm not sure which testimony relates to which application so forgive me if I'm being redundant. I'll try and move very quickly. You're locating or this Empire Zone is being located in north Amityville. Is that correct?

MR. KAMIL:

Yes, sir.

LEG. D'AMARO:

And are you presently operating at that site?

MR. KAMIL:

It's not being operated, but it will be operating at that site, yes.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Right. So you're constructing a new building?

MR. KAMIL:

Not a new building, no. The building was there already.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Oh, you're moving in.

MR. KAMIL:

It was a bankrupt company.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Okay.

MR. KAMIL:

It was Sweet Productions, if you recall the name.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Okay, right.

MR. KAMIL:

It went out of business. We bought the plant and we then have started -- we invested machinery and equipment and have been -- and hiring back the people from the -- who were originally working for the company.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Right. And your projected job creation goal at the site is what?

MR. KAMIL:

I don't have the numbers. I guess it was 50 to 150, something like that. I don't have the numbers in front of me, I apologize for not being prepared.

LEG. D'AMARO:

It's okay.

MR. KAMIL:

But it was between 50 and 150 jobs.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Fifty to 150 jobs.

MR. KAMIL:

Yes. I think it's starting at 50, will go up to 150 jobs.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Okay. And what's the name of complex in north Amityville where you're locating to? Is it --

MR. KAMIL:

New Horizons.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Is it New Horizons?

MR. KAMIL:

Yes.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Okay. All right. Okay, yeah, I do recall this. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. KAMIL:

My pleasure. No, I'm not going to get down till later. I didn't mean to be disrespectful. I was walking out because I didn't know -- if you have any questions?

LEG. D'AMARO:

Oh, that's all right.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

We're good? All righty.

MR. KAMIL:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Thank you very much, Mr. Kamil. And I got to tell you that being a Legislator from Babylon I'm very appreciated of the fact that you're opening a manufacturing plant in the Town of Babylon that is in our grand County of Suffolk and that's something that goes a long way. By the way, I was involved in the Sweet Productions going back a couple of years ago when I was involved with Economic Development. I'm very surprised that they didn't make it. I mean, they seem to be well on their way. But I'm glad you're here and I'm glad that you're growing and expanding in the Town of Babylon. I'll make the motion to approve.

Do I have a second on the motion?

LEG. STERN:

I'll second.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Second by Legislator Stern. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved. It's been moved to the Legislature. **APPROVED (VOTE: 5-0)** Very good. Congratulations.

MR. KAMIL:

Thank you.

INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

1893, Reappoint Nancy J. Duncan as a member of the Suffolk County Citizens Advisory Board for the Arts. (Eddington) Do I have a motion? Does she have to be here as a reappointment? Okay. I'll make the motion to approve, second by Legislator Stern. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved. **APPROVED (VOTE: 5-0)**

1934, Establishing an Energy Conservation Policy for Suffolk County Electrical Agency. (Horsley) I guess we have a little more tweaking to do on this. And though I was going to put it forward today, I'm going to ask that we table 1934. May I have a second on the motion?

LEG. D'AMARO:

I'll second.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Second by Legislator D'Amaro. All those in favor? Opposed? It has been tabled. **TABLED (VOTE: 5-0)**

All right. At this point in time I'd like to call up George Gatta and/or the representatives from the college, Mr. Jim Whitten, Vice-President of Workforce and Economic Development, concerning the faculty and staff housing Brentwood Campus and basically giving us an update of where that proposal is.

Good afternoon, gentlemen. And thank you for your patience today. Sorry about our tardiness.

MR. GATTA:

Well, coming from a college, you know, we generally wait on professors so waiting on the Legislature is not a big deal. We're happy to be here and have an opportunity to speak.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Usually my recollection is that if you're -- as myself I'm an adjunct professor, usually what, you wait 15 minutes and then you get a half hour for a full professor? I feel lucky.

MR. GATTA:

A half hour is correct. We have two items that we would like to address the committee on this afternoon. I'm joined by Jim Whitten, he's our new Vice-President, well, not so new, he's been here six, seven months now, Vice-President for Workforce and Economic Development.

The first is a proposal that has been discussed not at any great length, but has been kicked around for a number of years and that was -- and that is to develop some faculty and staff workforce housing at our Grant Campus. And Jim will get into that.

Secondly, I just wanted to make the committee aware that about two hours ago we received a copy of the Governor's proposed budget cuts that he's asked the Legislature -- the State Legislature to address next Tuesday when they reconvene -- next Monday when they reconvene in Albany. The impact on the Community College is particularly devastating. And it really relates to the size of the college. The Governor's proposed a cut of anywhere between five an 11% reduction in state aid to community colleges; small colleges, those with under 3000 full-time equivalents would be cut, \$160 per full-time equivalent. Those between three and six thousand students, full-time equivalent students, will be cut 230. And he's proposed a \$300 per FTE cut for the larger community colleges, such as Suffolk Community College with above 6000 full-time equivalent students. We have approximately 17,300 full-time equivalent students so that translates to us to a reduction in this year's budget of a little more than \$5,200,000.

So we have been preparing for potential cut. We didn't -- we had no idea it would be of this magnitude. Several months ago the Governor had proposed cutting about 6%, so this is almost double that amount. We are looking at every aspect of our budget. It is particularly troublesome given the fact that at a time when the economy is in the worst shape it's been in many, many, many years and more and more students are coming to us, our enrollment for the fall semester, this current semester is up 4.6%. We have projected an increase of 2.75% in our budget.

So it's very challenging to meet the demand and the demand does not appear to be diminishing. The SUNY four-year institutions have been forces to cutback. We're hearing reports that the four-year institutions are not in a position to accept transfer students. So looking towards the spring semester and next year, we believe they'll be even more demand for students coming to the Community College. So it's going to be very challenging to manage an in institution with a growing enrollment, which requires an increased number of faculty members to provide the instruction when you've got a reduction of that magnitude potentially coming from the state. We're hopeful that when the State Legislature meets next week, it will be less than is proposed, but we're not, you know, we know it that it could be that severe at this point. And that doesn't take into account what could be happening in next year's state budget.

So again, we're examining every aspect of our budget and we'll be keeping the committee informed on a regular basis of the actions that we need to take to make sure that we can maintain the full opportunity program that we provide. Maintain access for students that don't have opportunities to attend either a public four-year institution, a SUNY institution or a CUNY institution and can't afford to go to a private college because of their high cost. That's where we are on that.

If you have any questions on that, I'd be glad to address that now and then Jim can give you a briefing on what we're looking at and we're in the very beginning phases of looking at the workforce faculty and staff housing at the Grant campus.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Right. Well, the first when it comes to mind and Legislator Stern just whispered in my ear, he goes, *you know, boy that -- that'll throw off if you can't take a transfer student from the two year schools to the four, that'll throw off academic plans forever for some students.*

MR. GATTA:

Absolutely.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

My -- the first thing that comes to mind because this is devastating news and certainly a blow to our community and to our college. What is -- in any of these contingency plans is there any plans or even is it even legally feasible to cap the number of students that would come to -- come to the Community College? And that being one question. And then the second follow-up to that, is do we jump on board with the rest of the SUNY presidents who are considering tuition increases? I mean, where are we?

MR. GATTA:

The College's objective and its mission has always been to be open access.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Right.

MR. GATTA:

And to be full opportunity, meaning students that need even remedial work can come, take the remedial work and then pursue a degree at the college level. So our mission is to try to ensure that we can maintain all of that.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

And that's secured. That is what we're going to do.

MR. GATTA:

Well, that's our mission, that's our objective and that's our goal. Again, we will do everything we can to maintain that access. We will have to have contingency plans and we're going to be looking at every aspect of the operation. So without increased support from somewhere, it will be very challenging. So that's why I wanted to bring this to the committees attention today and let you know that we're --

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Are you looking at tuition fees?

MR. GATTA:

We're looking at everything.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

And that would be the Board of Trustees would --

MR. GATTA:

That would be the Board of Trustees, exactly. Thankfully we are the lowest tuition of any institution on Long Island. So, you know, that is a possibility.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

What level of increase, tuition increase, if the County was not able to assist, what level of tuition increase make the College whole at this point in time?

MR. GATTA:

At this point, I really can't predict that. Oh, you know, it'll have to be a combination of where we can economize within the existing budget. We have and as we discussed at the full Legislature and at the committee this past summer, we don't believe it's in the College's best interest to use reserves in the current year and we're going to do everything possible to avoid using the reserves that were put there to balance the budget this year. We really feel it's important that given the uncertainty of next year's budget that we really need those in place to safeguard against a significant tuition increase, not knowing where the County might be and looking at the state in their fiscal condition. We don't believe there will be anything additional from the state, there may be the likelihood of additional cuts.

So we're doing everything to be as conservative as possible on the spending side and we'll be looking at every option on the revenue side to make sure that we can maintain access. So I can't predict at this point what, you know, exactly where it will be, but we'll keep you informed.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Please do. As you would expect we are vitally interested in this issue. Legislator D'Amaro.

LEG. D'AMARO:

No, I just wanted to comment that we just went through that with our budget here in Suffolk County where the revenue streams are decreasing while the costs are going up exponentially. Same problem. We're going to experience some cuts, I'm sure, as a County, from the State of New York. I haven't seen the proposed cuts, I guess you've already focused on them -- how they affect the Community College.

But the difficulty is going to be, as the Chairman points out, how do you make up the revenue? You know, during our Operating Budget we just provided a million dollars in funding to make up for several million dollars in cuts of state aid to childcare. But, you know, we can't keep continually doing that because, I mean, we would like to, but we just don't have the funds available to do that at this time.

So I agree with you, Mr. Gatta, everything has to be on the table when you're making some tough decisions when it comes to these budgets. It's a difficult time for everyone. But I would want to believe that when the State of New York finally enacts its cuts, it would have to place education and funding community colleges pretty high on the priority list to not cut or not cut as severely because this is the institutions that are providing folks in the middle class who cannot afford to go to the private institutions, especially access to education.

MR. GATTA:

Right.

LEG. D'AMARO:

So I would hope that would be the message that's heard up in Albany. And if there's anything that I can do to help you with that, please let me know.

MR. GATTA:

We appreciate that. Thank you.

LEG. D'AMARO:

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Legislator Kennedy.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Thanks. George, a couple of things, one, first of all, the policy about a student going from Suffolk Community to a SUNY facility, that is permissive or that is something that the student has a right to exercise? I was always under the impression that there was a hundred percent transferability from any of our community colleges into a SUNY college.

MR. GATTA:

We have -- we have any number of articulation agreements with the SUNY institutions and private institutions where a student who graduates from Suffolk, their credits are accepted. What's happened this year, and what is happening is that the four-year institutions have been cut back already by the state upwards of \$200 million. They don't have the resources to take additional students. So of them have already indicated they don't have the resources to take additional students mid-year.

The Governor's also proposed today that the four-year institutions increase their tuition by \$600 per year, which is about a 15% increase in tuition. So it would go from \$4350 to \$4950. Still under the maximum of the Pell grant, which is around 5000, \$5100 to try to keep it affordable. So they're dealing with the four-year institutions at this point by increasing revenues. They've already had the reduction.

So, but getting back to question, we do have those agreements, but they four-year institutions are saying they just don't have the seats in the classrooms available at this time.

LEG. KENNEDY:

You know, the College has embarked, I guess, on a, what I think is a very positive role with the creation of the endowment funds and the foundation. And you had us out there in the summer to meet some of the students that were beneficiaries of several of those grants. And I'm just curious as we're well into this first semester how that incoming group of students are doing? Are you tracking them as they're going through the process here?

MR. GATTA:

Absolutely. We're not just tracking the get there from here scholars, which is the recent \$5 million endowment that's been put in place. But we're also tracking the students that are in our College Success Program. These are students that have been challenged academically, they volunteered to come in during the summer for a couple of weeks of extra help prior to the start of -- the start of school, the academic calendar in the fall. And I'm pleased to report that they're doing well.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. So your endgame or end goal as far as being able to graduate students who've got a particular degree and skill is kind of staying there as the outer objective?

MR. GATTA:

They're being given as much support as they College can provide. They have their own counselor that they can see for academic counseling. They've got study groups. They've got tutoring. A great deal of support is going into the students that need that help.

*(*Legislator D'Amaro left the meeting*)*

LEG. KENNEDY:

You know, the other thing that comes to mind I just saw yesterday, where DHL is shutting down its facilities here on Long Island and we have a facility in Ronkonkoma. And one of the individuals who's a driver was talking about the fact that seeing that there was going to be a downturn and closure of this facility, they elected to enroll in an Oil Heat Technician Training Programming. Now I know you have that program over on the Grant Campus. Right?

MR. GATTA:

Yes, we do.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Yeah, it just -- it makes absolutely no sense at all to take away these opportunities from people that are impacted. And this was a 60-year old gentlemen, so. If you could share a copy of that briefing that you got with my office, I would appreciate it.

MR. GATTA:

I have a copy here if someone could make it we could distribute it.

LEG. KENNEDY:

I'll get a copy of it.

MR. GATTA:

This is the Governor's deficit reduction plan that came out today.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay.

LEG. ALDEN:

Wayne?

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Yes, Legislator Alden.

LEG. ALDEN:

You done?

LEG. KENNEDY:

Yeah.

LEG. ALDEN:

George, prior to this, what was -- I know we strive for a like a 33, 33, 33% so a third from us, Suffolk County, a third from the state and a third in tuition. What was New York State's contribution prior to this?

MR. GATTA:

Well, this hasn't been adopted yet, but assuming that, yeah, in this year's budget we are at approximately 42% student, 30 to 31% state and about 25%, maybe a little higher than 25% from the County.

LEG. ALDEN:

From the County.

MR. GATTA:

So it's a third, a third, a third has gradually gone more -- more of a burden, much more of a burden is placed on the student. But the state has -- the state has been increasing their FTE over the -- their FTEA their base aid other past four or five years.

LEG. ALDEN:

And that was from what to what? They were down around what, 29?

MR. GATTA:

They were down around 28%, 29%. And now they're up to about with us about 31%.

LEG. ALDEN:

So maybe two, three percent?

MR. GATTA:

Yes.

LEG. ALDEN:

And that was in economic times that we've never seen before. A year ago the stock market peaked at whatever Dow Jones was up 14,000 and the money was rolling into New York State; it makes you wonder what they were doing with the money because they certainly didn't give it to community colleges. They certainly didn't give it to us to have our -- to continue with our health education and those type of programs for people that live in Suffolk County so makes you wonder.

MR. GATTA:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Thank you very much, Mr. Alden. Is there any further questions on this matter? Legislator Stern.

LEG. STERN:

Thank you. I don't recall if it was asked before, but, George, what would you say the timing is here?

So ultimately the state comes up with their plan, it has a devastating impact, at what point does that then carry over to the Community College? Is that halfway through the year, do we get to finish up the semester and does it apply for next year? How do you see that going?

MR. GATTA:

What is proposed as we understand it is those -- these cuts would take effect immediately and would impact us for our entire years reimbursement. So it's basically if it's adopted it would be a retroactive cut for our academic year, which begins on September 1st.

LEG. STERN:

But we're past September 1st so students are already in class and that's going forward. So as a practical matter, when does that really happen at midterm before spring semester starts?

MR. GATTA:

We would need to act quickly. So if there were changes in any fees that we would have to adopt that before the start of the spring semester, which is the end of January.

LEG. STERN:

So it's -- at this point it's not like classes just come to halt.

MR. GATTA:

Oh, no, no, no. Every -- no.

LEG. STERN:

Students will be finishing up the term, the semester.

MR. GATTA:

Oh, of course. Yes.

LEG. STERN:

And then it's really before a new round of classes begin.

MR. GATTA:

That's correct.

LEG. STERN:

Okay. Thanks.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Gatta. And we do appreciate it and you are going to be keeping us well informed on this every step of the way. And if you need us to be there or something like that, you let us know.

MR. GATTA:

We will.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay. Mr. Whitten, please.

MR. WHITTEN:

Hi. Thank you very much for letting me speak today. Good afternoon. What I wanted to do is just up update the committee on one of the projects we're working on, but -- as a concept. But before I did that, regarding the discussion we just had, one of areas that I concentrate on for the College and for the County is workforce development, continuing education and training with local industry.

One of things that's going to be crucial as we move forward, is the concept of retraining. As people

are being are being downsized and companies, you know, DHL as a prime example and the gentleman you talked about, is as we continue to look at new programs and new opportunities for the people of the County to be able to retrain to stay employed and work in our area, you know, we talk about a tuition cut for our individual potential students, this is another side that hopefully will be continuing to develop, you know, external funding either through grants or through partnerships with industry to make sure that we can maintain those things. So that's a vital concept and I just wanted to make sure that that -- I know you know this, but I feel as a practitioner if I didn't say that, that I wasn't on my pulpit.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

We appreciate that.

MR. WHITTEN:

So, give me that little bit of leeway. Thank you.

Briefly, what I wanted to do is just give you an update of -- we conceptually for a while the College has been looking at the concept of faculty staff housing on our campus in Brentwood with the Michael J. Grant Campus. There's a piece of property on that land has approximately ten acres that abuts Wicks Roads and I brought a campus map and I can show you the exact area if you need me to point that out to you.

We have just begun preliminary discussion and one of the bigger issues that we're seeing is attracting -- when we're trying to attract quality faculty to the area, one of the biggest concerns they have is affordable housing. We actually had anecdotally a faculty member that wanted to start this fall coming from Minnesota, a sociology professor, excellent candidate who even though they were going to receive approximately \$25,000 more in salary than they were making in Minnesota, they still couldn't justify the move to the area because they could not afford to live. And that brought to light this issue again, that we need to look at different models or different opportunities for us to attract quality faculty, but also to maintain staff and possibly as transition housing for students that are graduating that want to live in the area and continue to work and grow in this area.

So this is the concept of it. We have had discussion meetings with folks, Gene Murphy, from the Town of Islip. We've also had discussions with Michael White and we've been invited to the Long Island Regional Planning Committee, we're now a member of that. On that committee is also Stony Brook and Adelphi and C.W. Post and Long Island University, pretty much everyone on the Island. And we're all coming together to look at this issue of how we can collaborate. And this concept project that we mentioned to them seemed to have the most momentum. And the fact that the land is already sewered it's got a great geographical location and that it sits very close the LIE.

And so at this point it really is just a conceptual piece and we're doing some investigation on, you know, obviously how would we fund this, that's a big issue. So that is the concept of it. I can certainly answer any questions that you have.

LEG. ALDEN:

Question.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Sure, Legislator Alden.

LEG. ALDEN:

You mentioned that you talked to the Town of Islip, Gene Murphy, have you talked to -- now Jerry Wolkoff, is building a huge, actually it's a city right across the street from where you are and where you propose this housing. And part of his component already is not specifically professors or students, but students actually are a part -- not Suffolk Community College students, but students that live in Suffolk County are a part of his proposal and that's a huge proposal. Is there any way of advancing that stage of his housing to meet our needs?

MR. WHITTEN:

And certainly, as I said, this is a conceptual phase that we're in right now, that would be part of the investigation, is talking to what's -- talking to Mr. Wolkoff and their development. But, you know, particularly we were looking at something that was very affordable on our campus that would be a potential third party partnership. So if it's something that they could help us with, absolutely. But as we wanted to make sure that it was affordable and adjacent to the campus.

LEG. ALDEN:

And you looked at the other two campuses also, Selden and our Eastern Campus?

MR. WHITTEN:

Yes.

LEG. ALDEN:

As far as availability of property and there's nothing on either one of those two?

MR. GATTA:

We have looked at both of the other campuses, there is no property at the Ammerman Campus in Selden that would lend itself to this. There is 60 acres of County property adjacent to the campus on the east and north side of the Selden property. And I have had discussions with the County administration about that property. So as part of a County development that may lend itself.

The Eastern Campus as you may know is in core preservation area of the Pine Barrens and the master plan for the campus does not call for any housing. There is a library that's being designed and will be built shortly. The master plan also contains a health and fitness facility longer term. But we don't propose to do anything at the Eastern Campus in terms of housing. So the only one of the three campuses would be the Grant Campus in Brentwood that would lend itself to this.

Just one other point. We did have Mr. Wolkoff and his team make a presentation to our trustees about two months ago about his project. Jerry's been working on this for years and will probably continue to work on this for years. No telling when he will stick a shovel in the ground and move it forward.

So we're exploring this. It'll be a small project. It would be one that would benefit the school, faculty, staff and students that have potentially graduated so they have some traditional -- transitional housing. We're not ruling out the possibility of working with him at some point. But we just don't know when his project may move forward.

LEG. ALDEN:

George, you have property that you mentioned in Selden that's owned by the County, that's not dedicated parkland right, it's open space?

MR. GATTA:

It's not dedicated parkland. It's not dedicated open space. It's just 60 acres of County property. It's property that's owned by the County that's not dedicated to any use except for governmental purposes.

LEG. ALDEN:

Now the property in Brentwood and the property at Ammerman and the property out in the east, that's actually -- is that deeded to Suffolk Community College?

MR. GATTA:

Well, the way property is held for Community Colleges pursuant to State Education Law is that the local sponsor being the County holds the property in trust for the College for educational purposes.

LEG. ALDEN:

Okay.

MR. GATTA:

So the difference between the properties is that the 200 acres that Grant the roughly 150, 160 acres at Ammerman and the property out east, the title is held by the County in trust for the College. And the trustees have the authority to control what goes on on the -- on those properties for educational purposes. The County property is owned by the County and the County would make a determination on how that's developed.

LEG. ALDEN:

So you have to come to us because of our agreement with the County?

MR. GATTA:

No. We're coming to the committee because you're our local sponsor, you're our partner and we want to keep you informed of what we're thinking about and what we ultimately may do at the property. But the trustees would have the ultimate say in that.

LEG. ALDEN:

Right.

MR. GATTA:

But your input is important to us and we want to keep you informed of everything that's going on at the College.

LEG. ALDEN:

Good. Thanks, George.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Yes, Legislator Kennedy.

LEG. KENNEDY:

George, you know, there's one other thing that as long as you're going through this exploratory process it occurs to me, if you go over bridge, you know, you're into the remnants of what once was one of the largest mental health facilities in the free world actually and there are still some vacant buildings there unused. You know, I've heard all types of things that it costs more sometimes to rehab a refurbished buildings. Other times you can get benefit of, you know, an exterior skin that's still viable and intact, you can go in and do some interior, you know, retrograde or rehab.

If you're looking at opportunities, I would at the very least, you know, talk to OMH and see if any of the buildings still sitting there on the campus that are unused might be something that OMH would consider. I mean it's not going lend itself to newly constructed duplex town housing. Clearly it would be much more like, you know, interior apartments or almost dormitory style living and things like that. But, you know, for students in might work. For singles it might work. It might be something that's available and available at a reasonable cost. Not for nothing else, throw it into the mix.

MR. GATTA:

We can certainly reach out to them. But I would have to say that if it were part of an overall redevelopment that would be happening concurrently with our development, you know, it would be something we'd take more seriously then if it were an island unto itself, because if you drive through those grounds right now it looks --

LEG. KENNEDY:

Hit or miss. You're right, I've been in there. As a matter of fact, I was there for a conference recently.

MR. GATTA:

-- it's very, very, very depressing, very depressing area and not an area that I think faculty or staff would want to live in unless everything around it were redeveloped.

LEG. ALDEN:

You have to have imagination.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Think outside of the box.

MR. GATTA:

And a lot of money.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

George, just quickly what kind of numbers of housing units are we talking about?

MR. GATTA:

Well, the property that's on the east side of the campus and basically it abuts Wicks Road.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Right. Yeah, I know where -- I know the location.

MR. GATTA:

It's between Perimeter Road, off Perimeter, internal Perimeter Road and Wicks Road and it would only be access -- it would only be internal access so we would not be having any road cuts onto Wicks Road. It's ten acres. Part of it is really not usable. The waist of the property is pretty narrow so we're not talking about hundreds and hundreds of units. We're talking about -- and really we would be looking to partner with the private sector on this.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

That was my next question.

MR. GATTA:

It would be a public/private partnership.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Right.

MR. GATTA:

We're not going to come to the County and ask you to fund housing and we're certainly not going to ask SUNY to fund housing. You're talking about if you could develop eight acres of it, maybe somewhere around a hundred units maximum it may be phased, you know, it's tough to say specifically until we have a draft site plan to look at.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

A plan, okay.

MR. WHITTEN:

Could you just point out or have him point out.

LEG. ALDEN:

You need a microphone on. It's over there. That one won't reach.

MR. WHITTEN:

The property we're talking about here is this ten acre strip of land right here, which abuts Wicks

Road, this is the Long Island Expressway, so this is how you come into the College, on this area. You come in through Wicks Road and there is a private entrance to the College. This is a ten acre strip. It's probably about seven acres, seven or eight that you could actually -- because of the way it's stretched out. I believe this is the area that you were talking about before, Wolkoff.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

No. North of there.

MR. GATTA:

No, he's to the -- on the other side of the parkway.

LEG. ALDEN:

No, Wolkoff --

MR. WHITTEN:

This is the nature preserve as we call it here on the side of the campus. This is a sports exhibition complex, so it kind of faces that.

LEG. ALDEN:

Where do they hold the -- they just held a car meet not that long ago.

MR. WHITTEN:

That's over here.

LEG. ALDEN:

Is that part of our property?

MR. WHITTEN:

That's called a --

MR. GATTA:

Yes.

MR. WHITTEN:

We refer to that as the Mother Cabrini field. Because that's where the Cabrini Festival is every year. But that's not the area we're talking about, this is.

LEG. ALDEN:

Is that part of the --

MR. GATTA:

Yes.

LEG. ALDEN:

-- property that's in trust for the College.

MR. WHITTEN:

Yes.

LEG. ALDEN:

Is it restricted?

MR. WHITTEN:

No.

LEG. ALDEN:

Except for Mother Cabrini.

MR. WHITTEN:

In other events. But that right now is a nature preserve.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

You could answer that.

MR. GATTA:

It's not formal, it's not designated. It's listed on our master plan as a nature reserve, but it -- the trustees have not dedicated as a nature preserve.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Nor is it parkland or anything?

MR. GATTA:

No, no. It's held in trust for educational purposes like the balance of the property.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Right. There was discussions a couple of years ago, I recall, where we were actually looking at the property for future development.

MR. GATTA:

Correct.

MR. WHITTEN:

And the other piece that, you know, the quality of life issue as well is, you know, there is a fitness center here that, you know, people could be a part of. There's recreational pieces in other areas as well.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay. All righty. Any other further questions? Gentlemen, thank you very much and we appreciate you updating us and keep us in the loop as we move forward with this. Are we talking about sooner than later or what is your -- what timeframe are you looking at, George, with this?

MR. GATTA:

Well, on this housing potentially?

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Yeah, the housing issue. Yeah.

MR. GATTA:

Potential for housing? As Jim mentioned we're working with the Long Island Regional Planning Council --

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Right.

MR. GATTA:

-- which is the new Long Island Regional Planning Board. Jim is reaching out to the Long Island Housing Partnership. I know he's having discussions with our County Department of Economic Development and Workforce Housing. I believe he has his meeting scheduled next week with our Director of Affordable Housing at the County. So we're doing all of the foundation work now in terms of getting input and we would like to have something that we can send out and get some expressions of interest from private developers sometime right after the first of year.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

So does the site plan come first or does the RFP come first?

MR. GATTA:

Well, it'll be a draft site plan based on input from the town, from the County Planning Department, from the Regional Planning Board, from all those entities. So it would be -- this is what we think can go there, give us expressions of interest and what your draft site plan might look like and then we would go from there.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay. All right. Thank you very much. All right. And secondly, but certainly not least, is we've reached out to Mr. Lenny Stucker, Vice-Chairman of the Suffolk County Film Commission and the CEO -- CEO Talent Works International, re: film production in Suffolk County and the Economy.

This is a -- this is an industry that I know is high on the County Executive's designs for the County as well as the County Economic Development Department. We're all very interested in where we're going, I understand there's the studio out there now that it seems to be thriving and it's doing TV shows and whatever. And what is the possibilities for growth? And so we're very excited about the fact that the possibilities for film industry here. Welcome.

MR. STUCKER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee. Thank you. Good afternoon. As you know, as you already pointed out, I am Vice-Chairman of the Suffolk County Film Commission. And I am CEO of T.W.I., Talent Works International. We produce major television shows for the major networks cable channels here in the United States. And we also produce a lot of programming for the rest of the world for broadcasters internationally. So I have a little bit of knowledge of the industry.

The good news is I'm here not to ask you for any money. With the help of my fellow commissioners and Michelle Stark, we've been working very hard and we're here to ask your help to help us make the County a lot of money. Now you all have, I think, this in front of you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

That's a great start, by the way.

MR. STUCKER:

Well, thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

We like that.

MR. STUCKER:

Thank you, I appreciate that. You all have a copy of -- PowerPoint presentation. I'm not going to bore you with all the slides on it. But I'm here to give you a little bit of an explanation.

There was a nine-year lapse that there was no Film Commission in Suffolk County. And because of that, people who weren't really familiar with our industry tried their best to find a way of issuing permits. And in that time it sort of got very diluted, very complicated and basically full of red tape in order to get a film permit to find out how to do it.

Now, you have to you understand that people who create TV shows, do films, not only come here from the United States, but come from all over the world. We in the past have had some international production come here to shoot. And they don't know or it's very difficult to find out how to get a permit.

So what we've done is we've created a website, number one, a central place for people to at least

start to find a way of how to find a location. And secondly, because as a mentioned prior, the dilution and getting so difficult to use County properties if you want to use the parks, who do you go to, you want to use the courts, who do you go to, you want use other County properties, who do you go to.

So the bill that we're asking you to approve really creates one film permit. One way, one simple way of doing it, which will bring in a lot of money. Now, I just want you to refer to the second page just to give you an idea that if a feature film was to come here and these are factual numbers, they will spend \$125,000 to \$260,000 per day. Okay. A feature film will spend \$30,000 to \$110,000 per day here in the County. A weekly -- a TV weekly series, which we've had some shoots, will spend a 165,000 to \$300,000 per day. Okay. Commercials, 25,000 to 110,000 per day. And still photography 15,000 to 35,000 per day. Also when these companies come they're fully insured. It's part of the requirement so there's no liability to the County.

They also generate a lot of work to the County because coming into this location they have to hire carpenters, electricians, catering, clothing, they go out at night and spend money in the town. Some of these production companies can bring in two, three hundred people for two weeks to stay here spending money in our hotels. So it's really a win-win situation that no money -- there's no money that the County has to spend, but it can only make money. Now, I'm going to defer to Michelle to speak about the tax part of it.

MS. STARK:

Okay.

MR. STUCKER:

All right.

MS. STARK:

Sure.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Welcome Michelle.

MS. STARK:

Hi, how are you? Yeah, one of benefits of the industry is the level of tax, sales tax that's generated and hotel/motel tax. Across the United States, for taxes paid by industry workers and on goods services, was \$10 billion in 2005, 3.1 billion of that was federal tax, 1.5 billion in state tax and 4.7 billion for unemployment, Medicare, Social Security and corporate income tax and property tax.

So it's a revenue positive industry and what -- what's really great is that they generate a lot of tax revenue, but they don't use a lot of services. It's considered -- film should be considered like a floating factory, floating manufacturing. My background is in manufacturing, but on a permanent facility so, of course, you're using a lot of municipal services.

This film production is a manufacturing activity. But they come in, they set up, it's like a big circus. They spend lots of money and then they leave with very little impact. And, as a matter of fact, there's a new popular type of production called green production. And I'm actually on a committee for the New York Production Alliance looking at ways to become even more environmentally friendly when productions come into a community.

So there's really no downside to having film in a community, there's just upside; community pride and as I said, tax revenue, which we of course can all use with limited strain on services. So I think it's a win-win for everyone.

MR. STUCKER:

Now, the bill before you is to approve one permit. Now I've had meetings with the town supervisors

on the west side and all of them are in compliance. We had to have discussions to explain that no way does the County want to take over and dictate and tell their individual towns what they can or cannot do. We reiterated more than once that that is ultimately their decision. So they've agreed that they would be willing to work with us as long as they had the ultimate decision, which was never a question of the County. And we've asked for them to give us input in what we need to incorporate into this permit that's before you so it would service their needs as well.

Now on December the 4th, we've set up an event with the east side of the Counties town supervisor's, or the term out there is board of trustees committee members, who, I think, we've got an overwhelming response of people who are interested. Now out there because of the summertime it's clear that this is offseason, which they are willing to listen to, obviously the traffic out there is quite extensive during the summer. But again, to use towns, East Hampton, Sag Harbor, places like that offseason to have film companies come out there and shoot and we've sent out invitations, I know Michelle's office has put together some invitations and the response has been overwhelming of people who are interested in this. And again they are willing and understand the need for one permit.

So this one central location to feed all the inquiries and then we would disseminate that information to the appropriate towns that they would have their own approval. And everybody seems on board with that. So we really would love for you folks to see how this would really be beneficial to the County. Questions?

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Legislator Stern.

LEG. STERN:

Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chairman. How long does the process take now to go through all of the different, you know, various levels and steps?

MR. STUCKER:

Well, that is the problem because up until we've had the website, you have to understand if you are the BBC and you want to come here, who do you talk to? So you make a call to town. The town says, I think you need to talk to so and so. So and so says, well, I think so and so handles it. And on and on it goes until if they get lucky and they spin the wheel and hit the right person, sends them to Michelle's office who really then has a handle on it and kind of walks them through it very quickly. The problem is up until now getting to Michelle's office, which is really the office that handles film permitting here in Suffolk County. So the fact that we now have a website, now we just need to be legislated that we have one permit.

LEG. STERN:

Well, let's assume that after jumping through these various preliminary steps they get to Michelle, you know where they need to go and what they need to do. The way the process us right now, once they get to you, approximately how long does it take to go through the process?

MS. STARK:

Well, it depends. There -- right now there are towns on the East End mostly that actually have laws to handle or processes to handle film permitting. So for them it could be anywhere from three days to a week to get the permits in place. Other towns sometimes or villages require that the film production crew -- production companies get permission from the trustees, has to go through a Legislative cycle. So they have to have a resolution in front and that could take a month.

So what we're trying to do is create a model for the towns and villages that aren't really experienced with us so that we can capture all the information like the BBC -- we, the BBC has come here a lot and always the call is, we want to film in the Hamptons, how -- you know, they want one permit to cover the Hamptons, and then of course, I have to explain, well, you've got to go to this town and that town and it's not only the Town of East Hampton, but you have a Village of East

Hampton, and, you know, you can imagine the confusion.

So this is a way of just gathering all the information and then forwarding it to the appropriate authority in the town or village so that the production company has done their work by telling us what they are going to do and filing their insurance. And then basically we are handing them off and giving them a name at the town or the village that will work with them and help them, you know, accomplish what they're trying to do. But generally it's three to five days to get a permit.

MR. STUCKER:

If I just may elaborate on that. Part of it is and what we're trying to solve with one permit is then the town -- what slows it up a bit is the town says, well, what are they shooting, who are they shooting for, how big is their budget, how many days do they want to stay here, are they insured, what's the level of their insurance. So by us meeting with these towns, we're incorporating into this one permit all those questions already to kind of quicken the process to make it more amenable and more attractive that people go, *well, they're film friendly out there in Suffolk County*. It's quite easy to do.

LEG. STERN:

Michelle, you had cited 2005 tax revenue numbers before. Is that the most recent year that you have that information for?

MS. STARK:

Yeah, I get that from the Motion Picture Alliance. That's a trade organization, yes.

LEG. STERN:

And did you have any idea of how many permits were issued in 2005 that equates to that tax revenue?

MS. STARK:

In the County I would have to say probably somewhere around -- because I just, off the top of my head three to 400 in our County.

LEG. STERN:

Wow.

MS. STARK:

And that's not including all of New York State. New York State, it's an 11 billion dollar business. And if you look in -- I did break down from 2004 I think, on the employment numbers in the state that I got according to the national classification, national -- what is it, NAICS, it's the Industrial Classification System and it shows you the employment for motion picture and sound recording broadcasting and publishing. In New York State was 165,000 and then you can see that New York City has 63% of that, Nassau 5% and Suffolk 5%.

So what we want to do is expand the percentage of our contribution or our participation in the industry so our numbers are going to go up and, you know, we'll get more benefit as they do.

LEG. STERN:

And so with a new film friendly procedure in place, how do you propose that that be marketed to the industry so that we can, you know, really benefit from it?

MS. STARK:

Well, of course, we have limited funding to do any marketing. I do a lot of networking, I go out and I meet with producers, filmmakers. I go to all the local film festivals, or film events. I belong to a number of industry organizations, I'm very active. We do have a couple of marketing pieces that I do use. And the word is communicated by the Film Commission members, of course. And this industry is very small and a lot of it is word of mouth. If you have a good reputation it really filters

through to other people and they understand. I work with location managers primarily, that's a small universe of people. And once that you've helped them and they know that they can get their work done without obstacles it becomes a lot more desirable, it's one less risk they have to take.

MR. STUCKER:

Now I'm going to elaborate on that. One of our biggest tools that we got, and again, thanks to my film -- Film Commission members and Michelle, is that we implemented our website as a producer. When I go to other states and we want to use a facility within that state, recently in San Francisco, we used Treasure Island, which is owned by the City of San Francisco, which is an old Navy base, but the City took it over, is we go right to the Film Commission. The Film Commission in every state is there to be film friendly to do just what we want to do, bring in these people, bring in the money, bring in the film production, please shoot in our state. So they bend over backwards to help you.

Up until recently, Suffolk County never had a website. There was no Film Commission. So anyone in any state as well as an international broadcaster who wanted to find out information about our County, there was no way to do it. Now we have a website. You go to the Suffolk County Film Commission website and there is a lot of information that has been gathered by Michelle, put into it of who you speak to, what you need to do and again we're trying to add this one stop film permit to be the caveat to really put it all together. But it's the website now that answers your question that people can find us.

MS. STARK:

And we -- the County is also a member of the Association of Film Commissions International. These are film commissions from all over the world. There's about three to 400 film commissions. And, you know, of course all across this country there's regional commissions throughout New York State and California, just all over, you know, New Zealand, France, everybody has a film commission. So it's a trade organization for film commissions and we're very active in that. And they of course, refer people to us. Also producers who are looking for a particular, you know, kind of look.

And I have one good story that I'll have to share because it was yesterday. There's a film being shot in Montauk called Paper Man, with Lisa Kudrow, from, you know, Friends and Jeff Daniels. And I was there yesterday, they just started shooting yesterday. And one -- their second second assistant director was telling everybody how much he loved filming out here. He was here in Patchogue for the movie, Splinterheads. They were there for about six weeks. So you get that kind of feedback and testimonials from the crew, that reverberates, people start, you know, they start hearing about it and it just goes from there, it starts snowballing.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

That is a good story.

MS. STARK:

Yeah.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Legislator Alden do you want to --

LEG. ALDEN:

I was just going to ask if you've conferred with Mr. Heaney because he's got an immense amount of experience as far as on the town level and some of the -- and he might be able to get you through some of the pitfalls that you might experience. The territorial type things.

MS. STARK:

Yeah, no, he's being very helpful actually.

LEG. ALDEN:

Good.

MS. STARK:

We had a Barry Sonnenfeld TV pilot that was shot out on the East End and Skip and I went to all the local villages and met with, you know, the clerks or the supervisor, mayors, to make sure that they were all on board. And so --

LEG. ALDEN:

He's still well liked, by the way.

MS. STARK:

Yeah, I noticed that, yeah. Well, he's a likeable guy.

LEG. ALDEN:

Absolutely.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Yeah, he's all right. No, he's great. Let me just ask you a quick question then. First of all, the comments you asked about those questions that you reeled off for the towns, I was in the town government so, boy, I said I would of asked the same questions. Those -- taking off my mind, yeah. Okay, the insurance, yeah, right. We've been asked all those things.

How do we get the rest of the attention of the film industry for the rest of Suffolk County because we've got so many places that are just extraordinary that, you know, you guys would never find. You know, the film industry would never find unless we let them know it's there. How do we go about that, what do we -- what do we do as a County to promote ourselves?

MS. STARK:

Oh, good question. Yeah, no, I am always looking for quality locations, pictures, you know, we frequently reach out to the towns and villages to give us information about any unique locale or unique feature; geographic, could be architectural, anything. And, you know, we also get pictures from the location managers who go out scouting and they'll give me their pictures of what they've discovered, you know, in some of their treks. But we've had -- we've have doubled for France, for the Midwest, New England, we have a lot of different looks, you know, from -- I mean we have a lot of diversity.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

We do, yeah.

MS. STARK:

So, yeah, if there's a trade show by the way that we should go to.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

So maybe, Michelle, you should let us know what they're looking for and we go, hey, you know, Argyle Park, it's a great place for that.

MS. STARK:

I do, I do.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Yeah, okay.

MR. STUCKER:

Well, there is a way, but I did preface my statements by saying this isn't going to cost you any money.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Ah, there you go.

MR. STUCKER:

Okay. But, in answer to your question as other states do and I could give you an example, Michelle certainly has them as well, there are what we call the Phoenix Production Book, the LA Production Book, the San Diego Production Book, where the town or the city actually puts together a book that gets distributed to all the major production houses, movie companies, that do just what you're saying, they list everyone that's involved, whether it be electricians, carpenters, production companies, studios, editing houses, processing houses, plus pictures and pictures and pictures of locations that attract them. Now, what we're trying to do is do that on our website, which is a tremendous tool as I mentioned. But again, that's when someone is specifically looking to come to Suffolk County.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

It has cause for production and stuff like that, yeah.

MR. STUCKER:

But to produce and actually put together what's called a production manual to be distributed that can wet somebodies appetite who may have not thought to shoot and well, look at that mansion, look at that park, look at that coastline, let me look into it. So that's another way of doing it, but then again you'd have to spend money to produce that manual.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Is this something that our Tourism Commission should be looking at as an assist?

MS. STARK:

Actually, yeah. Film tourism is kind of a new branch of tourism. I've talked to Moke about that.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

That's exactly where I was going, yeah.

MS. STARK:

Yeah, and --

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Come on, Moke, let loose.

MS. STARK:

Exactly. I don't think that's going to happen, but they've been very hopeful, you know, in assisting with hotels and things like that. And I have -- yeah exactly, I have talked to him a little bit about the film tourism as part of a marketing campaign. One thing that would be great to see would be a map of locations, you know, that have been used in films. Because you have a -- In and Out was shot in Northport. They just shot another Edie Falco movie in Northport, Edie Falco's from Northport. So there's a lot of fun kind of, I think, narratives that you can weave around the locations.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

So you could see the tour bus, the double decker tour bus going around, and this is where, you know, Greta Garbo's visited.

MS. STARK:

Yeah. Edie Falco in this case.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Yeah, right. Or whatever.

MS. STARK:

We have very independent minded citizens here. Hal Hartley is a big independent filmmaker. He's from Lindenhurst, so yeah.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Oh yes, my district. So anyway, good. Good stuff. How do we help you, I mean, where are we going in the future, Michelle?

MS. STARK:

Well, right now we're collecting from -- you just passed 1866 so that was adopted.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Yep, we did. I knew that. I was going to lose Legislator D'Amaro so I had to push them through first.

MS. STARK:

Okay. So the next thing we're doing is collecting fees from various departments. We've gotten some from -- these are for locations, for instance, Fire Rescue, Emergency Services, Health Services, Parks, Police, Public Works, and the Sheriff. We're looking at how to use those facilities and lands that we have so that when production companies here come here we can, you know, refer them to these sites. So we'll be putting those fees in front of Legislature once we get that all together and hopefully that will be passed.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Yeah, I had one more quick question, when you mention all those wonderful taxes that you guys generate and fees and stuff like that, where does that money go, I mean, do that go to the towns primarily? Is that what we're talking about? Or who --

MS. STARK:

No, but we're talking about sales tax. I mean --

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Let's talk about sales tax, okay.

MS. STARK:

-- mostly sales tax and hotel tax.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Oh sales tax are ours, that's good stuff.

MS. STARK:

Yeah.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

We're okay. Just checking.

MS. STARK:

Okay.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

All right.

LEG. ALDEN:

Actually actors making over \$250,000 a year, if we pick up some of that in Suffolk County -- New York State should tap into that.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

I don't know. He's -- Mr. Alden is going off on a taxing frenzy here. We'll let it be. Oh, okay.

LEG. ALDEN:

I understand there might be a new procedure or new, I guess, tax brackets that those who make more than \$250,000 might be paying a little bit more. And most actors and actresses fall into that.

MS. STARK:

Actually most of them don't make that much.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Probably don't, yeah. It's probably true.

LEG. ALDEN:

{ Inaudible } into that. I would think.

MS. STARK:

Maybe Lenny does.

MR. STUCKER:

Oh, thank you. I mean, you asked the question on how you can help make it more friendly.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Yeah.

MR. STUCKER:

And again, I really don't want to take away from my opening statement, but for instance, in some cities we shoot for straight hours they give you police at no charge. And the companies, production companies then pick up overtime. So when you have a lot of equipment, you know, some of this equipment's very expensive. Either you hire your own security, which can really become quite expensive or the town of the city like in San Francisco California, Chicago, Texas they give you the police for the straight eight hours for free. And then if you want overnight or you pick up the overtime.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Oh, yeah, our overtime is --

MS. STARK:

It's big.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Yeah.

MS. STARK:

One other local benefits Skip wanted me to remind you is that when the productions come into the villages and towns they frequently, you know, have students involved, film students, you know, for instance Five Towns College and Suffolk Community College have film programs so they can get involved. So it's really a great way for them to get a little training or to get some benefit, some community benefit from having them there. Frequently they'll leave, you know, charities, contributions. Generally, I've never had a really bad experience yet with a company that I've worked with that's come through the County.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

That's good news. All righty. Thank you very much and we appreciate your cause. And we want to be film friendly as well. And we're anxious to work alongside with you.

MR. STUCKER:

Thank you, we appreciate -- thanks for the time.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Just give us a, you know, give us a call if you want us to go our and meet anybody.

MS. STARK:

We'll do. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

All right. Mr. Heany is there anything you'd like to add.

MR. HEANY:

No, no.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

You're good.

MR. HEANY:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay. That being the case, motion to adjourn by Legislator Stern. I'll second the motion. All in favor? We're done.

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT: 3:46 P.M.

{ } DENOTES BEING SPELLED PHONETICALLY