

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, HIGHER EDUCATION AND ENERGY COMMITTEE
OF THE
SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE**

Verbatim Transcript

A regular meeting of the Economic Development, Higher Education and Energy Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York on Wednesday, August 11, 2010 at 2:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Legislator Wayne Horsley, Chairman
Legislator Steven Stern, Vice Chairman
Legislator Tom Cilmi
Legislator Ricardo Montano
Legislator Lynne Nowick

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Presiding Officer William Lindsay
George Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature
Sarah Simpson, Office of Counsel to the Legislature
Renee Ortiz, Chief Deputy Clerk, Suffolk County Legislature
Jill Moss, Budget Review Office
Joe Muncey, Budget Review Office
Brian Galgano, Aide to Legislator Horsley
Bob Martinez, Aide to Legislator Montano
Greg Moran, Aide to Legislator Nowick
Paul Perillie, Aide to Majority Caucus
Linda Bay, Aide to Minority Caucus
Maria Barbara, Aide to Legislator Cilmi
Greg Moran, Aide to Legislator Nowick
Deborah Harris, Aide to Legislator Stern
Ben Zwirn, County Executive's Office
Steven Tricarico, County Executive's Office
Yves Michel, Commissioner of Economic Development
Moke McGowan, Long Island Convention and Visitors Bureau
Sharon Wyman, Long Island Convention and Visitors Bureau
George Gatta, Suffolk County Community College
Kevin Peterman, Suffolk County Community College
Dot Kerrigan, AME
Other Interested Parties

Verbatim Transcript Taken By:

Lucia Braaten, Court Reporter

[THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 2:06 P.M.]

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Good afternoon, everybody, and welcome to the Economic Development, Higher Education, Energy Committee meeting of August 11th. May we all please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

(*Salutation*)

May we please stand for a moment of silence for those men and women who protect our freedoms, both home and abroad.

(*Moment of Silence*)

Thank you very much. Please, be seated. All right. Again, welcome. And we have a presentation today, Moke McGowan, who is our friend, who is, of course, the Director of the Long Island Convention and Visitor Bureau. And today, what he's going to do, Moke, there's -- you know, as we have discussed and as the discussion has gone along over the last year or so, questions about the budgetary process for the LICVB and, you know, how you put it together, and, you know, the administrative costs versus the non-administrative costs. And we thought the best thing to do is to bring Moke in today to give us a tertiary run-through. And if there's any questions from any of the Legislators -- unfortunately, Legislator Schneiderman is not here today, but he gave me some questions. Maybe we might go through some of them and we'll leave it at that. And, of course, welcome, and we're honored. Moke, why don't you give us a little presentation.

MR. MCGOWAN:

Well, thank you very much. Thank you, Legislator Horsley, and thank you for the opportunity, because we talk in terms of our budget on a continuum, and it's only a small 2.6, 2.4 million dollar budget, but because it involves two counties, it is definitely an intricate little budget, sometimes very difficult to manage, but we have, I think, done an excellent job. And, of course, tied into that is trying to make sure that both counties receive the return on their investments in tourism that they would expect to receive. And there -- because of the complications, we'll get into it, it's sometimes very easy to misunderstand.

We have put together a brief outline of the budget and the process. And this is the time of the year we generally put this budget together in anticipation of taking it before our Board in September for their approval and review, so the process really begins in July. But July is halfway through the year, so we really don't have a full set of information and metrics to make certain judgments on it. But, be that as it may, because of the timing, we try to base the revenue of our budget on the basis of two counties and their hotel tax collections throughout the year and for the remaining portion of this year. These are very distinctly different counties in terms of the markets that they work to influence. Nassau County is predominantly -- almost 80% is really focused on corporate group and business transient travel, with only about 20% being leisure oriented. Suffolk, it's about 60% corporate group, business transient, with a balance of about 40% leisure. The bottom line is at that we make these projections and create a program of work in September throughout July, through September without really knowing what the final actual collections will be, and we generally don't get that until January to February of the following year.

Looking at the 2010 budget that we produced this time last year, we projected about 1.6 million dollars from Suffolk, \$671,000 from Nassau, and \$194,000 in annual State matching funds, a Legislatively provided program, and then about 125 or about 150,000 from various other revenue sources from membership to our co-op marketing programs and other revenue sources. Unfortunately, again, this budget and program of work developed in July or August and presented to our Board in September.

When we got into January, we were notified that that \$194,000 in State matching funds was in jeopardy and we might not receive it. In February, again, at that point, we're two months into the year, we found out that, indeed, that program had been suspended. So, instead of a 2.6 million

dollar budget, we were now dealing with a 2.4 million dollar budget, which meant we had to readjust our programs. Now, this did not have an impact on the Suffolk Specialty Program at all, this is only an impact on the regional marketing programs, marketing and sales programs that we have.

The Suffolk Specialty Program is predicated on what we identify as the differential or difference between what we anticipate and project to be collected by both counties. For 2010, we projected that the difference would be about \$935,000. Two years ago, in 2009, that was substantially about \$300,000 less because of the different tax structure that was in place at that time.

You've heard a lot about Suffolk Specialty during presentations and other conversations, and when we're talking about that, that's really what we're talking about, is that money that is the difference between the two counties. Now, you may not be able to read this, and that's why we have provided copies of these slides, but this is the program budget that was put together in September, and there's a few things that I would like to call your attention to in this overall budget. And, again, this is solely the program budget. The first is the Advertising-Media Consumer. Well, let me back up. You'll see at the top the columns, Meeting and Conventions, Tour and Travel, and Sports. Those are the three major sales programs representing the three major market segments that we work to attract through our sales efforts. Then we have the Suffolk Specialty Program, and to the far right, the Regional Marketing. The Regional Marketing is all of -- the Regional Marketing and Suffolk Specialty is solely consumer oriented, it's not trade, it's not sales oriented. And you will notice that the costs of the various programs in the sales arena, the Meetings and Convention or Travel and Sports, none of those costs, program costs, are involved in the Suffolk Specialty Program. And, again -- and I'll come back to that a little bit later, but I just want to call your attention to that.

Under the Advertising-Media Consumer, this is the advertising dollars we expend in media, and for Suffolk Specialty, it's about \$383,000, and then the regional marketing, it's about 94,000. So, totally, we spend about 477, or we anticipate \$477,000 to be spent on trying to get consumers, consumer travelers to come to Long Island and enjoy a getaway vacation, a family vacation, what have you. As we go down the list, and we'll come back to that again, but at the very bottom, you can see the collective cost of each program area. Seven hundred and seventy-one thousand dollars is allocated to the Suffolk Specialty Program for consumer marketing; 289,000 and change is the regional marketing program.

LEG. NOWICK:

Is that two different numbers or is it inclusive?

MR. MCGOWAN:

Pardon me?

LEG. NOWICK:

Is that inclusive of the Suffolk? The 289 is in the 771?

MR. MCGOWAN:

Yeah, 289 is solely the regional marketing and does not include Suffolk, with a caveat, and I will touch bases on that shortly, because there are some shared costs.

This part of the budget is our other operational administrative costs. And when we refer to administrative costs, this is typically what we are referring to. It includes the cost of our computers and our office machines, copy machines, fax, etcetera, as well as our rent in our building. Now, you'll notice that the rent for 2010 was budgeted for \$99,000 and some change. That's actually a budget of about 19% less than what we spent in 2009. Now that's projected budget.

At the time that we developed this budget, we were in negotiations with our landlord on the cost of our office space. In those negotiations, and, again, we projected about a 19% reduction from \$122,000 that we spent on office space in 2009, that we could get a reduction of about 19%. In actuality, by the end of November, when we concluded our negotiations, we had reduced that down

to an annual cost of \$84,000 and some change. That's our annual rent, office rent costs. However, we also negotiated some upfront concessions that took place in this year, 2010. So our actual out-of-pocket expenses for the rental of our office space for this year alone is \$56,000. That helped us tremendously in making up a good portion of the lost State matching funds dollars. So, instead of dealing with \$194,000, the 44,000 savings that we realized here meant that programmatically we had to adjust our programs only \$150,000 across the board, with the exception of Suffolk Specialty.

And then, finally, we get to the cost of our personnel. We have 16 full -- 14 full-time staff members, two part-time staff members. It is the same level of staffing that we have had during the six years that I have been at the LICVB. The cost across the board in payroll taxes and benefits, you can see there at the -- in white underlined at the bottom. There's 163,000 and some change that is allocated to the Suffolk Specialty Marketing Program, and the reason -- and the people, or, rather, who are these people that are involved in that, is really the sales people in Meetings and Conventions, Tour and Travel and Sports Development. This \$163,000 includes in total 45% of the sales managers' payroll taxes and benefits. It is on the basis of four individuals, two of which are focused on Meetings and Conventions, one on domestic and international tour travel, and then one on Sports Development, and it also includes all of the folks who work at the airport at that visitor desk that we have there. It's really predicated, and this goes back a few years, and it's part of our current contract, it's predicated on our taking a look at the productivity on our sales staff in those three areas during a time frame of three years. We looked at 2004 through 2006, and what we had found out was that of all the meetings, leads that we developed that became definite pieces of business, 55% of that business took place in a Suffolk County property or in Suffolk County. And so we did approach the Department of Economic Development about this and indicated that because there was a value that we could actually look at that Suffolk County was receiving from our sales efforts, could we apply a portion of the salaries of those people involved in that endeavor to the Suffolk Specialty, and they said yes, to a maximum of 45%, so that's where that figure comes from. So, the total for Suffolk Specialty, again, \$935,000, 771 of which is program and 163 and some change is the personnel expense.

Now, I would like to go and look in terms of both Suffolk and regional marketing, and these are all the costs and the only costs in the \$771,000 that are Suffolk-centric. Now, I have put this into different colors, because you need to know that not every program can we absolutely quantify the value to Suffolk County. We can with the advertising and the cost to produce that advertising. We are obligated to take 3.3% of what we receive from Suffolk County in total and apply it to a cultural arts marketing program. The public relations is one that is not a shared cost, but we knew what we were -- that we were going to be focused on a couple of endeavors as we went into this year, so that became a focus cost. The matching grants program is solely Suffolk-centric and solely geared to Suffolk County, so it's a non-shared cost.

Those elements in green that you see there, those are to a degree a shared cost, and the reason, and I'm going to show the full of the budget as it compares to the marketing -- regional marketing, and then the total cost for that, we can't quantify, if you will, the absolute value of these elements that are in green to Suffolk County, or to Nassau County for that matter. We can't tell you what is the value of the research to Suffolk County. It's a shared cost, and for that, what we decided sometime back was let's take those costs where we really can't identify the exacting quantifiable benefit and separate it into thirds. So, 33 1/3% of the costs of these programs are Suffolk, 33 1/3 to Nassau and 33 1/3 to regional, because all of Nassau costs go into regional, and that's where we came up with that. There is one difference here and that is, as you're looking at the online marketing, \$52,000 is not a third of the total 88,000, and there's an explanation to that and we'll get into that very briefly here in a moment.

Finally, in orange, you'll notice that, again, going back to the advertising, we spent \$477,000; 94 of that is for regional, and the balance for Suffolk-centric. And that means that roughly that \$94,000 is about 20%, 19, 20% of the total consumer advertising that we place.

The call to action on all of our advertising is primarily to ask or to get that consumer who responds

to our ads to call, write, go online and request a travel guide. The costs in that travel guide is what the postage and the mailing costs are all about, because, in this particular case, 19% of the cost, roughly 19, 20% of the cost is regional, then 20% of the cost for postage and mailing is allocated along that basis. And so that will change based on how the regional marketing or regional advertising in the Suffolk-centric advertising breaks out.

Now, I told you about the -- I mentioned the shared costs, and that the online marketing does not reflect 33%. The reason for that is that is the shared regional expense of that 52,000 and change is about 18,400 and change. But there are two programs that are Suffolk-centric that we are working to develop this year that are not part of a regional program. One is a landing page and micro-site that's dedicated to cultural heritage assets of Suffolk County, and the second is a focus on the East End, again, a micro-site landing page, so those costs are separated out and that's why there's that difference. Otherwise, the balance of the programs, collateral research, photo media, etcetera, are all one-third of the total costs of the regional.

So, in total, and, again, this does not reflect the loss of \$194,000, but at the end of the budget process last year, we were projecting 2.6 million dollars, of which 1.3 and change, or 50%, was going to be totally program oriented; that's both marketing and sales. The operational overhead are rent and leasing of copy machines and office supplies, and things of that nature, \$190,000, and the personnel at 43%, or one-point-one-hundred-and-thirteen-thousand dollars. So, that is essentially our budget and how we worked to coordinate it.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Well, Moke, thank you very much. And, as usual, it's very thorough. When was the last time that you've been audited?

MR. MCGOWAN:

You know, I think it was two thousand and -- the audit report was 2004, and I think it was for the years 2002, '3, and '4, something of that nature, so it's been about five years.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

It's been about five years.

MR. MCGOWAN:

Five, six years.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

And, of course, there were no discrepancies or questions in the audit that was brought up at that time other than --

MR. MCGOWAN:

Well, at that time, that --

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

-- the earlier stuff that --

MR. MCGOWAN:

That was the audit.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

That was your audit, okay.

MR. MCGOWAN:

Yeah.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

So, now, since your administration, there has not been an audit then?

MR. MCGOWAN:

No. And we've also had dialogs on an ongoing basis with the Comptroller's Office. There's been questions on occasion where we wanted to make sure that we were in compliance, or if there were any questions about how we were doing something, if we could get, you know, feedback, so we have had conversations and discussions and feel fairly comfortable with that.

The other thing that we have done since I've been there is every year we have posted our budget and our marketing plan program of work online as soon as it's approved by our Board and we start the year. So, when we finish this year, planning process for 2011 and with our Board's review and approval, that will be posted December 31. And so anybody -- and that's also the budget detail. That gets down to the nitty-gritty of, you know, these larger allocations where we are going to be spending the dollars and how we're going to be spending the dollars. So, that's a part of the transparency and accountability that we try to put into place.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Very interesting, and I appreciate those comments. You know, this is -- I'll get into later on into Legislator Schneiderman's questions, but one that I would have, we have been working, this committee and an associate committee to this concerning Gaming Task Force, concerning the possibility of a Shinnecock casino coming to Suffolk County. And since your budget is so based on hotel reservations and things like that, and I'm not sure it's way premature to think about how that relates to you as far as the hotel/motel tax, and things like that, because there might not even be a tax related to it if it's a Shinnecock hotel, but I'm curious to see what -- how would you think that that would affect the overall tourist business for Suffolk County? And have you given it any thought, you know, because, frankly, we think we're in the game, you know, that there's a distinct possibility that this may happen for Suffolk County, and we want to be prepared for it, and, certainly, you're a piece of that action, so to speak. What are your thoughts?

MR. MCGOWAN:

First off, these are solely my thoughts and not that I've my Board. We've not had a chance to discuss it, and so, not knowing what their input might be, but let me just use my own personnel thoughts, and also from a perspective of having launched and opened a tribal casino on the coast of Oregon back in 19 -- actually, 1995, I think it was, if memory serves me correctly. You've heard me say before that Long Island, be it Suffolk or Nassau County, has not had a major product developed in years to help drive incremental new business. Whether it's a convention center or a tribal casino, and to some extent, dependent upon how well it's developed, I think it has a lot of very strong opportunity to drive business. I think we lose a lot of business to other casinos, that is our own folks in our backyard from here to Brooklyn, Queens and Manhattan, on an annual basis to other products of that nature, be it in Connecticut or Upstate, what have you, so it does give us an opportunity to help drive additional new traffic. And, I think, if it is done well, even if there is a major hotel that is attached to it, it will still help the overall tourism industry, simply because of compression and the need for the rooms, and it also exposes a lot of the other businesses on Long Island. Folks who come to a casino, even though they're very focused on what a casino generally has to offer by way of entertainment and gaming, and things of that nature, still explore out and enjoy a lot of the amenities in and around the area. So, it would cause, I think, you know, a decent impact on our overall tourism industry.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

I agree, and I guess maybe that's the reason why I asked a professional. Let me just quickly -- in our sale of Suffolk to the Shinnecock Nation, I mean, down the road, would you -- would you maybe give us or lend us a hand in promoting Suffolk to the Shinnecock Nation that this is the best location for them? Is there something that the LICVB can do for -- to make this -- close the deal, so to speak?

MR. MCGOWAN:

You know, my gut feeling is that we would probably have to have a discussion with the Board. And I think, quite honestly, I think the Board would be favorable to it, but I really reserve -- you know, anything could happen, but, you know, we support it.

The only product we have supported since I've been here was the potential development of a convention center at the hub in Uniondale. We have not supported outwardly as a Board recommendation, or anything along those lines, any other product. My gut feeling is that the Board probably would support that. My professional experience is that the tribe will probably hold things extremely close to the vest for as long as possible, but, you know, knowing that you have a proactive, I think, professional marketing organization promoting Suffolk County should play very strongly into their thought process, because they're going to be looking for a partner or partners to assist in that nature. And it's not that you're going to be -- we, as an organization, are going to be promoting them directly, but it is one of the very strong arrows in our quiver of assets that helps us overall, and I think that works in a partnership with them. So, we would -- you know, we would certainly be at the table.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

And I recognize that you have a problem -- it's not a problem, but, you know, a conundrum that you represent two counties and not just one, and we're both in the hunt, so I understood that. But I think that there is a role for you at least making sure, you know, that we're -- that it comes to Long Island, and in our case, we certainly want it to come to Suffolk, but we want you to be part of that mix. I think you're an important ingredient down the road and once we start really getting serious about making this decision or having them -- asking them to make the decision.

MR. MCGOWAN:

And I think that we're in a good position to bring a lot of the elements together, and whether it's, you know, the transportation aspect of air -- of travel -- of Southwest Airlines, MacArthur Airport promotion, to all of the other elements that we work to promote and market and sell, it's certainly -- quite honestly, it will make our job a lot easier.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

I think it would, too. And, by the way, they like the concept of a convention center themselves, you know, so that is in their thinking as well, so that's -- and maybe we'll get twofers.

MR. MCGOWAN:

That would be the -- that would be the end game.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

There you go. I've got -- I'll go back to Legislator Schneiderman's questions later on, but let me -- let me first turn this over to Legislator Montano.

LEG. MONTANO:

Good afternoon, Moke. You actually answered the question -- one of the questions I had. But just very quickly again, going back to the revenue side, the difference between Suffolk and Nassau is 1.6 million and 671. How does that -- how does that come about again? You said it has to do with the tax structure?

MR. MCGOWAN:

What we do is we project the revenue that we anticipate will be collected by both counties for the year, and that's all it is is a projection, and it's based on the business, level of business activity and the previous year's collections and things of that nature. It is not scientifically done, but, for instance, if --

LEG. MONTANO:

But why the difference is what I'm asking. What explains the million dollar difference?

MR. MCGOWAN:

Oh, there's two major differences. One is we used to be on the same tax structure. Nassau County had 3% tax, hotel tax. Two-and-a-quarter percent went to their General Fund, and the remaining three-quarters of a percent, we've received two-thirds of that. Last year, Suffolk County had a three-quarter percent lodging tax and we received two-thirds of that. And so, on the surface they were both equitable at that time. The difference was, is that Nassau County had about fifty-five hundred rooms and Suffolk County has twelve thousand rooms. Nassau County is predominantly focused on the corporate business market, and we have in Suffolk County much more leisure related products to help us sell to that particular market, and also, Suffolk County is very attractive to the international market, so there was those things. Now, you changed your tax structure to three-quarters of a percent to 3% and we would be receiving roughly 24% of the new taxes, or the taxes that are generated. That has a ceiling cap of two million dollars, but we don't and wouldn't project under these business conditions today to realize that two million dollar cap for -- until we get out of this recession and we see a much more improved business climate. So that's how we came up -- we come up with that. We will --

LEG. MONTANO:

Is this fairly consistent in terms of year to year, the disparity in the revenue side between Nassau and Suffolk?

MR. MCGOWAN:

There has been a --

MR. MONTANO:

Has this been a consistent pattern, is what I'm asking.

MR. MCGOWAN:

Oh, absolutely, but it has differed based on the tax structures, it's differed on the business conditions. The business climate really, obviously, dictates a lot of how well both counties do in their tax collections. But I would like to point out something. Because this is a projection, that \$935,000, let's say that all of a sudden we have collected more in Nassau County than we had projected and we hit Suffolk County right on. As we go into 2011, we won't know that until January or February. But as we go into 2011, we have to make an adjustment downward in the case of probably a reduction in what we will spend on Suffolk County, Suffolk-centric, and what we will spend regionally. On the other hand, if the converse happens, more collections in Suffolk County than we projected then in Nassau County, and we owe at the end of the year money towards Suffolk County, in the following year, we will tap into our cash reserves and make up that difference. We've done that at least three years in the past five-and-a-half. One year, there was a \$200,000 difference between the two. Suffolk County, we expanded our advertising by going into the cash reserves and adding to what we had budgeted for consumer advertising an additional \$200,000. And so there -- that's part of the management issues that we face in reconciling the difference between the two and our obligations to Suffolk County.

LEG. MONTANO:

Now, with respect to the \$194,000 that was listed as State matching funds, you said that money was eliminated from -- or you're not receiving that money; am I correct --

MR. MCGOWAN:

We're not going to receive it.

LEG. MONTANO:

What was that money supposed to match?

MR. MCGOWAN:

That was going to be matched against the regional marketing, and it couldn't include --

LEG. MONTANO:

Was that a grant, or was it --

MR. MCGOWAN:

Yes, it's a matching grant program.

LEG. MONTANO:

Was it State -- I mean, was it County or Suffolk, Nassau? I mean --

MR. MCGOWAN:

Regional, and the dollars were through -- are from Empire State Development through the Office of Tourism.

LEG. MONTANO:

That 194, or what it was -- see, what I'm trying to get at is what -- when you say "matching", then I would assume that you got 194,000 from somewhere else that the State was supposed to match.

MR. MCGOWAN:

Right.

LEG. MONTANO:

Am I accurate in that?

MR. MCGOWAN:

You are.

MR. MONTANO:

So --

MR. MCGOWAN:

It's a reimbursement, so we have to spend the money first. And the expenses would come out of the regional marketing and our sales programs, so --

MR. MONTANO:

So, you made the expenditures and now you're not getting the money, is that what happened?

MR. MCGOWAN:

Well, we will -- we've had to adjust our expenditures because we know we won't get the money, yes. That's a two-for-one -- a two-to one; that is, we had to spend \$2 to get \$1 back. So it's not just \$194,000, we had to spend 400,000 -- around \$400,000 in order to get that \$194,000. But that's -- you know, again, every -- every element that you see in the Regional Marketing Program, almost all of those expenses are eligible for reimbursement on that. And then everything that -- for the most part, almost everything that we have in the sales end is likewise reimbursable as we submit expenses.

LEG. MONTANO:

And just I looked on your -- I looked it up on the computer there, and structurally, you're the Director, but is there a Board of Directors? I mean, what is the structure of the organization?

MR. MCGOWAN:

Yes, we are governed by a Board of Directors, thirty-nine individuals and Executive Committee of ten. Of the thirty-nine individuals, there are six of those individuals are ex officio in positions that represent both sides of -- both counties, if you will, Lodging Association, Restaurant Association, etcetera.

LEG. MONTANO:

Okay. Thank you.

MR. MCGOWAN:

Oh, let me add one other thing. The ex officio also includes one member from each county government appointed by the County Executive.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Legislator Cilmi.

LEGISLATOR CILMI:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for coming, Moke. A couple of questions, if you'll bear with me. First of all, going to your budget allocations page and looking at the total program allocation, is there -- are there any personnel costs embedded within that program allocation, the 1.3 million?

MR. MCGOWAN:

None.

LEGISLATOR CILMI:

None at all?

MR. MCGOWAN:

No. The 1.3 million is solely program. The 1,113,000 is all of the personnel.

LEGISLATOR CILMI:

Okay, which brings me to my next question. Can you describe in some detail the -- that cost, the personnel cost of 1.1 million; where does it go?

MR. MCGOWAN:

As I said, we have 16 individuals on staff. Four of those individuals are Sales Department -- Division, if you will, the Director of Sales and three individuals, plus one support individual. Within the marketing area, we have a Director of Marketing Communications. Under that individual is a Manager of Visitor Services who operates the Visitor desk at the airport, operates the Visitor -- the Nassau County Visitor Center seasonally, who answers all of the incoming phone calls that we have from visitors themselves responding to our advertising, things of that nature, and handles all, almost all of the mailings of the travel guide in response to folks requesting the guide. There is also our Manager of -- shares a hat or wears two hats, Manager of online marketing and also member servicing, because membership is such an integral part of our online marketing, because they are assets of our marketing; he wears two hats. They have one administrative assistant that assists in all of those areas. We have -- my -- rather, we have a Manager of Finance, an Office Manager who assists the Finance Manager, and is really a coordinator of -- between myself and the other departments. So, Marketing oversees Advertising, our Director of Marketing and Communications oversees the marketing elements and disciplines of advertising, advertising production, online marketing and our internet and web presence, public relations, press relations. I, obviously, direct and oversee all of that, but I spend a great deal of my time in being the marketing overseer, if you will, of the Suffolk Specialty Program and coordinating that between the regional.

LEGISLATOR CILMI:

Would you be able to provide us with a sort of a breakdown, title by title, salary by salary, of all of those individuals within your -- is that something you can provide to us?

MR. MCGOWAN:

Certainly can, certainly.

LEGISLATOR CILMI:

Appreciate it. Because of the tax structure that you were describing a minute or two ago, or the increase in the amount of taxes that you're collecting from -- or that we're collecting and giving to you, can you tell us, so what's the expected differential between the -- between our payments to you in 2009 compared to what you expect in 2010?

MR. MCGOWAN:

In 2009, we received about 1.3 million dollars, and I'll have to go back and double check that, but that's what I believe what we also -- right around what we had projected revenue wise from Suffolk County. Our program for Suffolk Specialty back in that year was about 600,000, \$650,000. Even prior to that, 2007, 2008, you're really looking at a differential of about \$430,000, and that was the Suffolk Specialty Program. So we were seeing growth leading up to 2008 in actually both counties, but more growth in Suffolk than in Nassau, because Nassau is -- again, is limited based on the market segments that they really are restricted to attracting. They're not a leisure travel destination, so it's very difficult for them to try to be something they're not. So we were seeing growth in Suffolk County, plus the growth in hotel rooms in Suffolk County, and then, unfortunately, the bottom fell out with the economy. That growth in Suffolk County was growing the Suffolk Specialty Program on its own. And so, going back to 2009, we were looking at about 1.2 to 1.3 million dollars from Suffolk County; projecting into 2010, we were looking at about 1.6. So we felt that because of the market conditions, we would not see a significant -- you know, the difference that we would see was only because of the tax structure changing, not because of the business improving.

LEGISLATOR CILMI:

So, do you anticipate, on a percentage basis, a similar, or I guess it's self-justifying, an increase in business for Suffolk County for the Suffolk County establishments that benefit from your programs?

MR. MCGOWAN:

We're in uncharted waters. We're still as an industry, as a whole nationwide, let alone here, are still going into through the problems of the recession, its impact on consumerism, consumer travel, and on corporate travel. And so we really don't see a major improvement, a return to pre-recession levels of business until probably around 2014, 2015, and that's also backed up by some of the major leading economists that follow the travel industry, Smith Travel Research, Price Waterhouse, PKF, etcetera. What I think that we will continue to see and what has helped us are certain situations that present themselves. Most certainly, weather has a huge impact on how well we do on -- in Suffolk County, and especially on the East End. And, as I was discussing with Legislator Montano earlier, part of the problem in our marketing historically is that you can spend a tremendous amount of consumer marketing dollars trying to get folks to come out to East End and come out to eastern Suffolk County during the summer, and all of a sudden, you know, the ten-day forecast calls for major rain and you will get no activity. On the other hand, if it's very sunshiny in the ten-day forecast, did you influence those people? And the top of mind awareness is what we have worked to try to achieve, not just in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, but in portions of Connecticut, portions of Massachusetts, and certainly Upstate and nearby, within about a 200, 250 mile drive radius, so that when those folks need to get away, that we are, hopefully, top of mind awareness and they think about us.

Other things that have helped us tremendously this past year in creating that top of mind awareness was certainly Dr. Beach naming two -- one of our beaches as the best in the nation, and another one is in the top ten of the nation. We leveraged that and took advantage of that in a significant way, and that's part of a presentation I'll be making before the Legislature probably within the next month or so. But, you know those opportunities present themselves. We, as professionals, look for those opportunities. You can't plan for them, you can't look out there, but you, as professionals, know how to leverage them to the maximum extent when they do present themselves.

LEGISLATOR CILMI:

Have you seen or heard any indications that the additional 3% tax has been counterproductive in terms of business here in Suffolk County?

MR. MCGOWAN:

I have not, and, quite honestly, I'd be hard-pressed to really find that. When we look at a 3% tax and compare it to so many other communities, we are on the low end. And historically, and I could probably bring in a parade of General Managers of properties who would back this up, folks look at what the rate is, they don't look at what the taxes are, per se, when they are making a decision. They may choose one property over another on the basis of rate, but they generally, unless it's way out of line, and I mean 25% tax rate, they generally won't make a decision on the basis of the lodging tax. We offer a fair value, a very good value in creating that awareness. What we're hoping to do is stimulate a decision-making process that says look at Long Island and the value it presents and provides and make a decision, versus some other place that you may decide to travel to. But that tax rate will not have an impact on a decision to travel.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay. I guess last question. Of the program expenses that you talked about, can you give us a sense of geographically where those expenses are distributed? Is it -- is most of it distributed in the northeast, is some of it distributed in the Midwest, advertising dollars, marketing dollars, sales dollars, etcetera?

MR. MCGOWAN:

We have some lead into the Midwest from our regional, but most of it is in the northeast, and really within a 250-mile radius. We can geo-target our online marketing, and we do that, but when we're looking at various media, we're looking at media that are lifestyle oriented, travel oriented, and that reaches, to a good extent, a female audience with a message that, hopefully, will resonate with a female audience, but it is predominantly in the northeast region. We do get inquiries from as far away as Hawaii, and California, and Texas, but our focus and our expenditures are really targeted to that drive market, one tank of gas, needs to enjoy a getaway, and we present an opportunity and an appealing destination for them.

LEGISLATOR CILMI:

Okay. Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Moke.

MR. MCGOWAN:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Thank you very much. Legislator -- Counsel Nolan and myself are just discussing, why females? And then we both decided, yeah, you're right, they do make all the plans for vacations.

MR. MCGOWAN:

They are the gate keepers.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

That's true. We said we're all alike, and he goes, "Yeah, we are." Legislator Nowick.

LEG. NOWICK:

Just quickly, I was curious, and it has nothing to do with the revenue, but those -- well, it does. Those two beaches that you were speaking of, what was -- one beach was Copper Beach, did you see?

MR. MCGOWAN:

Cooper's Beach.

LEG. NOWICK:

Cooper's Beach, and the others?

MR. MCGOWAN:

Main Beach.

LEG. NOWICK:

Are those public beaches or town beaches?

MR. MCGOWAN:

Yes, they are?

LEG. NOWICK:

So you don't have to have a sticker on your car, you don't have --

MR. MCGOWAN:

You have to pay for parking.

LEG. NOWICK:

You have to pay for parking, but --

MR. MCGOWAN:

And it's about \$40, but, no, you don't need --

LEG. NOWICK:

How much?

MR. MCGOWAN:

Forty dollars.

LEG. NOWICK:

For one day?

MR. MCGOWAN:

Yes.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Nice. Where is that?

LEG. NOWICK:

Whoa. Where is that?

MR. MCGOWAN:

East Hampton.

LEG. NOWICK:

How many people can you fit in a car, 20, 30?

MR. MCGOWAN:

That is what you would do.

LEG. NOWICK:

Yeah.

MR. MCGOWAN:

It's time to take the van.

LEG. NOWICK:

Oh, my God. Cross that off the list. And just curiously, Moke, I have to know this. You represent

Nassau and Suffolk. Do you go over to the Nassau Legislature all the time and do what you have to do here?

MR. MCGOWAN:

I do. I spend -- you know, we have a -- answered earlier on, we have a Board of Directors of 39 individuals. The fact of the matter is, is that I report to a Board of 39 individuals and I report to two Legislators -- Legislatures of 39 individuals, plus the Executives. It is a balancing act and we do try to provide the strongest value to both counties in line with their collections and distribution and -- but, you know, what we do look at -- and this has an impact on what we do and how we do it in Suffolk County. Long Island is the brand, Long Island is what is going to resonate with a consumer specifically off the Island who doesn't know one county from another. When we focus on Suffolk County, and it's Long Island's Suffolk County, and that's how the message is portrayed in our advertising creative, versus the regional, "Come to Long Island." With Suffolk it's, "Come to Long Island Suffolk County." But the visuals, the messaging, the tone and manner of the ads are exactly the same as the regional, and that way we can develop the additional strength and leverage, the dollars, from both regional as well as Suffolk-centric.

LEG. NOWICK:

So, I would imagine you do really two different kinds of advertising, one more of a convention type of -- I guess to appeal to the convention and business, and then, more for Suffolk, I would think leisure.

MR. MCGOWAN:

Predominant -- it's all leisure in Suffolk. We do a little bit of advertising to the convention meeting planner trade, but most of that activity is direct sales oriented through participation in trade shows, sales missions, familiarization trips, site inspections. We have to get that meeting planner to consider us, develop the relationship, get them to come and take a look at what we offer by way of meeting their criteria and their needs. All of the -- that's why all of the program costs for the sales is regional. None of those costs bleed over into Suffolk Specialty Program. It's -- you cannot sell to a meeting planner or sports events rights holder one county to the exclusion of another. You have to listen to and understand their needs and criteria, and then propose to them those business entities, whether it's lodging or whether it's facilities and sporting -- sports facilities, that can handle and facilitate their needs, and it might be some in both counties and they make their decision based on their own individual negotiations. But, you know, it's -- that's, like I said, why none of the costs of sales are in Suffolk-centric.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Legislator Stern.

LEG. STERN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hello, Moke.

MR. MCGOWAN:

I apologize, I've kind of neglected you this afternoon.

LEG. STERN:

You talk about striking a balance. Within the industry and within the organization, we're talking about the balance between a corporate outreach, particularly to Nassau as opposed to a more recreational use in Suffolk. Within the industry, and I guess within the organization, do you have personnel who are dedicated solely just to corporate and just to recreational, or is there overlap within the profession and within the organization?

MR. MCGOWAN:

The sales people are dedicated to, if you will, the corporate. We have two Corporate Sales Managers, Director of Sales and one additional individual, who are totally focused on the corporate market, going out and trying to -- both corporate and association, trying to get corporate entities to

hold their meetings or associations to hold their meetings on Long Island. Then our Sports Development Sales Manager focuses predominantly on sports, but also shares a hat in support of the corporate meetings, trying to develop that, so she splits her time between sports and a little bit on the corporate side. The final individual is really focused on domestic and international travel trade, the tour operators. And, again, whether it's the attendance of a program such as the American Bus Association to get bus tour operators to consider domestic, bus tour operators to consider coming to Long Island, or the attendance at three major international shows that reach international tour operators, she spends predominantly her time in those arenas, and likewise spends a little bit of time in trying to develop sales in the corporate area.

LEG. STERN:

And did I understand correctly, that -- did you say that all of the funds that are dedicated to the Suffolk Specialty, that those expenses are dedicated to the recreational tourism, rather than the other corporate side?

MR. MCGOWAN:

Yes, you did.

LEG. STERN:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

All right. Thank you very much, Legislator Stern. Are there any further questions from the Legislators? Okay. I do have Legislator Schneiderman's questions, and I did promise that I would go through them. Moke, maybe what we'd do is -- we've got a time issue here. We've got a -- now, some of them I think are short answers. *"What are the occupancy rates in hotels in Suffolk County over the last three years?"*

MR. MCGOWAN:

You know, I would have to go back and get -- we have had a major drop in occupancy in Suffolk County between 2008 and current. I would say that it has dropped off, off the top of my head, about 15%. It has come up a little bit, but that is at the sacrifice of rate, that is rates have come down significantly to try to drive demand.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Is that on both ends of the County or --

MR. MCGOWAN:

We -- that is -- that information is really through Smith Travel Research, which is a research program that we participate in. They focus predominantly, though, on the corporate hotels and do not normally include the independently owned properties, but we also tap into Island Publications, a division of Newsday, who does an annual survey to get that.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Right, you know, I know Island Publications. Okay. All right. So, basically --

MR. MCGOWAN:

It's very soft.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

-- he could look it up under the Island Publications.

MR. MCGOWAN:

Pardon me?

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

We could get that information from Island Publications.

MR. MCGOWAN:

I'd be more than happy to get it on behalf --

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

That would be terrific. *"What percentage of spending goes towards administrative costs, including salaries, rent, and office related projects?"* This goes back to the question of, and I could answer this for you, but I'm not going to, but that I suspect that, you know, not-for-profits are always touting, well, 98% goes back to the client base, and stuff like that. You're not that kind of operation, so would you answer that question?

MR. MCGOWAN:

We are not that type of operation.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Fair enough. I guess I did answer it. *"What percentage of Suffolk hotel tax is used on promoting Nassau County?"* I got that's 671,000; is that basically the answer to that?

MR. MCGOWAN:

Yeah. I'm not sure I understood the question. What percentage --

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

What percentage of Suffolk hotel tax is used on promoting Nassau County? I guess the answer would be none.

MR. MCGOWAN:

Six -- well, if you will, it would be the match of the 671,000, yes.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Yeah. Four, *"Where do LICVB members travel to promote tourism, and who goes on these trips? Names."*

MR. MCGOWAN:

We invite everyone to -- in the rare occasions where we have a cooperative program and say we are going to attend the International Pow Wow, we will invite all of our lodging members and attractions to participate. It's costly for them to do so, but they can't be anybody, they have to be desirous, not only for the international business, but understand international tariffs and how to price and the cost of prices. It's really -- everybody's invited, and on a first come first serve basis, those who want to participate --

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

And where is this, where is this located, this International --

MR. MCGOWAN:

The International Pow Wow is actually produced by Travel Industry Association of America, and it goes East Coast, West Coast and Midwest, it revolves around the nation.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

But in the United States?

MR. MCGOWAN:

Yeah. On the international, we attend two international programs, one in London, World Travel Mart, I don't attend it, but my Sales Manager and those that market attends that, and the ITB in Berlin, because we focus on both UK, Irish, and German and German-speaking. Those are our two

primary focus markets internationally. In those programs, no one's invited to participate. Occasionally, almost any other program, van tours, and things -- site inspections and things of that nature, we ask folks to assist us in those endeavors, and we will again open that up through a committee that is attended by folks throughout the Island to provide assistance, and that's basically it.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

"Why is it necessary to travel to foreign trade shows? Can you justify the expenses involved?"

MR. MCGOWAN:

Certainly can. You know, up until five years ago, four-and-a-half years ago, 2005, we did not have an international presence at all. We had -- we had not marketed, we had not promoted, we had not sold to the international community and, consequently, we had absolutely no products. No international tour operators carried Long Island products in their catalog of offerings, that is the catalogs and products that they make available and sell through the travel trade or the travel agent in their home countries. Today, we have almost two dozen. We have some of the top tour operators, both in Germany, and in the UK, and in Ireland carrying Long Island product. All we had worked to do is educate our folks, be they attractions, but predominantly the hotels, of how to deal with and work with an international tour operator. The tour operator themselves make the selection of the product that they want to include, but we -- there was no conduit to bring those two together in years past.

We have some 18 hotels that now participate and offer international tour operator rates, which is roughly about a 30% reduction of the rack rate that they offer because of the way that it is marketed and sold internationally. Of those 18 properties, I think about fourteen of them are in Suffolk County and four are in Nassau County. What we are seeing today, if you will, we project that of the 1.4 million UK visitors that come into New York City, we get 10% of them. Of the one-and-a-quarter million German and German-speaking international visitors that come into New York City, we get 8% of them. So, that's -- you know, I think you can also touch bases with some folks in the industry, such as -- I think a classic example is the Southampton Inn, who lost a tremendous amount of corporate business because of the market conditions and has been able to make up almost the entire difference with international visitors staying in their property. It is I think a huge return on the investment for how little we spend on that.

To go back through this budget again, you're going to notice that the total cost of all of the programs for it are, international and the domestic tour operations, is only about \$49,000, so I think the return on investment is significant.

Why do we attend those two shows overseas? It is where you have to go if you're going to be a player in that arena. And again, we only attend those shows that are specific to the markets that we are trying to attract. And the reason we focused on the UK, Ireland and German and German-speaking is those are the two top international long-haul travelers to New York City in our own backyard.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

And those people who go to these conventions, it sounds like there's two of them, are staff, not yourself or --

MR. MCGOWAN:

No. Only one individual goes overseas and that is our Sales Manager, a lady by the name of Isabelle Gonzalez. She has worked the international market in the private sector before we hired her and understood and knew that very, very well, which is also why we've been very successful, the right person in the right capacity.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

All righty. Are there any further questions? Does that -- anything that comes up through those

answers that we'd like to explore? We're good? Moke, thank you very much. We appreciate you coming down here today, and we appreciate your report and your objectivity, and we're looking for a big year next year. Let's hope that '14, '15 -- that sounds like a long ways away to me.

MR. MCGOWAN:

Unfortunately, it does, but we are doing everything that we can to keep Long Island, Suffolk County before the audiences. And I would like to extend our appreciation, my appreciation to you and this committee for allowing us the opportunity here today.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

You're welcome.

LEG. NOWICK:

We'll be parking our car at that beach.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

That's right. Only 40 bucks. Come on, Lynne, let's not be cheap.

All righty. Moving right along. We're going to be going to our agenda. And starting with the LICVB related issues. We have two resolutions that we are going to address.

TABLED PRIME

1366 - Adopting a Local Law to maximize -- ***1366 - A Local Law to maximize the promotion of tourism in Suffolk County (Schneiderman)***. I'll --

LEG. NOWICK:

Motion to table.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Motion to table by Ms. Nowick, and I'll second the motion. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved. ***(VOTE: Tabled 6-0-0-0)*** we're going to watch Moke pick up his --

MR. MCGOWAN:

My apologies.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay. Would you include Mr. Montano in on that vote?

MS. ORTIZ:

Yep.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Very good. All right. We're moving to 1531 --

LEG. NOWICK:

You included him in that motion?

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Yes. Yeah, we did. We're good, right?

MS. ORTIZ:

Yes.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay. ***1531 - Adopting a Local Law improving tourism promotion in Suffolk County***

(Schneiderman). Same vote, same second. All those in favor? Opposed? It has been tabled.
(VOTE: Tabled 6-0-0-0)

1657 - Authorizing temporary transfer of development rights to Motor Parkway Plaza (Co. Exec.). I understand Mr. Zwirn is going to recommend something for us.

MR. ZWIRN:
Just to table it.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:
Just to table.

MR. ZWIRN:
We have to amend it, so we would ask it to be tabled.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:
Okay. Any questions on that, Legislator Stern?

LEG. STERN:
Second.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:
Oh. Legislator Stern makes the motion to table, I'll second it. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved. It has been tabled. **(VOTE: Tabled 6-0-0-0)**

1703 - Authorizing the County Executive to execute an agreement with the Suffolk County Faculty Association, Suffolk County Community College, covering the terms and conditions of employment for employees covered under the Bargaining Unit No. 3 for the period of September 1st, 2011 through August 31st, 2015 (Co. Exec.).

P.O. LINDSAY:
Motion.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:
Say it again.

P.O. LINDSAY:
Motion.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:
Motion by Legislator Lindsay. Second by Legislator Nowick. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved. **(VOTE: Approved 6-0-0-0)**

All right. Legislator -- Legislation **1715 - Appoint a member of the Suffolk County Community College Board of Trustees (Belinda Alvarez-Groneman) (Cilmi)**, which I understand has been withdrawn; is that correct?

LEGISLATOR CILMI:
At the request of Ms. Groneman, yes.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:
Groneman. All right. That has been withdrawn. Okay.

INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS

Introductory Resolution 1732 - Authorizing extension of contract for energy audit of the

William H. Rogers Legislative Building (Lindsay). Would you like to make that motion, Legislator Lindsay?

P.O. LINDSAY:

I'll make the motion, and then I want to talk as well.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay. The motion to approve; I'll second the motion. Are there any further motions? Okay. Legislator Lindsay.

P.O. LINDSAY:

The only -- I was hoping Joe Schroeder would be here today, he's our energy guy. I think we will spend a total of \$20,000 in the energy audit and the follow-up survey of -- they measure how much we save. But Joe's telling me that we should save \$30,000 annually when all the work is done on our energy in the building, which I think is quite a return on investment.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Legislator Nowick.

LEG. NOWICK:

I could save you \$20,000 if they didn't put the air conditioning on so high and we have to put the heat on under the horseshoe; what do you think?

(*Laughter*)

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

I think we'll battle over that one.

P.O. LINDSAY:

Some of the problems that they discovered is some of the dampers weren't working; that's why in some rooms it's freezing, other rooms it's sweating; that the compressor that we have downstairs that air conditions the building is working two or three times harder than it has to, because the return air in the building from the air conditioner doesn't go into a duct, it goes into the ceiling, it's called a plenum, an open plenum. And the roof, one of the things they want to do is paint the roof with a reflecting paint to lower the temperature in the plenum. He said we were taking air in the plenum around 80-something degrees and then trying to cool it, and the machinery just was working much harder than it had to and was burning a lot more electricity. It was interesting.

At a future meeting, when Joe's available, I'd really like him to come to the committee to talk about it, because our systems here are really screwed up. And it points to that maybe this could be replicated in some other County buildings and save us a lot of money.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Legislator Nowick, do you have a question?

LEG. NOWICK:

I thought we had similar legislation a few years back. Whatever happened with that? No?

P.O. LINDSAY:

Joe.

LEG. NOWICK:

Okay.

P.O. LINDSAY:

Ask Joe.

LEG. NOWICK:

Okay.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

I have a quick question of you, Legislator Lindsay. It says, "Authorizing extension of contract for energy audit of the William H. Rogers Legislative Building." What does this do? Does this just like extend the contract for energy auditing, or when are we going to go do it?

MR. NOLAN:

No, it actually -- it extends the term of the contract. They've done most of it. They have -- there's a couple of elements they have to finish in terms of the audit, but the term of the contract has run out. So they can't get paid until we extend the term of the contract, so this is a piece we have to do. It's not going to cost us anymore, it's still under the original \$10,000 authorization.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

We're just extending the contract.

MR. NOLAN:

Right, the time to perform the work.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Got it. Okay, fair enough. We have a motion to approve and second on that. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved. It has been approved. **(VOTE: Approved 6-0-0-0).**

1846 - Appoint member to the Suffolk County Community College Board of Trustees (Theresa Sanders) (Gregory). Theresa, you want to come on up? Hi, Theresa, it's always a pleasure.

MS. SANDERS:

Good afternoon, everyone.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

You know, certainly, thank you for coming today, and we appreciate you sitting through our tourism issues and the like. Why don't you tell us a little bit about yourself, why you should be on the Board, why you would be an asset to the Board, why we should appoint you. And, again, thank you for being here.

MS. SANDERS:

Sure, and I'll keep it brief. I do have a PowerPoint. I'm just kidding, I'm just kidding.

(*Laughter*)

I do want to say thank you very much for having me here. And I just learned a lot, a lot more about Long Island, it just makes me love it more. And I guess my background is pretty interesting. We were a migration from -- my family was migrationed from New York City, to use that terminology. My father was in the military and moved to Mitchell Field housing and brought the family with him. I went to East Meadow Schools and I grew up playing outside in Long Island and enjoying everything Long Island has to offer. And it was an interesting experience, because we would very often go back to the city to visit our family, and, of course, you know, the image of Long Island in the rest of the world is that everybody, if you live out here, you're all rich. So our entire family just thought we had arrived and we were the richest people in the world because we lived on Long Island. And as I grew up and I started to understand by going through the school systems, moved from Nassau to Suffolk, and understanding disparities that exist in every community, and even on Long Island, because I had an opportunity to grow up in a household, two parents, go to good schools, colleges, have a great opportunity and a foundation. But I also got to see the other side of Long Island that

did have disadvantages and everybody didn't have what I had.

And the education aspect for me I think was the most enlightening and enriching. When we were younger, we didn't travel a lot, but my mother used to tell us you could travel through reading and, you know, we just thought that that was just how you had fun. We had fun, we read books and, you know, you take your mind anywhere. And as I got older, I was like, "My mother is very slick." She didn't have to really spend a lot of money to get us to experience life, so I grew up loving to learn. I begged to go to school when I saw my siblings go. I was in school from like preschool, Head Start, you know, I just loved it. And so, as I got a little bit older, I graduated high school early, went to West Babylon Schools, and came out and started college and just never stopped. So, when I had the opportunity to serve in an educational setting, I'm excited about that, I really am. I think that that's an equalizer for most people. It's the one thing you can never lose, you can never lose what you learn. You could lose a house, you could lose a car, but if you've got some level of education, you can always regain those things. And then there's the life skill component, because you could be academically smart, but if you don't understand how to balance a checkbook, or, you know, the social graces of dressing and interacting with people, you're lost.

So I see that the College, Suffolk Community kind of offers this bridge to an opportunity in life for so many residents, especially now during these economic times. It's difficult for people to send their kids away to school. We have a huge population on Long Island. I call it our untapped intellectual property, that's probably our most valuable asset on this Island. Those are the kids in families that they can't go away, they have to help. They might live in a basement, they have to work and go to school. They can't afford to leave. Maybe there's a relative that's sick. And so there's an opportunity in this jewel that we have in terms of the Community College that I think that I can serve.

I think the benefits that I have had in life is now -- you know, it's time to return it. You have to give back, that's how you keep your blessings going, so I'm just ready to give back. I think I've had some opportunities, and while I'm not rich and I don't have everything I want, that there's still a way that you give back, regardless of where you are in life right now. So I openly, you know, am excited about this opportunity to serve in another capacity and -- oh, well, I'll wait until you ask a question, then I have a --

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Go ahead.

MS. SANDERS:

Well, and I also want to give an opportunity, because I know that I've been in public service for about 18 years now, public, so I know that when you are a public servant, your life is an open book, I know that. And so I do want to just put out there, I understand there's an anonymous letter that's been circulating, so I want to put out there the reason it's anonymous is that probably tells you all a lot anyway. But I do want to open it up, because I don't think I want to leave this room without anybody having asked me any questions, any of you, because I take the opportunity to serve on the College Board very seriously, so I want to have everything vetted. And I know, being a public servant, these issues are always vetted, and my life is open and there's nothing that I want to hide. So I just leave those comments and then open it up for questions.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Did you want to explain the letter; is that something that you want to address or --

MS. SANDERS:

I'd -- if anybody has a questions.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay. All right.

MS. SANDERS:

It was anonymous, so I figured, if you had a question, you can ask me a question.

LEGISLATOR CILMI:

I haven't seen any letter.

LEG. MONTANO:

Did anyone see a letter? You have it? I generally don't read anonymous letters.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Yeah, I gave it no credence.

MS. SANDERS:

Okay.

MS. ORTIZ:

Can you use the microphones? Legislator Horsley, microphone.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Oh, I'm sorry.

MR. MONTANO:

I'm sorry.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

All right. I've passed it over to Legislator Montano. First of all, let me, while he's reading that. Once an Eagle always an Eagle, right?

MS. SANDERS:

All the time.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

All the time. That's an inside thing. That's the West Babylon --

MS. SANDERS:

There you go.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

A West Babylon graduate, that's good. That was a Babylon --

MS. SANDERS:

You never forget that experience.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

You want to pass it around?

LEG. MONTANO:

I'll give it its due consideration, pass it in the garbage can. I don't think letters like that should be anonymous, and I think that it's unfortunate that anybody who's in a public position would be subject to, not necessarily attacks, because, you know, you need a thick skin to be in this business and we choose, but when something's anonymous, I certainly have my concerns and I frown upon that. If you want to say something, then be person enough to say it and sign your name to it.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Theresa, could you tell us a little bit about where you work today and what you're doing. Maybe that might be -- while we're passing this around.

MS. SANDERS:

Okay. So, I'll tell you the primary hat is I'm a parent. I have a daughter that's graduating next year from college, and a son that's graduating high school next year, so it's very interesting. That's my first job, developing well-rounded children. I have a very close-knit family and just love, you know, the weekends, the evenings, and just being able to relax.

The other job I have is President and CEO of Urban League of Long Island. That's the most recent job I've been -- and, again, public service, I've been at the Urban League for 18 years now, and, you know, there were things in my life that was the catalyst for me getting into public service. I knew back then that, you know, once you open up your life, it's an open book, but I also felt that there are lessons to be learned from that and experiences that you can show other people in terms of how to turn lemons into lemonade and to improve your life. It's one thing to talk about it and it's one thing to look for opportunities from systems and entities, but there's something that individuals have to do in order to improve their lives as an individual responsibility. So I love what I do.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Thank you. And I appreciate the fact that you do, and you're doing great public service. Legislator Lindsay, do you have any questions?

P.O. LINDSAY:

Theresa, first of all, I want to thank you and commend you for your willingness to serve on this unpaid position, which many boards and commissions within the County there is no compensation, and people come forward and give of their time so willingly. I think it tells us something about the people that live in Suffolk County, that how generous they are with their time. Do you serve on any other boards or commissions in the County or --

MS. SANDERS:

I've been appointed to the Long Island Regional Planning Commission, I currently serve on that, Tomorrows Hope Foundation, and those are the two current ones.

P.O. LINDSAY:

And you'll have time to devote to this as well as with your other responsibilities already?

MS. SANDERS:

Yeah, definitely. And again, because of the -- I live in Suffolk, the educational aspect and the balancing of the time frames, I guess that was another thing about, you know, when you're juggling a house or you learn how to -- you learn how to keep a good tight schedule, so those things, yeah, will definitely work into the schedule.

P.O. LINDSAY:

Because our College Board is a very active hands-on board that we really need -- we need people there and we need them quickly. We have a couple of holdover appointments from the Governor's Office, so we're waiting to see what happens with them, and we have one vacancy on the County level, so your service will be greatly appreciated. And just that you know what you're getting yourself into, walking in the door, this isn't an honorary Board, this is a very, very active Board.

MS. SANDERS:

I look forward to it.

P.O. LINDSAY:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Legislator Stern.

LEG. STERN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yeah, I agree with the Presiding Officer, a critically important institution with a very active Board, and I thank you for your willingness to serve in that capacity. I wanted to ask you, where are you currently at with -- in your pursuit for -- is it -- well, tell me about the program that you're currently pursuing at Dowling, Education Administration?

MS. SANDERS:

Yeah, I've completed my basic course work, so now it's writing and defending. And, of course, this thing called public service just like keeps pulling at me, so -- and getting the kids at a point in their life where they're balanced, that took a little bit of priority. Eventually, I'm going to finish and have my Doctorate, but, again, I took a back seat to finishing my research. But my research is -- the first phase has been entered and somewhat defended, so I know what the research is going to be, and, hopefully, it will be something I can apply to a wider community.

LEG. STERN:

I mean, that was just one element among many in a very impressive resume, and certainly indicates a demonstrated interest to all the kinds of things that you're going to be a part of as a part of this Board. So, again, thank you for being here.

MS. SANDERS:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Are there any further questions?

LEGISLATOR CILMI:

I guess I have a question.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Sure, Legislator Cilmi.

LEG. CILMI:

Hi, Theresa. How are you?

MS. SANDERS:

Good.

LEGISLATOR CILMI:

Thanks for volunteering to serve. From one West Babylon graduate to another, we'll have to have a conversation after the meeting about that. But I guess I don't want to justify the nature of that letter with a public response, because if whoever wrote it wasn't adult enough to put a name to it, then I don't think you should be forced to respond to it publicly. However, I would like to speak to you about it privately prior to --

MS. SANDERS:

Definitely.

LEGISLATOR CILMI:

-- my voting on your appointment to this Board, so I look forward to the opportunity to do that and to discuss things in good old WB at some later date.

MS. SANDERS:

Any time.

LEG. CILMI:

All right?

MS. SANDERS:

Thank you.

LEG. CILMI:

Thanks.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

We need a motion? Legislator Montano?

MR. MONTANO:

I'll make a motion.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Second, I'll make the second on the motion. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved.

LEGISLATOR CILMI:

Abstain.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

It moves on to the Legislature. And Legislator Cilmi abstains.

LEG. NOWICK:

Go Eagles.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Go Eagles, yes, exactly.

LEG. CILMI:

Go Eagles.

(*Laughter*)

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Yes. And, Theresa, you don't have to come to the meeting on Tuesday, which is out in Riverhead, by the way.

P.O. LINDSAY:

No, it isn't.

LEG. NOWICK:

Yes, it is.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Yes, it is.

P.O. LINDSAY:

Yeah, you're right, it's in Riverhead. You're right.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

That's why they pay me the big bucks, Bill.

(*Laughter*)

MS. SANDERS:

Does everyone have my contact information, if you would like to talk to me?

MR. MONTANO:

On the resume.

MS. SANDERS:

Okay. So just feel free to give me a call. Thank you.

LEG. MONTANO:

You have it on the resume, I can reach you.

MS. SANDERS:

Okay. Thank you very much, everyone.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Congratulations.

LEG. NOWICK:

Very nice presentation.

MS. SANDERS:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Motion to adjourn.

[THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 3:30 P.M.]