

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
OF THE
SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE
MINUTES

A meeting of the Economic Development 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 November 12, 2014.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Leg. William J. Lindsay III, Chairman
Leg. Steven H. Stern, Vice Chair
Leg. Kara Hahn
Leg. John M. Kennedy, Jr.
Leg. Kevin J. McCaffrey
Leg. Jay H. Schneiderman

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

George M. Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature
Jason Richberg, Chief Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
Benny Pernice, Budget Review Office
Carolyn Fahey, Economic Development
David Kennedy, Greater Patchogue Chamber of Commerce
Jason Hann, Aide for Leg. Schneiderman
Brendan Chamberlain, Aide for Leg. Muratore
Alyssa Turano, Aide for Leg. Hahn
Eva Greguski, Aide for Leg. Calarco
Michael Cavanaugh, Aide for Leg. Lindsay
Sean Rogan, Aide for Leg. McCaffrey
Deborah Harris, Aide for Leg. Stern
Darnell Tyson, DPW
And all other interested parties

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Diana Flesher, Court Stenographer

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 2:00 PM

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Good afternoon. Welcome to the Suffolk County Legislature Economic Development Committee hearing. If we could all rise and be led in the Pledge of Allegiance by Legislator Kennedy.

SALUTATION

If we could all remain standing just in honor of Veterans Day, which was yesterday, and honor those who are currently serving in the military and be with them and be with their families while they're in harm's way and away from their families.

MOMENT OF SILENCE OBSERVED

(Gavel sounded) Okay. We'll start with the Public Portion. We don't have any yellow cards. Is there anybody that would like to speak during the Public Portion, please come forward. Seeing no one, we'll move onto presentations. We don't have any. Oh, sorry, go ahead, please step forward. State your name for the record.

PUBLIC PORTION

MR. KENNEDY:

Hi, my name is David Kennedy. I'm the Executive Director of the Greater Patchogue Chamber of Commerce. And I'm just here quickly to -- just come in support -- I know before the Economic Development Committee there's a bill before you about Connect Long Island initiative from the County Executive Bellone, about some rapid transit connections to our train stations, our downtowns.

I just want to speak on behalf of Patchogue. Certainly we're a community that's worked hard to really enhance the fact that we're a walkable community, use a lot of smart growth initiatives thanks to the leadership of our Mayor Paul Pontieri. And certainly connecting these walkable downtowns with some kind of rapid transportation, getting Long Island off of the dependency on cars is helpful. Probably the biggest issue we face here in Patchogue with our development due to our new popularity, which we're very proud of, is certainly parking and patrons finding places to park in downtown.

So certainly anything that would encourage people to use public transportation more and people use that type of access is greatly appreciated. And from I know of the program, it's very innovative that this rapid transit can actually provide transportation on major roadways and get these people using these buses that would actually make the lights -- I didn't find this out until recently, that actually has technology that the lights would always be guaranteed green as these vehicles travel. And I think that makes going from Stony Brook to Patchogue so much more doable for people who want to travel to both communities.

So certainly on behalf of the Chamber we strongly support this bill and hope this does pass through the Committee and make it to the full Legislature for a vote. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Thank you. Does anybody have any questions for Mr. Kennedy? Thank you, Mr. Kennedy. Anyone else interested in speaking behalf -- before the Committee? Okay, seeing no one, we'll move onto our Tabled Resolutions.

INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS

There are no Tabled Resolutions so we'll go to our Introductory Resolutions starting with **1868, To reappoint Lyn Boland as a member of the Suffolk County Citizens Advisory Board for the Arts. (Hahn)**

LEG. HAHN:

Motion.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Motion by Legislator Hahn; second by Legislator McCaffrey. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Unanimous. **(VOTE: 6-0-0-0)**

1922, Accepting and appropriating a 100% reimbursed grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the Home Investment Partnership Program and authorizing the County Executive to execute agreements. (Co. Exec.)

LEG. HAHN:

Motion to put on the Consent Calendar.

LEG. STERN:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Motion by Legislator Hahn to put on the Consent Calendar; seconded by Legislator Stern?

LEG. STERN:

To approve --

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

To approve and place on the Consent Calendar. Excuse me. Seconded by Legislator Stern. No discussion. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion's approved. **(VOTE: 6-0-0-0/Consent Calendar)**

1923, Accepting and appropriating a 100% reimbursed grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the Emergency Solutions Grant Program and authorizing the County Executive to execute agreements. (Co. Exec.) Same motion, same second. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion approved. **(VOTE: 6-0-0-0)**

1924, Accepting and appropriating a 100% reimbursed grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the Community Development Block Grant Program and authorizing the County Executive to execute agreements. (Co. Exec.) Same motion, same second. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion's approved. **(VOTE: 6-0-0-0)**
1940, Authorizing transfer of development credits to Westhampton Free Library. (Schneiderman)

LEG. KENNEDY:

Motion.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Motion by Legislator Kennedy.

LEG. STERN:

Too slow, too slow.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

(Laughter) Second by Legislator Schneiderman.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Flip it. It's Jay's thing. Give him the motion. I'll be the second.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

No, just kidding. Okay. Legislator Schneiderman, seconded by Legislator Kennedy. (Sidebar conversation) All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **(VOTE: 6-0-0-0)**

Okay, **1952, Appropriating funds in connection with Jumpstart Suffolk (CP 6424) to the Town of Huntington for Huntington Station. (Co. Exec)**

LEG. STERN:

Motion.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Motion by Legislator Stern. I'll second. If we could have someone from the Administration come up to discuss this, please. Carolyn?

MS. FAHEY:

Good afternoon. The resolution before you awards \$250,000 to the Town of Huntington for the redevelopment of the intersection of Railroad and -- I don't know how to say it properly, Lowdnes, L-o-w-d-n-e-s, Lowdnes Road. This redevelopment will help to spur and jump start the connections to the -- the new Huntington Station Downtown Program connecting both the school district, one of the schools, the Veterans Housing Project that this Legislature has funded, and the new development over by the Railroad Station.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Any questions for Carolyn?

LEG. KENNEDY:

Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Legislator Kennedy.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Carolyn, thank you for being here. Are either one of those roads a County road?

MS. FAHEY:

No. They're town roads, correct? They're town roads.

LEG. KENNEDY:

They're both town roads. Where's Counsel? So, George, how do we get -- how do we get an interest in the underwriting collateral?

MR. NOLAN:

We do need an interest. I'm sure Carolyn can probably address that.

MS. FAHEY:

We do an easement with a municipality. The town would have to give the County an access easement to the road work where we're doing the improvements.

LEG. KENNEDY:

But neither of these is connecting to a County road or approximate to a County road? It's two interior town roads?

MS. FAHEY:

Yes.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Any other questions? Thank you, Carolyn. Do I have a motion? That's right. Second by Legislator Hahn. All those in favor? Opposed?

LEG. KENNEDY:

Abstain.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Okay, one abstention. **(VOTE: 6-0-1-0)**

1953, Appropriating funds in connection with Jumpstart Suffolk for the Town of Smithtown (CP 6424). (Co. Exec)

LEG. KENNEDY:

I'm going to make a motion to table on this one, Mr. Chair. There was -- our representative from Smithtown was supposed to be here. He had a scheduling conflict and was unable to attend.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Seconded by Legislator Schneiderman. Any discussion on it? On the tabling motion all those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion's tabled. **(VOTE: 6-0-0-0)**

2011, Accepting and appropriating a grant in the amount of \$1,500,000 from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority's 'Cleaner Greener Communities Phase II Implementation Grants' to fund Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Development and amending the 2014 Capital Budget and Program in connection with the connect Long Island - CR 97, Nicolls Road (CP 5597) (Co. Exec.) I'll make a motion to approve; second by Legislator Hahn. On the motion, Legislator Schneiderman.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Do we know what the total cost of the project -- this is just planning money, I assume, right, this 1.5 million? And is that a hundred percent grant or is that a portion?

MR. VAUGHN:

So parts of this question I'd be more than happy to answer them. I do have a representative from the Department of Public Works as well. This -- while this is not technically a 100% grant, the other costs associated with this grant will be filled in by other grant money. So while not -- while

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this grant is not entirely 100% -- a 100% grant, there are other grants that's going to pay for our contributing costs to this specific grant. In terms of the entire cost of the project, I will defer that question to DPW. Was there another -- I'm sorry, was there one other part that I missed?

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Are there any conditions on it? It's a lot of money. It's great that you guys were able to secure this kind of funding.

MR. VAUGHN:

Uh-hm.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Are there conditions that we move forward after the study period?

MR. VAUGHN:

Right. So there is -- each part of the grant money will be given to us in phases, I believe. And we'll be reimbursed for each phase that is completed. So we will -- we initially have to lay out the money and then we'll be reimbursed as we kind of go forward. I'm going to turn it over to Department of Public Works.

MR. TYSON:

Good afternoon everyone. My name is Darnell Tyson. And as Tom mentioned, I work with the Department of Public Works.

So in terms of responding to the funding question, the NYSEDA grant is actually broken up into six different tasks. So we're supposed to check in with the State after each of the six tasks. I'm referring to construction of stations, our match of busses. And we will check in with them to make sure that they're aware of our contribution so they'll be matching us as we move forward with the process of implementing BRT.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So this grant is -- this million-and-a-half, it's all planning. There's no physical construction involved here?

MR. TYSON:

It is actually a combination of planning and construction. I guess the issue is that the planning component we can actually all receive at this point, but we cannot allocate under Capital Project 5597 that this is under. We can't allocate construction money until the SEQRA part of the funding -- I'm sorry -- of the process is complete.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So I assume -- here's my concern. And I applaud the County Executive. There's a broad vision here for public transportation and getting people quickly to the train stations and, you know -- you know, to work. This bus route for transit, it's an interesting idea, but obviously it's not a \$1.5 million idea. It's probably more like a 30 to \$50 million idea; correct?

MR. TYSON:

Yes, correct.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So -- and some of this is planning. Some of it's actually construction. I guess we're creating some bus stops or stations or parking areas.

MR. TYSON:

Yeah.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Or road realignments or things like that. So do we have the money in place for the other -- what is it, 40 million or \$50 million down the road?

MR. TYSON:

Well, actually the 50 million probably refers to the entire BRT, you know, set up all at three corridors. Specifically for Nicolls Road for phase I, which is where we would start, the cost is more in the area of a \$10 million range. So the \$1.5 million that we're getting from NYSERDA will actually be combined with this money under Capital Project 5597, \$3.75 million already acquired.

In addition to that, there was 375 K for the feasibility study that started before the alternative analysis that's ongoing; another 350 K for the alternative analysis. So there are other funds that are in place that this will complement.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Do you know how large our user group is?

MR. TYSON:

We have an estimate of ridership that would be expected on the corridor, yes. And actually we can say that for all three of the corridors as a result of the feasibility study. There were initial estimates that we will refine.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

But we know that this would be heavily utilized?

MR. TYSON:

We believe, that, yes, it would be utilized by a segment of the population around the order of a thousand customers a day, which for Suffolk County is a fairly significant ridership base.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

And that's all three of the lines.

MR. TYSON:

No. So that's a thousand for Nicolls Road. There's another projection of 3,000 for Route 110.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Is that it; just the two routes? Or is there more?

MR. TYSON:

Nicolls would be --

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Nicolls, 110 --

MR. TYSON:

Yes. And then the third would be the Sagtikos.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Oh, okay. And then just describe again this BRT, I guess -- does this bus not have to stop at, you know, traffic lights or is this a dedicated land? How is that going to work?

MR. TYSON:

It could actually be a combination of all of those things. I mean where we are is very early on in the process. But through the alternatives analysis that we're undergoing now for Nicolls Road, we would decide where bus lanes would make sense, where priority, like as you mentioned, traffic signal priority would make sense for buses. You could have any of those elements along the Nicolls Road corridor at different locations. So it would run from Stony Brook on the north, make a stop at Suffolk Community College and then either run to Ronkonkoma or down to Patchogue. So it would be like a zone express so it would not make as many stops as the current local buses do.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

No bridges or tunnels through intersections or anything?

MR. TYSON:

We are not anticipating bridges or tunnels.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Just signalization so that maybe the light could be changed by the bus?

MR. TYSON:

Yes, anticipation is that -- instead of the signals along the corridor, the lights could be changed. There could be also bus lanes where they make sense. Or, you know, additional lanes along the Nicolls Road corridor. So in the BRT implementation, you could expect to see any of those things.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. And so at the end of the day when this is constructed -- right now we're not anticipating a great level of County funding. This is all going to be -- or largely going to be NYSERDA or other State, Federal monies?

MR. TYSON:

So in the particular case of the NYSERDA grant, the County match will be in the purchase of buses that we were already -- you know, purchases of busses that we are planning to acquire. The state has said that we could actually put that up as our match for the grant money that they are supplying us.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. Yet in the past a lot of our busses have come through Federal government, Stimulus money, which was very helpful.

MR. TYSON:

Yeah, this one's coming under FTA 5307 filing. So I don't think it's Stimulus but it is Federal funded.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Yeah, I don't know if the Stimulus money -- it's probably all gone. It goes back to the Great Recession.

MR. TYSON:

Yeah, this is -- this might be different.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Yep. Okay. I have no further questions. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Any other questions? We have a motion?

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MR. RICHBERG:

Yes, we do.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Okay. Seeing no other questions, all those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Okay. Motion carries.

(VOTE: 6-0-0-0)

Seeing no procedural motions, I move to adjourn. Thank you.

**THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 2:16 PM
{ }DENOTES SPELLED PHONETICALLY**