

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 May 6, 2015.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Leg. William Lindsay III, Chairperson
Leg. Steven H. Stern, Vice Chair
Leg. Kara Hahn
Leg. Kevin J. McCaffrey
Leg. Jay H. Schneiderman

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

George M. Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature
Sarah Simpson, Assistant Counsel/Legislature
Jason Richberg, Chief Deputy Clerk/Legislature
Laura Halloran, Budget Review Office
Brian Sapp, Aide to Leg. Lindsay
Deborah Harris, Aide to Leg. Stern
Alyssa Turano, Aide to Leg. Hahn
Jason Hann, Aide to Leg. Schneiderman
Stephen H. Long, appointee/SC Citizens Advisory Board
And all other interested parties

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Diana Flesher, Court Stenographer

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 2:10 PM

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Good afternoon. Welcome to the Suffolk County Economic Development Committee hearing. If we could all please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator McCaffrey.

SALUTATION

We don't have any public comment cards. But if there's anybody in the audience that would like to make public comment, please come forward. Not seeing anyone, we'll close the Public Portion and move onto our Tabled Resolutions, which we don't have any so we'll go onto our Introductory Resolutions.

INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS

So starting with **1283, To appoint Stephen H. Long as a member of the Suffolk County Citizens Advisory Board for the Arts. (Schneiderman)**

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Motion.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Motion by Legislator Schneiderman.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Second by Legislator McCaffrey. Is Mr. Long here? Mr. Long, if you could come forward, please. You can have a seat right here in the middle.

Good afternoon, Mr. Long. Thank you for coming today and thank you for your willingness to participate on this board. If you could start by just telling us a little bit about yourself and why you would like to be on this board.

MR. LONG:

I am the President of the Children's Museum of the East End; have been in that position since June 2008. We welcome about 65,000 people every year devoted to sparking imagination, fostering learning; and doing that with families of all backgrounds and abilities; and building -- strengthening the community across the eastern part of Long Island. So one of the reasons that I think I'd be particularly a good addition to the Committee is we're about promoting the arts, promoting creativity and just doing it with a wide range of children.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Go ahead, Legislator Schneiderman.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Cultural Arts Advisory Board, or CAB, as you know, is comprised of members throughout the County; each Legislative District has a pick. I reached out to Mr. Long through my office to see if he'd be interested knowing his excellent work with children at the Children's Museum, which continues to expand. And it's really a remarkable facility. They also do some work with Long Island Head Start as well, but it's a -- it's become a great venue, really part of the fabric of the East

End. And I was really pleased that Mr. Long was willing to devote some of his time, if he has any spare time, to serve on this Committee to give us his, kind of, expertise and insight as to how these dollars should be spent.

So I thank you for coming out today and I certainly support you and thank you for your willingness to serve the County.

MR. LONG:

Thank you for stating it much better than I could.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Any other questions for Mr. Long? Okay. At this point we'll take the vote. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? It's carried unanimously. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-0)** Congratulations, Mr. Long.

MR. LONG:

Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

You'll be -- you'll go before the full Legislature on Tuesday. You don't have to be here for that, but that's where the -- we'll vote on it amongst all the Legislators.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I suggest you don't come because they're very long. They're here in Hauppauge. It's a long way from home and I don't suspect there'll be any problems with your appointment.

MR. LONG:

Fantastic. Well, thank you for the consideration. Thank you to Legislator Schneiderman for nominating me. And I'm thrilled to be considered and nominated.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Thank you very much.

Okay, moving onto **1294, Appointing Julie Stone to the Suffolk County Motion Picture/Television Film Commission. (Co. Exec.)**

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

This is going to have to be tabled because Miss Stone could not be here today.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Okay. So, motion to table?

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I have to recuse on this one.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

You can't make the motion. I'll make the motion to table, then.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Second by Legislator McCaffrey. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Mr. Clerk, please note my recusal.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Motion is tabled. **(VOTE: 4-0-0-0-1/DPO SCHNEIDERMAN RECUSES)**

1332, Accepting and appropriating a 100% reimbursement grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the Home Investment Partnership Program and authorizing the County Executive to execute the agreement. (Co. Exec.)

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Motion to approve and place on the consent calendar.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Motion to approve and place on the calendar by Legislator Schneiderman; seconded by Legislator McCaffrey. Any discussion? Okay, hearing none all those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion carries. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-0 / CONSENT CALENDAR)**

1333, 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 such agreements. (Co. Exec.) Same motion, same second. No discussion. Move onto the vote. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-0 / CONSENT CALENDAR)**

1334, Accepting and appropriating a 100% reimbursement grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the Emergency Solutions Grant Program and authorizing the County Executive to execute the agreements. (Co. Exec.)

We'll do the same motion, same second again. No discussion. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion carries. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-0 / CONSENT CALENDAR)**

1336, Appointing member to the Suffolk County Citizens Advisory Board for the Arts (Mark Carpentieri) (Spencer) Unfortunately, we heard he had a family emergency. He could not be here so we're going to have to -- I'll make a motion -- motion to table by Legislator Schneiderman. I'll second it. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion's tabled. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

1346, Establishing a Suffolk County Business Leaders Task Force. (Lindsay) I'll make a motion to approve.

LEG. HAHN:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Second by Legislator Hahn.

LEG. HAHN:

I do have a question.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Sure.

LEG. HAHN:

The members of the committee, three representatives of the business community to be selected by the County Legislature and three to be selected by the County Executive, do you have any -- is there

any way to assure that we'll get a nice variation between small and larger businesses? Or do you not want to do that on purpose? I know you probably wanted to keep it small and functional, but was there any thought given to --

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Small and functional in terms of the size --

LEG. HAHN:

The size of the task force.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Yes.

LEG. HAHN:

So -- but -- but I would hope that we could make sure that it's a nice mix in size of business.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

We could, you know, honestly --

LEG. HAHN:

Maybe even type, but I don't know how that could be.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

By putting together legislation, my main goal was to reach out to the larger employers on the Island and start a dialogue between them and the County government in an effort to create that dialogue and create a working relationship, not only to advise us on what they foresee coming down the road in the future for their businesses, but also to create that relationship so that when these -- as these businesses are being recruited to leave the County, to relocate to some other municipality, that we already have some kind of relationship in place so that it's not a situation that unfortunately is occurring now where we hear or read in the paper that XYZ Company's leaving Suffolk County to go to some other state that's been recruiting them for the last few years.

So my hope is that we can -- you know, one of the issues that I'd like the task force to address is how do we forge ahead with -- and create a stronger relationship within the business communities between the County government and the private sector so that we can hopefully head off some of these companies from leaving; and at the same time try to foster an environment that is more in line with what the business community is looking for and address some of their issues and concerns ahead of time.

LEG. HAHN:

I think that's also, though, important, not just for large companies, medium size, small and, like, developing companies here, the ones that start here. Because of Brookhaven National Lab, Stony Brook University, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratories, all the other wonderful institutions that we have here, you know, we do start companies here and then -- then they grow and they aren't necessarily considered big businesses when they're -- when they look to leave the Island. But I think the same is true, there is so much potential in the ones that start up here. They start up here because there are roots here and -- etcetera. And so just keeping a pulse with them would be important as well.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

I would agree. And, you know, small businesses are obviously the backbone of our local economy. And honestly as we've seen, as they've grown is typically when they leave. And that's obviously a situation we definitely want to try to head off and find out what are the reasons for them leaving and what we can do to entice them to not only develop their company here, but continue to allow it to

prosper and grow in the future here in Suffolk County.

Legislator Schneiderman.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I agree with that. Small business, I've heard said many times, you know, is the main creator of jobs. And it's hard to pick one person to represent small business, but we have quite a number of business alliances; chambers of commerce and various business organizations. And since you have a number of seats available and your -- you know, I don't see why one of those picks could not be the head of one of those small business organizations. I think it would be good. If not, maybe in the future expand the composition to add in a rep of small business, not just an individual business, but small businesses as a whole.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Yeah, I would not be opposed to that. I think that would actually be a good idea and something we can expand upon with the task force to make sure that small businesses are properly represented.

LEG. HAHN:

Right. So I don't see any harm with passing it, you know, keeping that in mind as we propose our representatives to this, but maybe amending later on just to ensure there's a certain percentage of representation that comes from a certain size business, you know, etcetera.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

Okay, agreed. Any other discussion on it? Okay. So right now we have a motion to approve and a second so I'll call the vote. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion carries.

(VOTE: 5-0-0-0)

Legislator Schneiderman.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Just one more comment on as we move forward. I like the way you wrote it. It's very broad; it gives us a lot of abilities to pick and choose who to be on this committee. But if it's going to be an ongoing committee looking toward, you know, whatever might be from streamlining permitting processes to infrastructure changes, whatever it might be that would help young people stay on Long Island, a couple -- a couple seats at the table, agriculture, tourism, Stony Brook, our university systems, our Suffolk County Community College, I think, you know, vocational training, that may be a key component here. You have a small committee, but you have an enormous task in front of you. We have to stop the brain drain. We have to. Our future depends upon it. So it's just some thoughts moving forward that -- because it's such an important function, that we want to make sure we have the right people at the table.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

I agree. And, you know, one way -- once the task force is set up and I'd be more than happy to work together to try to come up with a mission statement and objectives that we're looking to -- for the task force to address, one of those is through -- education, obviously, is a huge component as we see the cost of education going higher and higher and becoming further and further out reach -- out of reach for a certain segment of our population, we want to look at other vocational type of training and what does the -- what is the workforce calling for, what do they need, what expertise are they -- are they looking for additional training. So to partner with them and to see what they need their workforce to be educated in, so that it makes it easier for -- for that segment of the population and all segments once they graduate from whatever program they come out of, that they have more of a likelihood of getting a job.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I think you'll also find as the Committee deliberates and looks at some of the impediments, they're going to find very quickly that the cost of housing, cost of living in general but the cost of housing is a major impediment that a lot of businesses would expand, if they could find employees who could actually live here based on, you know, the market wages, you know, the fair market wages. And unfortunately our housing costs are so high that they often can't, so they relocate to areas where they can. And that's hurting Suffolk County; it's hurting Long Island.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

It definitely is. And that's -- you know, would be a major objective of the task force to address the loss of our young professionals here in the County. And housing is obviously a strong component of that. Mass transit is another component of it so I think all those, I would foresee, being part of their marching orders as to what issues we would be looking for them to addressing. We operate, you know, within our little bubble here within the government. I think for me it's -- it would be educational for all of us to get that input from the private sector who's actually living, working and having a hire in that environment everyday to find out where the shortcomings are and what they see as being issues; and working together with them to try to come up with equitable solutions to try to stem off those problems.

Yep, we need to take a vote on that.

MR. RICHBERG:

Already took a vote.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

We took the vote, okay. Approved.

That concludes our agenda. We don't have any other items before the Committee so with that I'll make a motion to adjourn.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON LINDSAY:

We're adjourned.

**THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 2:26 PM
{ } DENOTES SPELLED PHONETICALLY**