

**EDUCATION & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**OF THE**

**SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE**

**MINUTES**

A meeting of the Education & Human Services 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 April 5, 2016.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Leg. Monica Martinez, Chairperson  
Leg. Thomas F. Barraga, Vice Chair  
Leg. Robert Calarco, DPO  
Leg. Kara Hahn  
Leg. Leslie Kennedy  
Leg. Kate M. Browning

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

George M. Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature  
Sarah Simpson, Assistant Counsel/Legislature  
Amy Ellis, Chief Deputy Clerk/Legislature  
John O'Neill - Commissioner/Dept. Of Social Services  
Ben Zwirn - Suffolk Community College.  
Robert Lipp, Budget Review Office  
Ben Zwirn, Suffolk Community College  
Katie Horst, County Executive's Office  
Lisa Pinkard, Aide to Leg. Martinez  
Justin Littell, Aide to Leg. D'Amaro  
Ali Nazir, Aide to Leg. Kennedy  
Michael Pitcher, Director of Communications/PO  
And all other interested parties.

**MINUTES TAKEN BY:**

Gabrielle Severs, Court Stenographer

(The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m.)

**CHAIRWOMAN MARTINEZ:**

Good afternoon, and welcome to today's Education and Human Services committee meeting. If we could all rise for the Pledge of Allegiance to be led by Legislator Kara Hahn.

(Salutation)

Thank you. Okay the committee has not received any correspondence, but we do have two cards from the public. If Ms. Angela Huneault may come forward, and she's representing Riverside Rediscovered.

**MS. HUNEALT:**

Hi. I just want to thank you very much for coming here to Riverside. It is a distance for us to go to Hauppauge, and I know yesterday a bunch of us from Riverhead Rediscovered -- I'm the assistant community liaison for Riverside Rediscovered -- were revitalizing the area of Riverside. Yesterday, I came with a bunch of homeowners and they expressed how wonderful this was that they were able to sit here and participate and listen at this level. And so I also want to say thank you for coming, and we look forward to more meetings like this in Riverside.

**CHAIRWOMAN MARTINEZ:**

Well, thank you. When I saw your address, I actually said to Counsel, I'm like, They're from here, so it was nice. Thank you for coming today. Next we have Ms. Loretta Davis representing The Retreat.

**MS. DAVIS:**

Good afternoon. I'm Loretta Davis, the executive director of The Retreat, eastern Long Island's only domestic violence agency. Since 1985, The Retreat has provided these core services: a 24-hour hotline, emergency shelter, counseling, legal advocacy, and prevention education. The Retreat has been a safe haven for thousands of residents from all areas of Suffolk County. You have been critical in providing funds for us to do our work. Last year, we responded to over 3,600 hotline calls, and yet we still had wait lists. It is our job to meet the increased demand for our services. We had 294 counseling clients, children and adults, 340 legal advocate clients. We sheltered 88 children and 61 adults. We reached over 1500 students through our school program. We've had many success stories. We've been successful because we've been partners with you. We've advocated for legislators and their bills. Our agency serves and will continue to serve residents of all districts. You advocated for The Retreat last year and got proposed cuts reinstated. We're thankful that you understood what a drastic cut would have meant to us.

So why am I here today? I'm here to say that we value what we do, and we hope you value our work. We look forward to continuing this partnership, and thank you.

**CHAIRWOMAN MARTINEZ:**

Thank you, Ms. Davis, and please know that we do take what you do very serious and I thank you for your work every day.

We do have a presentation today as well. I'm sorry. Before we do presentations, anybody else in the audience that would like to speak before the committee? Seeing none, thank you. Also, Madame Clerk, can you also note for the record Legislator Browning's excused absence? Thank you.

We do have a presentation, as I just said before. We have here with us today Michelle Bates,

program coordinator of Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council. She will give us a brief discussion on the different opportunities through medicaid for our disabled population. Welcome.

**MS. BATES:**

Thank you for having me. My name is Michelle Bates. I'm the program coordinator at the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council for a new grant program through New York State Department of Health. It's a five-year grant program. We are the subcontracting agency for Suffolk County Department of Social Services. Our agency, as the subcontractor, we're responsible for the hiring of all of the enrollers that go out into both Suffolk County and Nassau County to assist them with applying for medicaid. We're able to apply for medicaid for those that are disabled, those that are blind, and those over the age of 65. It's commonly referred to as the "ABD program," for aged, blind, and disabled.

We have approximately 30 enrollment sites across Long Island. We are the only agency on Long Island that is currently awarded this grant, so we would be the agency that you refer your constituents to in the event that you had somebody that needed to apply. We can apply for community medicaid, long-term care medicaid, and we can assist with the nursing home applications as well.

We're also able to apply for medicaid for anybody that needs waived programs and services, so you may have children have developmental disabilities or mental health issues, and they apply for their services usually through the school district and then we can assist with the medicaid process so that they can become OPWDD designated, and they can provide services through that agency as well. It's basically our program in a nutshell.

**CHAIRWOMAN MARTINEZ:**

Thank you, Michelle. Quick question. You said there's 30 enrollment sites across the Island. Where can we find these specific sites?

**MS. BATES:**

So in your pamphlets that I gave you, your packets, there are our fliers. They can either call -- there's a number, a 631 number that they can call, which is an automated phone system, or if they are able to, they can go onto our website where all of our calendars are also located on the website. All of those site locations do work on first come-first serve unless they specifically state they they need appointments. So certain sites, like the Northport V.A., we go to their location once a week. They are by appointment only, and we work out of Stony Brook Cancer Center up at Stony Brook campus. They work by appointment only as well.

**CHAIRWOMAN MARTINEZ:**

Okay. Great. Thank you. Are there any questions from my colleagues for Ms. Bates? No? Okay. Well, thank you. I know that my office will definitely be reaching out, and I'm sure Legislator Kennedy's as well, so just keep us in mind when we call. Thank you for being here.

**MS. BATES:**

My card is in there too, so my phone number, my e-mail to me directly is in there so you don't have to go through the whole loop.

**CHAIRWOMAN MARTINEZ:**

We appreciate that. Thank you. We don't like those automated messages. Thank you for coming. We appreciate it.

That concludes our presentation. I know that we do have the commissioner here, department of social services. Are there any questions for the commissioner from the committee? Seeing none,

we also have Ben from the college. Any questions for Ben? Okay. Ben, do you have anything for us?

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Not in particular, no. We just have a hundred percent funded grant on here, but as an east end resident, I would also like to thank you for coming out to Riverside for the meeting today. We have 11 percent of the population on the east end on Suffolk County, which is not much considering how large this county is. But to give you an example, from my home to here is 40 miles, just to get from East Hampton to here. That's how big this county is, and another 20 miles east to go to Montauk. So when people think, you know, you've a long way to go from your hometown, even people who live on the east end have a long way to go just to get here, and it's very much appreciated, and I'll be here the answer any questions that you may have. Thank you.

**CHAIRWOMAN MARTINEZ:**

Thank you, Ben. You know, this morning coming here, it was rainy and stuff like that, but you're right, and I'm glad that you're here. I thought that you actually lived on the west end, so I'm glad that we accommodated you too.

But, okay, so that completes our presentation and our public portion. We'll continue to our resolutions. We do have some introductory resolutions.

**IR 1325, To appoint member to the Teen Pregnancy Advisory Board (Charlene Rogers)(Spencer).** Charlene, are you here today? Just quickly, Charlene, could you give us a quick background of yourself and why are you interested in serving on this board.

**MS. ROGERS:**

Sure. In terms of my background -- well, let me start with why I am interested. I'm interested because I've had lots of experience dealing with people, and that would include teens as well, and I have been a mentor in teen programs. More specifically, I was a retired police officer, also an attorney, and now an educator, and in all of that I have had instances where I've worked closely with teens as a police officer, again as an attorney, and now as an educator. That is why I'm interested in this position.

**CHAIRWOMAN MARTINEZ:**

That's a nice background you got there.

**MS. ROGERS:**

Well, thank you.

**CHAIRWOMAN MARTINEZ:**

This is something that I also hold very close to my heart because I represent a district that we do have a high teen pregnancy rate, and I'm glad that you're coming on board with the experience that you have and making this board even stronger than what it is, so I look forward to working with you in the future.

**MS. ROGERS:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRWOMAN MARTINEZ:**

I'd like to make a motion to approve. Second by Legislator Barraga. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **Approved (VOTE: 5-0-0-1, Not Present: Browning)**  
Congratulations. Welcome aboard.  
You do not have to come back on Tuesday. You do not, unless you want to.

**CHAIRWOMAN MARTINEZ:**

Introductory Resolution **1327, Requiring notification of building permits issued by Suffolk County Community College (Martinez)**. I'm going to motion to table this. I'd like to motion this for a tabling because I just received notification from our commissioner of DPW, Gil Anderson, that there is just one more amendment that needs to be made before we move forward with this, so I will motion to table.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Second.

**CHAIRWOMAN MARTINEZ:**

Second by Legislator Hahn. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? It's **tabled**. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-1, Not Present: Browning)**

Resolution 1330, Accepting and appropriating a grant sub-award amendment from the National Institutes of Health through the Research Foundation of SUNY Stony Brook for a project entitled IRACDA - the New York Consortium for the Advancement of Postdoctoral Scholars (CAPS), 100% reimbursed by federal funds at Suffolk County Community College (County Executive). Motion by Legislator Hahn. Second to approve and place on the consent calendar, second by Legislator Kennedy. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? It's **approved and placed on consent calendar**. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-1, Not Present: Browning)**

**Introductory Resolution 1337, To appoint member of Suffolk County Youth Board Coordinating Council representing legislative district No. 6 (John B. Mackay)(County Executive)**. We've received notification that Mr. Mackay will not be present today, so I will motion to table this. Can I get a second? Second by Legislator Kennedy. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **Resolution is tabled**. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-1, Not Present: Browning)**

**Resolution 1363, Accepting and appropriating 100% funding from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) to implement the TANF Non-Residential Domestic Violence Program in the Department of Social Services and authorizing the County Executive and the Commissioner of Social Services to execute a contract (County Executive)**. Motion to approve and place on the consent calendar. Second by Legislator Barraga. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **Approved and placed on consent calendar**. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-1, Not Present: Browning)**

**Resolution 1368, To appoint member to the Suffolk County Child Care Commission (Kathy Liguori) (Martinez)**. I think I did see Kathy. Hi, Kathy. I would like to make a to approve. Second by Legislator Calarco. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **Approved (VOTE: 5-0-0-1, Not Present: Browning)**. Congratulations, Kathy. We have a lot of work ahead of us. And you do not have to come on Tuesday, either.

And then finally, we have Introductory Resolution **1369, To appoint member to the Suffolk County Child Care Commission (Kevin Law)(Martinez)**. I will make a motion to table this. Second by Legislator Barraga. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **Tabled (VOTE: 5-0-0-1, Not Present: Browning)**.

This concludes our agenda and concludes our committee. Drive safe.

(The committee meeting was adjourned at 12:19 p.m.)