

EDUCATION & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

OF THE

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

A meeting of the Education & Technology 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 March 6, 2012.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Leg. Sarah S. Anker, Chairperson
Leg. Wayne R. Horsley, Vice Chair
Leg. Thomas Cilmi
Leg. Jay H. Schneiderman
Leg. Thomas Muratore

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

George Nolan, Counsel of the Legislature
Barbara Lomoriello, Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
Kristopher Oliva, Aide to Legislator Anker
Ali Nazir, Aide to Legislator Kennedy
Benny Pernice, Budget Review Office
Jill Moss, Budget Review Office
Richard Meyer, AME
Laura Schreiner, Special Assistant NYS Senate
All other interested parties

TAKEN AND TRANSCRIBED BY:

Lucia Braaten, Court Stenographer

(*THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 1:02 P.M. *)

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Hi. This is Sarah Anker. I'm your Committee Chair for the Education and Information Technology Committee. I'd like to call this committee to order. We have a quorum, yes. Okay. We're going to begin with the Pledge of Allegiance by Legislator Schneiderman.

(*Salutation*)

Please remain standing. I think after today, especially with the Budget and Finance, we do need to say some prayers in order to get us through the rest of the year, but -- and I say that respectfully. Thank you.

(*Moment of Silence*)

Thank you. And you can be seated. Okay. We're going to start with the public portion. We have no cards.

MS. LOMORIELLO:

No cards.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Is there anyone in the audience that would like to say something in front of the committee? Okay.

We're going to start with the agenda. We have a presentation. Can I have our presenters forward? Okay. Today we have Gary Quinn, the Commissioner of Information and Technology for Suffolk County. He's going to give us an overview of the department. Hi, Gary. Thank you for coming out this afternoon. I was wondering, could you introduce the folks that you're with?

LEG. CILMI:

Gary, why don't you sit?

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

All right. Good afternoon. My name is Gary Quinn, the Commissioner of Information Technology. Thank you for inviting us to give a presentation regarding our department and some information related to the County. I have with me -- to my left immediately is Debbie Seminario, who is one of our Data Processing Managers, and further to her left is Doug Miller, who is the Director of Information Technology and heads our department.

What I provided to you today is something that's -- it's just kind of a little bit of a summary or an overview of how we're kind of organized as a technology organization, not only the Department of Information Technology, DoIT, but also the other technology groups throughout the County. We're somewhat of a decentralized organization, and there's good things about that on how we actually do that. But I figured I'd give you a little background since I didn't get an opportunity to give you guys a little fact sheet about our department. If you take a look at the page, it's kind of like what is DoIT and, you know, what do we do? I think -- you know, DoIT is an acronym for the Department of Information Technology. It was kind of very fashionable about ten years ago. Everybody started calling things -- technology is usually stodgy, we don't get anything done, we don't respond to people, so they came up with this acronym called DoIT, you know, to be like proactive and fresh.

The other thing was -- is, you know, how is the technology in the County delivered and by whom? Centralized, decentralized, you'll hear a little bit about that. Just so you can understand how we got together, I had the opportunity to meet with Legislator Anker and tried to explain to us how we were organized, what we did, who we work for. And it's a little difficult without maybe a picture, but I find my presentation to be a little textural based. I didn't have enough time to do any animation for you, so I hope you can bear with me.

And then some of the most interesting topics today is social media, mobility, the web. You know, the web is almost kind of antiquated at this point. You know, social media and mobility is really kind of where it's at, and the web really is a platform for delivering information, and government needs to get its arms around that, not only for young people, but I think a lot of people, even like myself, are -- you know, even though I'm in technology, we are embracing things like iPhones and iPads, and you want information on the go wherever you are, in your car, at the beach, wherever that may be.

And then, finally, a little bit about what it costs. I know we had a presentation this morning. I won't dwell on that a lot, but I'll give you kind of a framework, a little bit of what the County is kind of look at from a technology side and cost, and then, you know, are we getting a good bang for our buck? A then -- and along the way, I'm kind of very informal. If you have questions you want to ask me on any slide, feel free. I won't -- I'll be about thirty minutes at the most.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Faster.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

Or a little faster, if you want to, okay? Because, that's right, you guys probably didn't have lunch, so I'll go from there.

The department was created in 2004. It came out of General Services, which included Civil Service and I believe Employee Benefits. It was set up by a Charter, and the idea was to try to get the government to deploy more technology in a better fashion, more cost effective, provide more services, and basically bring the County forward from a kind of centralized main frame environment, and so that was formed.

What DoIT actually provides, just so understand, there's kind of something called a technology stack, if you will. It's kind of different colors in a vertical. And DoIT really provides most of the common services, kind of like a utility company or an energy company. You know, we provide connectivity, data connectivity, voice connectivity, wireless. We provide things like messaging, so your e-mail, your Blackberry, the ability for you to connect from home if you would like, all of those kind of utility functions. We provide guidelines around security for the entire County. And there's a lot of value in doing things from common services, because then we do them consistently throughout the County. We can get better reliability, better availability. We can be secure. As you know, today you see all of these people hacking into all of these different locations. Those things should be done in essential formats, kind of like getting electric and how it -- what kind of television you buy at home should be your decision, but you get the same consistent electric to your house in a consistent reliable manner. That's kind of what DoIT does, in addition to building some local applications for certain departments.

Many of the other departments throughout the County provide some of those local services for end users around infrastructure, and the rest of the time is spent on delivering applications, so like electronic medical records, computer aided dispatch, the Clerk's document systems, the Social Services welfare systems, eligibility systems. And, really, that's not a place for DoIT to actually intervene, because we don't have knowledge of that specific business because we don't do it every

day. And so that's why, I mean, when they talk about something that is more of a centralized and decentralized model, it's very good to do that, because then you could move quickly and locally in a department, versus trying to do everything. You can do things specifically in the department, or expect someone like myself to come to Social Services and say, "I really fully understand Medicaid eligibility and these are the applications we should build in to play." I mean, that's not really an area of expertise, but I think the local people in DSS understand their business better, and they can basically acquire the applications necessary to serve their constituents or employees better.

So I kind of skipped around a little bit there, but we are located here in Hauppauge across the parking lot. We're also located in Riverhead, similar to you folks. Riverhead is a disaster recovery center for the County, for some departments, not all. And over time, it could be for more as people want to populate that location. We have about 74 staff at the moment. Just some little facts. We look after over 173 sites, we have 12,000 phone lines, you know, things like that, and we're a 24-by-7 organization. So we support our efforts in conjunction with people at your public safety because of the fact that the nature of their 24-by-7, we do the same thing. So it is sometimes fun, sometimes challenging. We also participate in a lot of the emergency operations that went on last summer, so it is a round-the-clock job.

As I mentioned before, we provide network connectivity, voice connectivity. We also maintain the County presence on the internet, which is the Suffolk County website. We also recently this year launched something called the Suffolk County intranet, which is for people to communicate internally to their employees and things that are happening within their department. So as -- usually, you go to the website, you look at Suffolk County, you land there, you see the landing page, and then you go to subsequent departments to look up information, services. We've also -- we also built a new site this year to be a little more friendly, that if you don't know your department, you can ask question like, you know, "How do I open up a business in Suffolk County?" "How do I get assistance," things like that? So some people don't know how to navigate the site.

As far as security goes, what I mean by security is not just where you log on to your PC, that's end user security. There's also perimeter security on the internet, which is where all these anonymous hackers come and try to penetrate government organizations and the like. Sometimes it's for fun, sometimes it's to, you know, gather information and publish it and use it against those individuals. We work hard at that every day. I'll tell you, there is -- we have probably close to two billion access attempts on the perimeter of the County in a monthly basis. It's done with automated tools and ways to defend ourselves. We have access to the internet in Hauppauge, in Yaphank for the Public Safety folks, and we have a redundant one in Riverhead. So that at any time, if we would lose connectivity, it would be -- you'd still have a presence on the web. The web is like your store in a business. If your website is down, you're kind of viewed as closed. The County really kind of has to be available at all times for different information and different reporting of services.

So we also do a couple of common applications such as payroll, financial systems. It's important that we all get paid. It's important that we can manage our money, and pay our vendors, and calculate how much we're bringing in and how much we're giving out. So those systems are maintained by DoIT for the Comptroller, and they're both here in Hauppauge and they're also in Riverhead in case of an emergency.

Another interesting thing that I think you may find, and it's kind of a strange name, it's called Geographic Information Systems. But if I translate that into actual use, you think about it. When you see these applications where somebody has their iPhone and they want to take a picture of a pothole or a picture of graffiti, or you want to find out if there's a restaurant nearby, you know, in your area because you're hungry, those are used through something called Geographic Information Systems. And what that does is it uses things like longitude and latitude, and then you have elements in the data layers and it pulls up through search, you know, what's in your area. So is

their a hotel nearby? Is their a restaurant nearby? Is it the type that I want? Or I want to basically take a picture of this pothole, snap it onto my iPhone and then send it to, you know, the Department of Highways. It's called location services and it's something that the government in some places has embraced more and more, but it's something to look at as a county over time to extend services to constituents based upon where they are, because they're not always in their house and they're not attached to a physical computer. And there's a lot of things of gathering information about where I am in the County, if I want to report issues, if I want to find out services, maybe I want to register for a campsite, or I want to go to a marina. There's a lot of things you can do with it, and we have a lot of the pieces that down the road, if you -- you know, the department finds interesting, we can do things like that. It also is used today in public safety where they're able to identify, you know, where their resources are at, or where, you know, activities are going on that they need to respond to, and the quickest way to get there.

Disaster recovery is something when I first came here three-and-a-half years ago we really didn't kind of have -- a lot of people were backing up the information in each of their individuals departments and they stored off site, but they never had anyplace to really bring it back to. So we're capturing it, but in the event of a problem or a disaster, and when I mean a disaster, it's really a flood, you know, through -- you know, the pipe breaks, you have a fiber cut, you have a fire. I mean, the hurricane is a big event, but they're usually rare, but those events do occur a lot, and when they do occur, you have an outage. And, you know, I don't think the County in many departments could afford to be down a week or a month or three months. But in some situation that have occurred recently, you know, the municipalities, people had a fire, they had to backup center, and it took them three to six months to restore themselves. Actually, when we attached to a different committee last year, I sent out some information to some members of just that even occurred. When they had floods in the midwest, people were too close to the river and they never thought the water would rise that high and they basically were kind of out of business. So we were able to use an existing facility in Riverhead. We had it retrofitted a little bit over the last couple of years. And at the moment, all the departments that are within do it, and also the County Clerk are currently able to sustain an event where we would have an outage in either one of the locations.

One last thing that we do is we also have a group of people inhouse that can develop application, and I'll go through a couple of those highlights from last year. A lot of times, County government, municipalities, the applications are very specific. So, in the commercial sector, where you would buy things off the shelf and then modify them to your needs, a lot of times in government the applications are very specific to the department, so we actually bill them for those individuals' needs. And you will find that there's a lot of custom built applications throughout the County, just because municipalities kind of run very different. There are some common things that most of us do, but many of the things that we do as individual service providers is kind of unique. Okay?

Flipping over to the next page, the departments that we support directly are the County Executive and any of his constituent-related departments. In addition to that, we -- and what I mean by "directly" is we do application development for them, or we buy applications for them. We maintain their web presence communications for them. A lot of those services are done by individual departments throughout the County that we do not do. We just provide a vehicle, such -- or a platform for them to communicate through or tools to use. All right? We also do it for Economic Development, Planning and Environment and Energy. We do a lot of applications for civil service, for people to take civil service exams, analysis of the profile of people within the County, positions, managing the list, delivering a list, communication to people, registering for exams, we do that. We also support Consumer Affairs, basically, their web presence, as well as some recent applications for them to do weights and measures in the field, so they can go out as field workers, be mobile, and actually conduct their job, versus in the past doing it manually, bringing everything back, and sending information out.

We also support Real Property directly, and we are actually very integrated with the County Clerk out there, since both of those departments work very closely together and supply information to the community. That's pretty much used by both of them, so they kind of really are combined in a lot of ways. And also Soil and Water, which really doesn't have too much to do. We just really do kind of do end user support for them.

Highlights from 2011: You may not say this is too dynamic, but many times you go to a career or a job search website, you know, like Monster, or let's say like Ladders or LinkedIn. The ability to upload your resume and your information is kind of a given. You know, like you go in, you fill out your profile and you say, "Let me upload my resume," and then pass it along to a job opportunity. We recently completed that last year, so that in Civil Service, where you're not sometimes taking a test, maybe it's just experience based, you can upload all of your personal information now into a portfolio that you've created, and so then, when you can actually can take an exam or somebody wants to interview you from a list, they can review your information online. So that's a big benefit, as opposed to mailing in paper, storing it, trying to find it, circulate it around. That was a huge help to us in processing the police exam last year, where there was a little over 30,000 registrants. They created profiles, they took the examine, they paid fees. We had to schedule them by locations, where they went, pay the proctors, and that was all done within that application.

A couple of other interesting things is for FRES, we developed a few applications. These are people that aren't under our direct responsibility, but we do share our resources throughout the County. And we develop things so people could go out and sign up for emergency evacuation services. So last year, during Hurricane Irene, you know, if you were somebody that needed somebody to come, you know, you didn't have a friend or somebody who could help you move from a lower ground to higher ground, you could sign up in advance and FRES would send somebody out to pick you up and take you to a shelter. We also have a shelter application that people could go online. When they were told to evacuate, they would know where to go, the nearest shelter to their house.

And another thing we did for FRES was to help them to recruit new volunteers. You know, today younger people, even older people are on the web, they're looking for things to do. As opposed to like, you know, going down to a firehouse, filling out a form, getting interviewed, looking up the program, you could do everything online. And, actually, that application I believe is -- even the State has looked to -- we developed it in-house and the State is looking to actually use that statewide. So we also do things with other municipalities and towns on Long Island, as well as other folks, where we share our code and we pass it along to them. We don't do additional development, but we do give it to them so they can use.

We created last year the open access website so that people could look up campaign contributions, member items, County contracts in one location. It was modeled after the Attorney General of New York State's Project Sunlight. And, like I said, we made a new website and a new internet, which actually you might say, "Well, gee, that's not really that exciting." Well, it kind of is because our old website required everybody in DoIT to get information from you to then publish, and we could only publish once a day. Now every department is empowered to publish externally/internally on their own. So we're not kind of in the way of being a bottleneck for them. And, also, there's a lot more new tools to do more things that are applicable to today's environment.

There's a bunch of other things we did here regarding -- things for the Sheriff, things for the Police that are in here. And I also will say is that some of the efforts that have gone on in working with many of the departments throughout the County and even the other elected officials, we've been able to standardize on certain technologies throughout the County, consolidate the acquisition of those technologies to get better volume purchasing discounts. Standardization makes it easier. We can share people across groups, so we don't have to relearn technology over and over. And last year we were able to maintain a little over a million dollars less than our adopted budget. I mean,

we forecast what we thought we could do, but through the ability to compile the software, hardware and networking across groups, we were able to get better pricing from vendors, and also get quicker ways to get things deployed because of the fact that we could share resources. So it was -- it was a pretty good year for us.

Next year, I mean, some of our goals for next year is to -- obviously, the County is looking at many ways to optimize it's processes, streamline. I listened to your meeting this morning and, you know, I know you have a lot of short-term goals. But over the long-term, also, there's opportunities to examine processes, use technology to streamline them, automate them, make them measurable. And so that's one of our goals is to -- you know, whatever we can do to work with the Administration to accomplish some of those things over the coming months and years would be something that we should, you know, all look to aspire to.

Another thing is to train the technology resources we have today in staff. We probably have not done a great job of that over in the County. And to do some of the more advanced things that you are familiar with from your own personal lives with technology, we need to basically uplift our skills a little bit, and we can certainly do that, and that's a very cost effective way. As opposed to going out and buying that, you can kind of do it with your own folks. So I think that's a big thing to work on across the County next year.

Incorporate additional departments into the Disaster Recovery Center. And I only say that, you know, once again, it's a common shared resource for all people to use, so it's there. There's no additional investment required by the individual departments, we just got to kind of get things into the same location. Today we're very decentralized, and sometimes that's good, because you'll say, "Well, gee, if we had a flood or a fire in one spot, then we'd only impact one department. But the economies that go along with residing in the same location, the ability to use equipment to 100% of its utilization, versus everybody buying four or five servers and using them 30 to 40% of capacity, we can basically virtualize them into a single unit and maximize that investment, and basically get more bang for the buck.

Something that we're looking to do also is we recently formed a group with Law Enforcement with DoIT to review security at the County based upon everything that's been going on in the -- that you read in the newspapers these days to ensure that we are doing everything we can to eliminate any kind of compromise within the County. So we'd like to probably on this year do a penetration test. And what that really means is we basically get somebody to hack into the County, and that's kind of what they do. And it's done a lot of places, but it is something critical due to the fact of the nature of public safety. Those individuals, Law Enforcement, the District Attorney, you know, we need to make sure that we're giving them the best we possibly can to ensure that their information is safe and secure with us.

Ongoing reliability. When I first came to the County a few years ago, we had a lot of outages and service was -- I would say it was average, probably, but you'd always need -- you know, the more you can keep people productive and continue to do their jobs and be connected, is a good thing. You don't really want to have offices down for multiple hours, or suppliers that just can't live up to our expectations. So we've been able to make a lot of improvements there in hardening up the County and getting suppliers to understand our level of need.

And a couple of things. Just, it's -- there's a lot of opportunities to share resources across departments, consolidate purchasing power across departments, and look to work together, which will give us more bang for our buck. And in the five years, if I look back five years at DoIT with the department, we are pretty much -- we've kind of gone through -- up a little bit of a hill and now we're kind of back down again. And I don't say back down from a negative side. I think we've been able to inventory what we had, decide what we ultimately need, and then share resources

across groups to get a better price performance, and we've been able to pretty much maintain our adopted budget at a level pace over the five-year window. Okay? And --

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

You know, I'm looking at your presentation. Are you going to start talking about centralizing and decentralizing?

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

That's what we --

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

Yeah. I didn't number my pages. I'm on --

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

It's quite -- yeah. I'm thinking, can you give us like a two-minute version of that?

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

Yeah, I will. Sorry, I will. I won't even go over that. I will just say that, basically, you can look at it at your own -- when you have a chance. I also can send it to you electronically, that -- just to show you how we're kind of set up. So a lot of times you may think that I'm directly responsible for a particular situation. I'm always happy to look into it and get to the bottom of it for you, but we are kind of very decentralized. So that would be just a little guide for you to follow along. All right?

So I'll pass through that. And then the last -- I'll go through the last part, which I think is something interesting. Social media, the Facebooks of the world, the Twitters, the Foursquares. All right? Those are things that you may use, or maybe your children use, but they are things that government, in the right way, should embrace to communicate with constituents. And I think constituents expect it, that we would start to become more visible in these venues to get information from the government, provide information back to us, or communicate activities, events and news to them through those particular venues. So I would say at the moment, you know, with the new Administration, we are taking a very proactive approach to doing more of that, and, you know, we hope to basically show you that very shortly. All right? So I will say that.

I will pass by the cost at the end. I mean, it's something that you can look at. There's a few capital projects that are going on, but I'm not going to go into that based upon until we can have further review of what we're able to do going forward through this year and into next. If you have any questions related to the budget or the projects, you know, I'd be happy to answer those at any time, or if you want to send me a note. And I would like to say that's kind of it. So I will take any questions. And I think, like I said, there's a lot of text in here, so you could look at it at your leisure, and then, if you have questions in the future, that's fine. But, at the moment, I'll take any questions before we -- before we go.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Thank you. Legislator Cilmi.

LEG. CILMI:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Gary, thanks for being here today. I'm really thankful to the Chairwoman for inviting you. You know, there are two ways to look at IT, one is as a cost of doing business, and one is an opportunity on how we can do business better. And I think you have a

remarkable level of experience that -- you know, I mean, you might want to even just share very quickly where you came from so that we all know what an asset we have in your leadership in this area.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

Thank you. So I always kind of forget that a little bit. I think I travel around and I meet so many folks, but thank you very much for the question.

Prior to coming to the County in 2008, I worked for Computer Associates over here in Islandia. Originally, we were in Jericho. I started there in 1985; I left there in 2006. I was originally a developer of code. When I got there, I was like young, after college, and kind of liked this technology business, writing applications. I spent a long time there. After the development, I actually spent a number of years, I ran global marketing for the company. I ran the company's complete operations, non-development, non-sales, worldwide for five years. And then after that, my last role there was I ran the international sales business, which was about 1.7 billion dollars, with about a one billion dollar expense line and 5,000 people working for me. A lot of people -- I get pigeon-holed being like, "You're a technology guy, you know, go in the back." I probably spent more of my life at CA as an overall manager and driving revenues and making -- you know, preserving costs and profits, but I do have appreciation for technology. I grew up in technology. I have a degree from Hofstra University in Computer Science, and I like it a lot.

And I came to the County in 2008 through someone who knew me, and they needed somebody to come here. And I was very interested in getting involved in government and kind of extending my experience over the years to a government entity. And so that's how I got here. And I enjoy being here, it's a great experience. And I think we can do a lot to Legislator Cilmi's points. A lot of people look at technology sometimes as a necessary evil. It's a tremendous facilitator, but you have to first understand what your problem is and then, only then, use technology to move forward.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Again, it's good to know that we have someone with your -- a level of skill and understanding, because, you know, we do need as much help as we can, especially with what has happened this morning, the deficit issue and --

LEG. CILMI:

If I may -- oh, I'm sorry.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Oh, okay.

LEG. CILMI:

I thought you were finished.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

And, again, I think information technology, technology in general will allow us to be able to do things, hopefully, in a way that will reduce costs, you know, to a great extent, get the word out there to our constituents, and, hopefully, be able to maintain what the County needs to do, you know, in order to help the constituents. Legislator Cilmi.

LEG. CILMI:

Yeah. So, to continue, I mean, I think your department was underutilized previously, and I'm hopefully, with our new County Executive's background, that he will see the benefit in supporting information technology in the County as much as possible, because I think that you could really go a long way towards improving a lot of efficiencies. I know the Chair has a bill, which is something

that I've been talking about for two years, in terms of improving our efficiencies, particularly in our Health Department, with permits. Certainly some of that relates to our Department of Public Works as well. And I noticed on your list of departments served, that both of those departments, coincidentally, aren't represented there. So, likewise, our Police Department isn't represented, but I know they have their own info tech section.

So my question is, you know, do you see your expertise and your colleagues and your department involving yourselves in those areas, in both the Health Department and Department of Public Works, to try and make things run a little better?

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

Yes, it has, absolutely. And even today, it may not be represented in the presentation, but today we have developed applications for the Health Department for their needs, for their workers. And even in the case of DPW, we actually run some of their applications in our building. As -- it kind of evolved over time and we actually support them and we do that. So it's not a very clear line of dissemination of who does what with who, and that's why sometimes when I met with Legislator Anker, it was a little confusing for a little while. But I absolutely believe that there is sharing going on and there is our people working across boundaries, and I don't believe that we should let the organization structure get in the way of using resources across groups. I think you will find, in talking to any of the technology groups, DPW has a small IT contingent, the Health Department has a lot larger one, probably maybe half the size of ours, but we do share resources and we do work together whenever we can, provided that we both know each other or working on a particular project, or we say, "Do you have one of these folks," or, "Do you have one of those?" So we need to encourage that more and more. And I think our department, you know, stands ready to work with anyone inside the County to do more and --

LEG. CILMI:

And lots of people's eyes glaze over when we start talking about information technology. This is all very sexy to me. I enjoy talking about this stuff. As you know, we've had many conversations. And just so that you know and your staff knows, anything I can do to support your efforts, I'm happy to do, so --

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. Does anybody else have questions for our IT staff? Legislator Schneiderman.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Thanks for coming down today. What was the total number of employees 73, 74?

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

Currently, right now, we have 74 staff --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Seventy-four.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

-- in our particular department.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Just give me a sense, because, you know, I was Supervisor once of a town in Eastern Long Island.

I think we had 300 employees, and so we only had a couple of people in IT. You know, that sounds like a lot, so give me a sense of a day in the life. Like there are three of you here, so there's seventy-one out there doing something, so what kinds of things would they be doing right now?

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

All right. So, as I mentioned before, there's kind of like this technology stack, and the same kind of thing you would look at as from I'm an end user or a constituent, all the way back to where does the information reside and how is it stored that I'm currently trying to retrieve. So the staff inside our department, we have about 18, I want to say, programmers of various types. Some people are payroll programmers, some people are dotnet, some people are web programmers to do website development. Other people are doing some other esoteric languages or individual applications. So that's part of the staff. We have a database administrator.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Is that a daily thing, though, programming, or is it something that you do once and you're kind of good for a while?

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

Not really. Actually, you'll write an application, and then you might write another -- you might write another application from another request. We get -- constantly get requests for -- just like in the case of the Legislature here of building an application to do open access. You know, we wrote that application inhouse with a couple of folks in, I want to say, like three-month, six-month window. So then after they were done working on that, they would then move onto the next project, and in the case of like civil service, the applications that we support there are ongoing throughout the year. Every year there is new features, new functions that are required for those applications.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Everybody's busy right now? I mean, you are directing them, right? So you're in charge, right? So you're --

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

They're absolutely. I can provide you a complete list of projects that were completed in 2011, active projects that are going on right now, the assigned resources to them, how much time they spend on it. We also have to charge back all of our time and our people and employees to the individual departments that use our services.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

So even for application development --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I'd be, you know, just curious. And then, is there -- since we have so much talent in this department, and you mentioned we have all these software developers that can do aps, is there sellable products out there? Can we be making things that, you know, the public might say, "Oh, yeah, that would give me faster access to information. You know, I'll pay the 99 cents, whatever it is for that phone ap, so I can get" -- is there some -- are there revenue generation potentials within the department?

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

I actually think there's an opportunity for -- this is kind of out there, but the County does have a lot of capability within the people that work at the County. There's a lot of IT people throughout the

County, it's upwards of 200 people. I think we have more than enough positions. We may not have the right skills in those positions throughout the County, and the amount of money that we actually spend is probably on probably pretty correct also, if you look at metrics that would be used for a government, a government of our size. It's just got to be used in the right way.

So it's kind of -- sometimes we have a square peg in a round hole. If we could kind of match everybody up and align the planets, it would be great. How to make some money at it? Many towns and villages, okay, do not have -- as you mentioned, you were a Town Supervisor. You don't -- you didn't have a lot of, say, on-the-payroll technology people, but you were using people outside to provide services to you. So people that maybe maintained applications that you aren't aware of for different departments, they came in. You call the guy up, he comes and puts a new tax table in, he puts a new feature in. The other side of that, you know, your PC broke, some guy shows up, he maybe wasn't a town employee, he was some service that you bought and the guy comes by. The County could look at doing something similar to that.

I mean, once we got organized a little bit better at the County, I think we could offer services to towns and municipalities that cannot sustain themselves today. And, actually, I know that Southampton is looked at, you know, as you might say, outsourcing, out-tasking, how to do things with less people? It's all possible and it's all -- it should be reviewed to find out what could be done. But in many cases, those folks, as they're getting less and less staff, they are unable to deliver service, so they got to find somebody to go to do it. Well, by the way, as Suffolk County, we do a lot of the same things that towns do, from -- you know, if you think about it, from tax assessment to providing public safety, to, you know, maybe health functions. All right? We do a lot of things either together, jointly, adjacent. And I know it would be tough, but if you looked at it, it would be a way that the County should become a shared services provider in technology for the municipalities in the region. And you might say, "Well, gee, we're going to charge the Town of Southampton some money." Well --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Might be a savings.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

It might be, because what's happening is you start pooling talent, the costs come down, because one guy today, it's not like the old days where you had a one-to-one relationship with a hardware -- piece of hardware and a technician. Today you could have one technician looking after 100 devices with technology, as opposed to one-to-one. So, in the old days, you have huge technology departments, they've come down considerable in size.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

And I think, again, that your idea seems to be more of a shared services type of situation. I know, you know, when I worked for Eastern Suffolk BOCES, the school district shared services and it was a cost-saving measure.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

Just at the moment, I think there's 47 villages in Suffolk County, and, you know, those people are struggling because they have to provide a lot of the same services that we do, and they don't have the staff and they don't have the technology or can they afford to buy the technology service. You know, we might become somebody eventually down the road of people look to us and say we could basically provide service to other municipalities.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. Legislator Horsley.

LEG. HORSLEY:

Hey, Gary. Good seeing you. Welcome to our world today. You can see how much fun we have. Let me just ask a question. I was very much a promoter and a cheerleader, and all sorts of things, for trying to create a wireless -- as Doug remembers, wireless Long Island. And, you know, we originally thought, you know, the best thing to do is maybe we should try to WI-FI the 110 Corridor, which I thought was a doable exercise, and then we got expanded beyond our capabilities and wherewithal. What do you think? Is there anything that -- where we can go into the future, where we could drive the -- you know, help the Long Island economy by doing things like WI-FI, or, you know, whatever may be, the next generation or something? You know, use your vision, you know, knowing that we have no money.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

Well, that shouldn't let -- that shouldn't stop us.

LEG. HORSLEY:

No, it shouldn't. That's the visionaries.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

So I think the first day I was here, I met you on Long Island WI-FI on television. Anyway, that was an interesting project and a concept, but, in reality, the cost to build it wasn't really something that the government should be involved in doing, and they were trying to do a private/public partnership. Unfortunately, the company that wound up from the public -- from the private side was unable to come through with the capital means. The economy was downturning at the time

LEG. HORSLEY:

That's right, yeah, it was.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

So the idea was a great idea. I think what you've seen since that has occurred is that WI-FI has become more prevalent throughout --

LEG. HORSLEY:

Yeah. We may have pushed Cablevision to get into the business.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

And I actually --

LEG. HORSLEY:

So, I think, if nothing else, maybe that was a success.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

I would agree with you, I mean, because they basically did not come back and respond to that effort. But then --

LEG. HORSLEY:

I remember.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

-- interesting enough, about 18 months later, you started showing up with WI-FI from Cablevision as a kind of customer retention program --

LEG. HORSLEY:

Right.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

-- for them. So they did see value in that. There are things that could be done. I mean, you know, when you see some of these WI-FI projects, like even in New York City, where they're WI-FI -- you know, lighting up WI-FI in locations with the city folks, they've done that with private companies to actually -- they've actually put infrastructure in into an area and they've done it for like a five-year arrangement, and then -- but there's always got to be -- somebody's got to make money, you know. So, in the private sector, if we're not going to make money, then we're probably not going to do it. And typically, what happens, they have some way to either capture information for those people, sell to those people, kind of like a Google model where you're advertising to them, and, hopefully, a -- you know, not an obnoxious way, and that's how it kind of usually works.

I think that -- you know, I did look at a number of things across Long Island. You know, as you know, cell coverage and wireless coverage is sketchy, you know, as you get to different parts of the -- to the Island. And we also do work on the deployment of cell towers on County property, we also do that here. And there does need to be some kind of concerted effort to look at how do we deploy more wireless technology across the County, because people are not sitting in their house on their PC, like I mentioned before, even yourself. You know, you drive in from the East End a lot, right, and you kind of want to work, right? Like -- hopefully, not while you're driving, but you kind of do want to work. All right? And you want to be mobile and you want to bring everything with, you don't want to have to go back to your desk. And we do need to look at ways to do that, but you got to do it smart.

I mean, I would -- what we did in some cases, we leveraged existing investments. I think we need to get together with towns and villages and look at all the investments that they have and see how we can kind of say, "Well, where are there pockets where we could basically get people to deploy more WI-FI or cellular to those locations. Because the tablets that you see today, you know, you look at the iPad, they're coming out with iPad 3 now, right? I mean, the tablets from them, the Galaxies, it's not like a notebook where you walked around with a three, four pound device. You know, you're walking around with something that you can kind of throw in the back of your car. You're always connected, you're always getting information. And so I think the private sector will deploy the infrastructure. The question is, is how can government get on there to deploy its services and its apps to basically give more services to constituents. We've got to figure out a way to get more services to them.

LEG. HORSLEY:

So we should be working, say, within Apple to create an app that's for Suffolk County?

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

Well, actually, Apple gives you the developer's kit.

LEG. HORSLEY:

Right.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

What you find is anybody with some wherewithal can develop an app. And that is something that the County, as we can come up with things that should be developed to be put in an app, we should develop them that way so people can get access. I mean, today we looked at a few things to do. Today what's happening is we're not really very externalized as a government. You know, we have a website, but that's not really what I mean. I mean, you want to be able to retrieve information from the government and send information back in through this mobile device to help you navigate

the County and get more service. Like I mentioned, this thing, location services, I mean, if you're waiting for the Suffolk County bus, all right, you want to know how far away is it. You know, I'm standing out here. Is it a couple of minutes away? You could see it on a little route -- on a path. You know, that's kind of pretty cool, right, because like it's raining, how long am I going to be here? You know, those are things that once the bus is in a GPS format or could be located, then you can basically -- location services, you place it onto a map and then you look at. And, you know, through Google maps, you'll click on the Suffolk County Bus application and you could see how far away it is, when's the next bus, time to -- time to arrival. All kinds of cool stuff like that, it could be done.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Are you working with Suffolk Transit on that or --

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

Well, I understand that Suffolk Transit is getting ready to deploy some GPS to their buses.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

They are.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

And then, ultimately, then we would be able to -- either they might have an extension to that that would be an ap, or we could look at doing something like that.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I think we went outside the County, you know, we outsourced that, you know, it's -- that GPS. It might have been through a grant, but maybe it could have been done inhouse through your department.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

Well, the grant, the application for the grant was a lot larger for a whole bus kind of system.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Right.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

But the ability to -- either there might be an extension to that that could be done through a phone, all right, which we would have to check with them. Or, if not, if somebody -- if people felt that was something we should do, then you could do it. The ap development on -- for iPhone or Android is not -- you know, people are making them all the time. If you see, there's like 500,000 aps on the iPhone today.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. Legislator Cilmi.

LEG. CILMI:

Yes. Thanks, Madam Chair. Just, very quickly, to speak to Legislator Horsley's question and to piggyback on to some of what Mr. Quinn was saying in terms of the impact on economic development is that, you know, there is a tremendous impact that could happen on economic development in terms of making government work better, and I think your department can play a significant role in that. The -- and just look at the permitting structure alone throughout Suffolk County, not only in County government, but through all of the villages and all of the towns, and not just Health Department permit, but the variety of permits that exist. If there was some way, and technologically there is a way, but if there was some way politically to have the political will to

develop a system that actually worked, you know, we could -- we could see tremendous economic benefit from that. And I'm -- maybe you want to speak a little bit to this vision that I helped sort of, you know, start, really didn't get very far, but last year, in terms of a unified permit, permitting system.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

So, I know what you're speaking about. There was -- there's an effort underway or it was underway to --

LEG. CILMI:

Yeah. I mean, it's still -- I think it's still ongoing. The County Executive made a commitment to continuing it.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

And I know the County Executive is very committed to --

LEG. CILMI:

Yes.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

-- economic development and to, you know, getting Suffolk County back to where it was at one time. And one of the things that gets in the way is I guess you would say, you know, government bureaucracy. And people really want information. They just want information and they kind of -- they like to access it by themselves. I mean, they don't really need somebody to deliver it to them. So I do know that there was a lot of work done around that, and I believe it continues to go on, to try to bring together multiple towns and villages into kind of an umbrella where you could go and find out information, not only enter information, but retrieve information to try to speed up the approval process for building on Long Island. And it not only goes to that. I mean, there are many -- they come up to also talking about, you know, parcels of land also.

When you buy a house today, you know, we're not buying as many as we used to, but we buy a house, you have a title search. You know, somebody -- a bank goes on and needs to get a copy of your real property land record and the deed and all that -- and all of the associated documents that go with that land parcel for the history from the time that Suffolk County was created, I mean, from when I guess the King gave us a big track of land and then we've been dividing it up for a couple of hundred years. You know, all that information needs to be part of that transaction. And today, the County Clerk processes those transactions, along with verification from Real Property. But there are other people in the Health Department, for instance, or even -- I think even Social Services that has information related to those parcels in documents. And all somebody really wants is to be able to go one place and say, "Let me get, you know, tax map number 12345, let me get everything with that." And today, you know, some of it's there, but not all of it's there, but the same to your point of that's externally with permitting. There's also internally the ability to cross departments, extract information from existing systems, attach them to a product, and sell that product to the public, like a title search for them, which they're currently doing today. But there's so much more that could be done to get maybe a premium service where you'd be able to charge more and get more value from it.

So there's many opportunities. I know you have other committees that are looking at processing the government, optimizing the government. You know, crossing the boundaries of the organization, allow each of the silos to work independently and do a great job, because they're very good at what they do independently, but try to cut across that organization and extract information, both for decisions to run the government, as well as provide service to the outside, and in many cases charge for those services. People want the information, we just got to figure out how to get it

together and package it and then sell it.

LEG. CILMI:

We live in a world where you can literally take a photograph of a check on your cell phone and make a deposit into your bank account and do it securely, although we could argue whether or not that's actually the case. But, I mean, there should be much more that we can do on a government level to -- you know, to facilitate everything that you're talking about, so thanks.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Anymore questions on the round table? Thank you so much for coming out today. We appreciate all the information. I know there's so much more work that we're going to be working on and, again, facilitating communication with the towns and villages. I think that's a wonderful idea. You know, we do have quite a challenge ahead of us as a Legislature, and we appreciate any help and guidance that you can give us. And, again, thank you so much for coming out today.

COMMISSIONER QUINN:

Thank you so much for having us. And anything we can do to help, we'll be happy to do. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. We are done with public portion, so we're not going to be able to have comments at this point, but we will be able --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

After the agenda.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. After the agenda, we will have comments.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

That's fine.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. We're going to go through the agenda and then we'll go ahead and take comments, yes.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

It will be quick.

MR. NICOSIA:

You supposedly end at two o'clock.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

We'll stay to hear your comments, sir.

MR. NICOSIA:

Excuse me?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

We will stay to hear your comment. It's a very brief agenda, so.

MR. NICOSIA:

All right.

INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. We're going to work on Introductory Resolutions. Yes?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Yep.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. Okay. We have ***I.R. 1143-2012 - Accepting and appropriating a Grant Subaward Modification from the Research Foundation of the State University of New York, for a project Win-Win, funded by the Lumina Foundation for Education 100% reimbursed by Federal funds at Suffolk (County) Community College (Co. Exec.).*** I'll make a --

LEG. MURATORE:

Motion.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Second

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

A motion, placed on the Consent Calendar.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

A motion to approve and place on the Consent Calendar.

MS. LOMORIELLO:

Who was the second?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I'll second to approve and place --

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Legislator Schneiderman seconded it. The motion was made by Legislator Moratore -- Muratore. Excuse me. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion passed. ***(Vote: Approved 5-0-0-0)***

Okay. Our next resolutions is ***I.R. 1144-2012 - Accepting and appropriating a grant award from the State University of New York for a Community College Workforce Development Training Grant Program for a Consortium Project: Audiovox, GPSI, and Wilbar International 88% reimbursed by State funds at Suffolk County Community College (Co. Exec.).***

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Motion.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Legislator Schneiderman makes a motion.

LEG. MURATORE:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Legislator Muratore seconds it. All in favor?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

That doesn't have to go to the Consent Calendar, right?

MR. NOLAN:

It doesn't.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Opposed? Motion's passed. *I.R. 1145 - Accepting and appropriating a grant award from the State University of New York for a Community College Workforce Development Training Grant Program for OneSource Document Management, Inc. 82% Reimbursed by State funds at Suffolk County Community College (Co. Exec.).* Same motion, same second, same vote. Motion passed. *(Vote: Approved 5-0-0-0)*

I just wanted to comment, if I can, about these particular grants, one -- two in particular that go to Suffolk Community College. This is for the Workforce Housing Program. I recently took a tour with the folks over there, and I have to tell you, that is one of the most valuable resource centers there is in Suffolk County. And from what I understand, it's the only workforce program in the state that provides education to learn about manufacturing. And when I'm speaking about manufacturing, if you want to learn how to weld, if you want to learn about HVAC systems, electricity, plumbing, this is the place to go. You don't have to have a college degree, but this type of education is there to get you a job and that's what we're doing here in Suffolk County, is trying to create, you know, a better workforce.

Okay. We're going to jump back to public comment, if you'd like to come up to the podium and speak.

MR. NICOSIA:

Can I bring you something to read? I came to make a presentation, but I probably --

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

You want to give your information to the Clerk? You need to push -- you have three minutes, and you need to push the button on the bottom of the microphone.

MR. NICOSIA:

Okay. Thank you. My name is Sal Nicosia. I've been here before, but I really came to make a presentation, but I'm out of order. So what I'd like to do is ask you if you could take the material that I've presented here and look at it and then invite me at another time to make a presentation, because time is of the essence. And I appreciate and I would like to extemporaneously extend myself as an educator here, because you are in the Education Committee. And I've been here with a previous -- information years ago, but since that time a lot has evolved positively. I want to bring the committee up to date and how you could facilitate what I'm trying to do in the educational field. That would be a benefit to the government and the citizens of this county, and also the nation, by the way. Okay?

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. Thank you.

MR. NICOSIA:

Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Thank you. We have no other business, we're adjourned.

*(*THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 1:57 P.M. *)*