

EDUCATION & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
OF THE
SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE
MINUTES

A meeting of the Education & Information 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 September 4, 2012.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

George Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature
Sarah Simpson, Assistant Counsel
Barbara LoMoriello, Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
Benny Pernice, Budget Review Office
Ben Zwirn, County Attorney's Office
Marie Berkoski, County Executive's Office
Christopher Adams, Executive Assistant, Suffolk Community College
Kevin Peterman, Suffolk Community College
Mary Lou Araneo, Suffolk County Community College
Donald Rodgers, Commissioner, Information Technology
William Shilling, Aide to Leg. Anker
Catherine Stark, Aide to Leg. Schneiderman
Paul Perillie, Aide to Leg. Horsley
Kevin LaValle, Aide to Leg. Muratore
Ali Nazir, Aide to Legislator Kennedy
Other Interested Parties

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Lucia Braaten, Court Stenographer

MINUTES TRANSCRIBED BY:

Denise Weaver, Legislative Aide

(THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 1:00 P.M.)

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. We're going to start the Health -- excuse me -- the Education, Information Technology Committee. Please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Legislator Schneiderman.

(*Salutation*)

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Please remain standing for a moment of silent meditation as we think of those residents, people in military who have sacrificed their life, their time for our country. Thank you.

(*Moment of Silence*)

Thank you. You can be seated. Okay. We do not have cards this afternoon. So no correspondence. No public comment. We're going to proceed to a presentation and this will be by Suffolk Community College representing President, Shaun McKay, we have Executive Assistant to the President, Christopher Adams and also Mary Lou Araneo, she is the Vice President of the Institution Advancement. So would you mind coming to the front?

Now this particular presentation will be -- will be on the college's "out of County student" survey. And of course that's a very important piece in understanding why residents of Suffolk County go to other colleges, specifically Nassau Community College, and, you know, the County does pay out of tuition for those students.

So, thank you for coming this afternoon and looking forward to your presentation.

MR. ADAMS:

Thank you and good afternoon. Chairwoman Anker, fellow Legislators, it gives me great pleasure to present today behalf of Suffolk County Community College. My colleague, Mary Lou Araneo, will also be joining me.

I wanted to first start off and let you know the impetus for us to conduct this survey to begin with. We were charged at our spring board of trustees meeting in March to conduct a survey of out of County Suffolk residents that were going to community colleges outside of Suffolk County.

In the spring of 2012, we sent out a questionnaire survey to 3,535 Suffolk County residents who attended a community college other than Suffolk. We conducted two mailings. After the first mailing we decided to make it easier for respondents we created a web based survey. From that we received 324 completed surveys with a response rate of 9%. One of the main questions we asked is what is the most important factor in determining your decision to attend a community college other than Suffolk County Community College. The response, the number one, the highest was the academic major was not available at Suffolk County Community College at 51.9%.

Also one of the questions that we asked was what -- what are some of the majors that people are choosing when they attend another community college outside of Suffolk County Community College. Majors pursued at other community colleges were fashion merchandizing, fashion, mortuary science, and radiological Xray technology.

We also determined what some of the other factors that were very, very important in the decision to attend an out of County community college. Next up was academic reputation of other community

college at 44.1%, courses you wanted to take at Suffolk County Community College were not available at a convenient time, 28.1%, general campus environment and facilities of other community college, 26.5%. And the last, the other community college is more convenient to where you work at 20.4%.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Chris, were they able to pick more than these things or they had to pick just one?

MR. ADAMS:

They were able to pick more than one.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

They were.

MR. ADAMS:

Yeah.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Was one of the choices that they wanted a four-year program?

MR. ADAMS:

I don't believe that was one of the questions of the options that we had.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Because I would think a lot of people were going to FIT go there because they could get a four-year degree.

MR. ADAMS:

That's possible.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Yeah, okay.

MR. ADAMS:

We'll see when we look at the out of County colleges most commonly attended. Not surprising, Nassau Community College at 58.6%, followed by Fashion Institute of Technology, 19.1%, and the last, Tompkins Cortland Community College at 2.2%.

We were also very interested in whether or not students that attended another community college outside of Suffolk County Community College had ever applied to Suffolk. We did find out there were 32.7%, 106 of the respondents who answered yes and of these 67 had attended Suffolk County Community College at one point in time 63.2%. Approximately 80% of respondents who attended Suffolk County Community College at one time had a favorable good to excellent view of Suffolk County Community College. As you can see the breakdown of things that we asked and we also wanted to know what some of the rankings were so you can see 91.3% the overall quality of the athletic programs, extra curricula activities, drama, intramurals, athletics, music, etcetera, variety of academic programs all the way down to social climate and activities at the college.

If I can just go back one second to the previous screen, we've come to the conclusion that from this that once they get to know us at Suffolk County Community College they like us, and you could see from the percentage of respondents that that is a very positive attribute, all the different things that students are able to do when they come to us.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Chris, can you just read maybe 4 or 5 or 6 of those and just give the percentages so we have it on audio record.

MR. ADAMS:

Sure. Overall quality of athletic programs, 91.3%. Extra curricula activities available; drama, intramural athletics, music, 89.9%. Variety of academic programs, 89.7%. General campus environment and facilities, classrooms, labs, library recreational areas, 89.2%, overall quality of student body 87.5%, overall quality of instruction 85.4%, variety and availability of courses, 84.7%, overall quality of student services, 83.6%, overall reputation of college, 82.6%. Faculty's concern for students, 82.4%, and last, social climate and activities at the college, 77.5%.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Chris, these are ratings of people who actually left -- who went and left.

MR. ADAMS:

Yes.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I'm sure the ratings would, I guess, be even higher for those who stayed. But it makes you say why did they leave if they thought the college was so good?

MR. ADAMS:

Well again, I think it points to other things that are happening. There's a lot of outliers; academic major, closer, you know, for example, people they may work in New York City, it may be easier for them to attend Nassau Community College. And you'll see in the next slide we also were very interested in where the respondents lived. So you can see we have a breakdown of that as well so I'll go through the next slide.

So we wanted to know, again, what town do you live in, and we can see the breakdown of western Suffolk towns; Babylon, 30%, Huntington, 23%, Islip, 16%, Smithtown, 8%. Then of course eastern Suffolk towns; Brookhaven, 14%, Riverhead, 1%, Southampton, 2%, East Hampton, 1%, and Southold we did not have any respondents.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Shelter Island I assume nobody is --

MR. ADAMS:

That's correct.

We also wanted to know what could we have done better to have influenced you to enroll at Suffolk rather than another community college. We had the opportunity for respondents to write in a qualitative answer and interestingly the top two choices, the two themes that emerged from this, was the -- provided the major I wanted and followed by number two, nothing, there was a lot of responses that there was nothing that we could have done to influence their decision to attend a community college outside of Suffolk.

And that is the report from the data. We did a very extensive report and from that we gleaned information that I'm sharing with you, have shared with you today at the Education and IT Technology.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

I want to thank you for coming, you and Mary Ann for coming here today, Mary Lou, excuse me, and

providing us pertinent information because we need to know where we can continue, I was going to say start from, but where we can continue from, so we can gain the support, especially the students from western Suffolk. And, again, it seems like maybe the nothing answers were the folks that, like you had said earlier, go -- go into the City, work into the City, they stop off at Nassau Community College for their course on their way home or something like that and there's really nothing we can do about that as far as being in Suffolk.

I'm just curious about how long did it take to run this survey, and, you know, how was this process, you know, in getting the results?

MR. ADAMS:

Well, we at first started we had put together the survey, you know, it took a couple of weeks to put together. We wanted to make sure it was both reliable and valid and from there we -- you know, it was quite extensive. Whenever you do a mailing survey literally we grabbed a whole bunch of staff members and, you know, mailed it out, how to fold and so it took a couple of weeks. And then we were planning all along to do a second survey or a second mailing, I should say, which we did and that took a couple of weeks. So, you know, I would estimate it probably took us about a good eight weeks to put it together and get the response back.

We also presented to our Board of Trustees at the June meeting. We wanted to come to the July meeting. July 31st there was an Education IT meeting. We couldn't make it at that time unfortunately so that's why we're presenting today.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Now I recently read some of the community colleges, I assume including Suffolk Community, we're looking into the goal of students attaining a job and working backwards and trying to educate them to the jobs that are available. Where are we with that as far as Suffolk Community?

MR. ADAMS:

I'll let my colleague, Mary Lou, answer that.

MS. ARANEO

I'm sorry. Can you just -- you read something.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

There was an article in Newsday about, I think, Farmingdale had a program where they would actually survey the jobs that were available on Long Island and they would tailor the educational needs to fulfill those jobs.

MS. ARANEO:

Right.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

I think STEM.

MS. ARANEO:

That was the op-ed piece. I saw it.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Yes.

MS. ARANEO:

Yes, actually our structure is quite similar to what was referenced in that piece where they talked

about advisory boards, which we do have in all our major curricula areas. We work with business individuals representing commerce. We talk with them about what our curriculum needs or is lacking if they see anything in our graduates that says, *you know, you really need to focus on this, this is an emerging skill set that I don't see coming out of the college.* Then we have meetings internally, make that adjustment and proceed from there.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

You know what I find too is that the value of community colleges are so important and I think people are -- appreciate it more in these economic hard times, you know, as well as loyalty, you know, when I'm out and about and I meet someone from -- who has graduated from the community college or has taken classes, they're so appreciative and they're willing to give back. And, again, I know not only do you acquire funds from, you know, State and Federal, but you're also doing a wonderful job with private funding. Is that correct? How are you guys doing with that?

MS. ARANEO:

Well, the college, as you probably are aware, did embark on its first major gifts campaign and we have been working on that for the past several months. It's still relatively new. We've had a lot of success in making outreach to external donors. We've raised over a million dollars already. Our goal is to raise \$7 million, and we're now turning the focus to campus based and the professional staff at the college hoping to get their support as well, which I'm sure we will because they do support our institution.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

I think Legislator Cilmi had -- has a question.

LEG. CILMI:

Yes, thanks, Madam Chair. I have a number of questions. I'll just kind of thumb through this report and ask questions as we go. Thank you for presenting this to us. It's very informative.

I'd be curious first, before I go into specific questions, what your board's reaction was to -- to this report?

MR. ADAMS:

Well, I think it seemed to me to be very positive as far as our, you know, able to, you know, put it together. There was certainly a question about undeliverable, which seemed to be the focus of most of the questions as far as how many undeliverable surveys had come back. There was, if you recall, I think it was here that we had said that at one time there was about 85 undeliverable surveys that came back. We worked with the Comptroller and the Comptroller's Office who had given us a revised list so we were able to whittle that down and we went back and forth for awhile. We sent out second and third waves of surveys to those that came back as undeliverable once we had the addresses that were correct. So we whittled that down to about 23, which I think is pretty good. I mean, certainly one is too many, but getting it down to 23 I think was good work. And there's probably a lot of answers to that, they could have moved within Suffolk County that they didn't have their correct address once that they had done research on to verify and balance that. But I think for the most part I think the undeliverables I think have been resolved to our satisfaction.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay, so maybe I asked the wrong question. What I was curious about was not so much their reaction to the report itself, but more so their reaction to the content of the report. I mean, did they -- and I recognize that that may not have been within your purview to even be interested in how they were going to respond to the information that's in the report, and if you don't have any of that information, that's fine. If they just said they take it under advisement; that's fine too. Could

you answer, though, that question?

MR. ADAMS:

Yes. I don't have any further information.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay.

MR. ADAMS:

Those were the main questions that came from two of the trustees.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay. So I think it's important to note that while a little more than 3500 County residents, Suffolk County residents, attended community college outside of Suffolk County, that we have -- what's the number up to this year in terms of enrolled students?

MS. ARANEO:

Well, the college won't have its official census until October.

LEG. CILMI:

Right.

MS. ARANEO:

But we are around 25,000 enrollment right now.

LEG. CILMI:

Right. So, I mean, that's -- I think that's worthy of mentioning, that even though we had 3500 residents that chose not to come to Suffolk Community College, we have a very healthy student base, which shows me that in as much as there's some desire to go to other colleges for whatever reason, there's also a significant demand for our community college and that's -- that's bolstered by the program -- the many programs and the convenience factors and all of the things that our community college offers. So I don't want that to be lost in this whole discussion.

That said, and moving to the next page, where we see that for almost 52% of the students, the academic major not being available was a significant factor. And then you follow to the next page, and we see that fashion merchandizing, mortuary science and radiological are -- were the three chief examples of programs that weren't offered. I think it's probably -- would probably be a reach for us to assume that if we were to begin to offer a robust fashion merchandising program that it would take many years for us to reach the stature, if we ever did, of an FIT. I mean, clearly that school specializes in that, in that discipline, and they have a very -- very good reputation in that field.

So I'd be curious, of the 52% or so that said their academic major wasn't available at Suffolk Community College, how much of that was fashion merchandizing versus mortuary science and radiological?

MR. ADAMS:

I don't have the numbers with me, but certainly I can research that and get back to you on the breakdown of those.

LEG. CILMI:

Because I think it's reasonable to assume that whichever students chose FIT over Suffolk Community College are probably -- probably wouldn't consider Suffolk Community College. Would

you agree with that or do you not really have any information to back that up?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

It's also bachelors verses associates degree.

LEG. CILMI:

Sure.

MR. ADAMS:

I don't have the information to back that claim up.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay.

MR. ADAMS:

I can certainly tell you my personal feeling, but I don't have any --

LEG. CILMI:

Yeah. I would think that if the college were to, and I say this again in the backdrop, that you can't please everybody, you're not going to be able to get everybody. But I think if the college were to offer mortuary science program or radiological program, if we don't already, it seems to me that we don't, either of those? Not the radiological either?

MR. ADAMS:

No.

LEG. CILMI:

Cause I would think that we're -- I mean, we're such an acclaimed nursing school and I think radiological would be a natural discipline for us to get into. But, in any event, those two areas, I think, are worthy of exploring. I don't think fashion merchandizing, well, you know, to some extent we -- maybe we should, I think it would be naive of us to think that we're going to take many students from FIT, unless of course, there's a financial incentive for us -- you know, for them to attend our college as opposed to FIT, which there may at some point in the near future be.

So let's just move onto the next page, academic reputation of another community college, 44%. I think that goes probably to the FIT question. I don't know, I mean, you guys are in this business. Nassau Community College's academic reputation compared to our academic reputation, can you contrast the two or are they fairly similar?

MR. ADAMS:

Yeah. I've not seen any studies.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay.

MR. ADAMS:

Again, I could give my personal view.

LEG. CILMI:

Right. Let's see, *courses you wanted to take were not available at a convenient time*. You're always going to have something -- something like that. General campus environment and facilities. That's, of course, what we all here try to improve upon in terms of all the capital investment that

we're making.

MR. ADAMS:

Absolutely. I would absolutely say thanks to the commitment of the Suffolk County Legislature. We are making strides and do have a robust capital programs on all of the campuses. So we're heading certainly in that direction.

LEG. CILMI:

And the fact that 20% is more convenient to where students work, was there any -- were there any questions on your survey that dealt with the age of the students that you were questioning? In other words, are they -- do we know whether or not they're out of high school students or, you know, continuing education students, for example?

MR. ADAMS:

I do not recall a question pertaining to the age. Again, I can go back and take a look at that. But, certainly, the next time we do a survey, that probably is a good idea to ascertain --

LEG. CILMI:

Yeah.

MR. ADAMS:

-- you know, what some of the age ranges are of the respondents. So I certainly will have to get back to you on that as well.

LEG. CILMI:

Have you any idea what percentage of students that attend Suffolk Community College are continuing ed students, versus right out of high school? Do you know what the percentages are?

MS. ARANEO:

I think, you mean adult students --

LEG. CILMI:

Adult, right.

MS. ARANEO:

-- as opposed to continuing ed.

LEG. CILMI:

Not -- right, adult education, right.

MS. ARANEO:

I can look that up. I think that's on the website as far as the percentages are.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay. It's not necessary that you give it to me right now.

Out of County colleges most commonly attended; Nassau Community College, FIT, significantly less, and Tompkins Cortland Community College, much less.

So, Legislator Schneiderman, asked the question that I had with respect to the numbers of students that had attended Suffolk Community College, but decided for whatever reason to transfer and go to some other community college. It would be interesting to know why they did that, especially since the numbers are so high in terms of the favorable ratings. And I think that the distribution of where

they come from, I think is, you know, is important and the answers are what I would have expected here.

So since we have a full -- almost 59% of Suffolk County residents -- of the out of County residents that you surveyed and that responded to the survey, 59% of them almost go to Nassau Community College. And I -- I mean, if -- I think my last recollection, and you may be able to tell us this is, the total number of students from Suffolk County that attend Nassau Community College, if I recall correctly was in the 2500 neighborhood.

MR. ADAMS:

I believe that's correct.

LEG. CILMI:

Right.

MR. ADAMS:

I don't have that number off the top of my head, but, certainly, I can look that information up.

LEG. CILMI:

Now let's say all of a sudden 2500 students decided, you know what, Suffolk Community College is a better college, we're going to go there instead. We don't really even have the space to accommodate that many more students at this point. Do we? I mean, that's a whole other question.

MS. ARANEO:

Well, if they wanted to come Monday through Thursday between 10:00 and 2:00 we probably couldn't accommodate them, but if they had flexibility and were willing to come later in the day, earlier in the morning, we could accommodate them certainly.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay.

MS. ARANEO:

Yeah, there's capacity.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay. Because, I mean, sort of, you know, past all of this discussion and obviously the reason we're looking at this is to try and see how we can get -- how we can grab those students that are attending other community colleges and have them come to Suffolk Community College ostensibly to avoid the out-of-county tuition cost associated with them leaving. But to the extent that we can't -- can or can't handle them, obviously that becomes a factor. So I would say that those 2500 students are really the target. So if we could somehow isolate and if your survey -- if you can do this within the responses of your survey, if you can isolate for us the respondents that attended Nassau Community College from the other two and let's look at those specifically and see why they're going to Nassau Community College, that might give us a very good -- it might point us in a direction in terms of how we can, you know, capture some of those, assuming that those percentages continue as they are, that we can capture some of those students for the future. Right? Does that make sense?

MS. ARANEO:

Right. And even going forward I know that much of this work goes through the Office of the Comptroller so if while they're submitting their waivers there was an additional step that they had to

complete indicating, you know, why are you going to this X, Y, Z other school, then we can perpetually have that information captured as opposed to running a survey now and only getting a percentage of the responses then everybody would have to tell you why are you doing that.

LEG. CILMI:

I would ask -- I would ask and I will ask the Comptroller's Office to speak with you directly. And if there's a way that his office can help you improve the college and keep some of Suffolk residents here, then I mean, obviously, that -- why wouldn't we do that? Okay. Thank you very much for your work on this. I appreciate it.

MR. ADAMS:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Legislator Barraga would you like to -- Muratore, sorry.

LEG. MURATORE:

Yeah, so you got to look around. What's it say there? It says Tom Muratore.

(Laughter)

Did they spell it right? Okay.

First of all, thank you for coming. I really appreciate it. You know, the college is in my district and I'm very, very concerned about it. And I see where we're going here and really you should be commended because, you know, I'm playing with numbers here and I'm seeing with the 25,000 you have registered or you're approximating. Then you add another 3500 onto that, you're talking about 28,000 students and you're capturing almost 90% of them coming to Suffolk Community College. I mean, that's a great job. I mean, I know we're not going to get everybody, you know, there's always going to be a reason that Suffolk -- and you can look for everything in the book, but if you don't have the one that's not there, you're going to lose a couple of students. But who sets the academic program for the college? Who decides what courses are being offered?

MS. ARANEO:

Well, we have -- the entire staff, I think, contributes at some level. We obviously have an Office of Academic and Student Affairs that is the primary driver of the academic side of the house. And then you have your executive deans on the campuses, you have your chairs and your faculty on the individual campus. It's an entire community event.

LEG. MURATORE:

Because my concern is, I mean, now you have done this survey, you have three areas there where mortuary sciences, X-ray and fashion, I mean, now have maybe three areas that maybe you might want to explore and maybe begin to offer some programs so we can capture some of those 3500 that go to Nassau or FIT. So, I mean, is that something that's being talked about throughout the faculty? Do you sit down and decide, *well, this year we're going to offer, you know, auto mechanics or, you know, fashion?*

MS. ARANEO:

I think the information is still relatively new, and we haven't really as a college community discussed those three suggestions. I know in the past we have looked at radiological technology, but the other two I don't recall ever having a discussion about.

LEG. MURATORE:

Well, I still think 90% capture rate is as a great job so keep it up. Thank you for your time.

MR. ADAMS:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Legislator Schneiderman.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Yeah, just, you know, on the numbers, because we're so always thinking about the County budget, and I -- and it seems like most of the students are coming from the Babylon area and my guess is, you know, since the numbers for Nassau Community were so high in terms of attendance that a lot of them must be going to Nassau, I'm guessing it's probably closer than the nearest Suffolk County Community College campus, which maybe, I guess, is Brentwood. So, you know, it's going to be tough to compete against that if they have that choice, even if we have the same major, they're still going to go there because it's shorter and they have that option.

Let's say, though, for a second that we were able to recruit them to stay in Suffolk. Do we save anything in terms of the County? Because we still have to pay basically a third of their tuition, whether they go to Nassau or here. The State's picking up a third, right, and the students picking up a third, roughly, not exactly. So if we succeed, let's say, in getting these students to come to Suffolk Community College does that help the County's bottom line?

MR. ADAMS:

Yeah, I'm not sure about that. We'd have to do the math ourselves.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Benny, do you know?

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Budget Review, you want to take a crack at that?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

You know, I certainly understand with FIT because it's those extra two years that we're carrying them, you know, that's a whole other ball game. But if they go, let's say, to Nassau, if they made that choice to Nassau rather than Suffolk --

MR. PERNICE:

Yes, then Suffolk has to pay Nassau part of the tuition.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Right, but if they went to Suffolk --

MR. PERNICE:

Then we would just have to --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

-- we would have to pay for them.

MR. PERNICE:

Well --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

It's a different amount of money?

MR. PERNICE:

Yeah, well, cause -- you don't pay per student, you pay the County contribution, which is the lump sum so it's not necessarily, you know, per student that the County's paying. But we are going to pay --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Would the lump sum then go up because they had more students to process?

MR. PERNICE:

No, because you adopt a college budget with a County contribution, which is about \$35 million each year and that's not necessarily based on how many students attend. That's based on, you know, it takes into account what the college is projecting and how many students there are going to be, but it doesn't fluctuate on a per one student basis. So that contribution is going to remain the same. But when they now go to -- when that student goes to Nassau, you're going to pay that same contribution and you're going to pay something to Nassau for that student.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Right. So there would be savings.

MR. PERNICE:

Yes.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

And then if we were able to recruit even more students, let's say once -- let's say we had an offering that Nassau wasn't providing, rather than matching it, but suddenly we offered something that students from --

MR. PERNICE:

Right. If you started taking students from Nassau to come to Suffolk then --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Let's say we had -- let's say, hotel school or something like that.

MR. PERNICE:

That would be -- that would be, you know, it would depend on how it was set up because right now the County gets the -- has the expense for when one -- a Suffolk residents goes to another community college, but Suffolk Community College gets the revenue when someone from another college goes to Suffolk Community. So it's in their budget. So it's kind of split. So I don't know that -- I don't how exactly the law would work --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

All right, so it wouldn't come to the General Fund.

MR. PERNICE:

-- where the money would come, but there would be a revenue to either the County or the college if someone from another County came in.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Right. So it might be in the college's interest to do that.

MR. PERNICE:

Right.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Have more operating revenue. But there are obviously expenses involved too.

MR. PERNICE:

Correct.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

All right. And, Chris, have you guys looked at those type of majors that might be a windfall for the college, so to speak, that might attract students from other areas?

MR. ADAMS:

We haven't, as of yet, to my knowledge.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

You'd have to do some kind of assessment to see what --

MR. ADAMS:

Certainly.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

-- students are looking to learn.

MR. ADAMS:

Yes.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

And I'd imagine it would be --

MS. ARANEO:

Well, I think our Culinary Program --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Yeah, Culinary Program.

MS. ARANEO:

-- was a good example of just that kind of response. And you can see our --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Right, the graphic -- visual arts, though, they probably, I'm sure, offer that graphic arts as well.

MS. ARANEO:

Well, we know we had a home run with culinary, because when we opened the Culinary Program we had, of course, projections for enrollment, and by year one, we had achieved our year four enrollment projection.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Wow. Are we also -- are we seeing a lot of students in that Culinary Program from out of Suffolk?

MS. ARANEO:

I don't know about -- I don't know the demographic makeup, but I'm just saying that we do look at programs where we know we can attract students.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Is that fully subscribed now --

MS. ARANEO:

And that was a particular --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

-- that program? Or is there room to grow it?

MS. ARANEO:

I'm sorry.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Is that fully subscribed that program? I mean, should we be advertising maybe in Nassau County about the program or is it a -- is there room to grow the program?

MS. ARANEO:

Well, there's room. We have room to grow our programs. We have that capacity ability.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Right. You know, I had mentioned, just as an example, tourism too. I mean, the culinary ties in with all the restaurants and catering facilities, but, you know, there's a lot of -- there's a big resort economy out here too not just in Suffolk but Nassau as well. And I know Cornell has a hotel school Upstate, but I don't think either community college has a program. Might be worth looking into.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

I think that's a great idea. And complementing with that thought that you're on is, you know, what's unique about Suffolk County versus Nassau County, well, we have a lot of agriculture. Do we have anything specifically focused on farm management, per se?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

A viticulture program. Right? The wineries. No? You still have that?

MR. ARANEO:

No.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

You did at one point.

MS. ARANEO:

We have classes but not degrees.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Oh, classes. Okay.

MS. ARANEO:

I was going to say we do have a Hospitality Management Program at the college just to be clear.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Oh, you do have a Hospitality Management.

MS. ARANEO:

Yes.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. That's great. Is that something that we have in other community colleges? Does Nassau have equivalent?

MR. ADAMS:

Yeah, we're not aware of that. There might be one or two Upstate; community college.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So, again, it might be something that we just need to promote to attract students from other areas and to offset the amount of Suffolk students that are going to Nassau. We might be able to get some Nassau students coming from Suffolk, too. You know, cancel each other out.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

And also, you know, considering the vet population, I attended a press event that, you know, through your Workforce Development Program and focusing on the returning vets and I just think that's a wonderful program. But, again, focusing on certain groups, you know, like the folks interested in the tourism, or agriculture. I think you guys are doing a fantastic job. There's more exciting future perspective. So, again, I appreciate all the work that you're doing. Legislator Muratore.

LEG. MURATORE:

Yes, I do. Does the college have a football or a soccer program? Athletics?

MS. ARANEO:

We have a soccer program.

LEG. MURATORE:

But no football.

MS. ARANEO:

No.

LEG. MURATORE:

Has that been given any thought? I mean, 27,000 students.

MS. ARANEO:

It's very expensive.

LEG. MURATORE:

Don't they make a lot of money though, don't they generate a lot of income for the colleges?

MR. ADAMS:

I would say the trend is for colleges to begin dismantling especially if it's not Division 1 football programs. An example is Hofstra University, Northeastern University, because of the expense and the amount of support that it takes to outfit a football team especially when you're not talking scholarships.

LEG. MURATORE:

Okay, good. Just a question. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

All right. I think we're done around the horseshoe. Thank you so much for coming out here and giving us a presentation. Very eye opening. And, again, whatever we can do as a Legislature, please let us know, more than happy to support you.

MR. ADAMS:

Thank you. We appreciate everything that the Suffolk County Legislature has done for us and is continuing to do for us. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. We're going to move to the tabled resolutions.

TABLED RESOLUTIONS

We have resolution, ***1692 - Authorizing sponsorship of the County website. (Cilmi)*** I'll make a motion to table.

LEG. CILMI:

Motion to approve.

LEG. MURATORE:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

All right. We need to get a -- okay, so motion to approve and a second.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

On the motion let's hear from --

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

On the motion.

LEG. CILMI:

Do we -- Ben, have you been briefed on any of this as of late or maybe --

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Don Rodgers is here.

LEG. CILMI:

-- the Commissioner would like to --

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Yeah, the Commissioner is here --

LEG. CILMI:

-- speak to us.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

-- to speak on that. Okay. We have Don Rodgers coming up.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Here? Or --

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

You can sit at the able. It's fine. Okay. We have the resolution authorizing sponsorship of the County website. Can you give us a little insight? I'll tell you my concerns, and let me start with three issues that I have with this particular resolution. I think it's a great idea. I'm an advertising PR person. I think we need to do everything we can to bring the County money, funding. But there's three issues that I have and the first one is the legality. Is this legal? I'm afraid if we start this website or if we create -- if we approve this resolution to allow sponsorship or advertising on websites we may -- it may be costing us more than actually receiving money. And what I mean is if we're doing something illegal we may get fined down the road. So number one, is it legal? Will we be fined? I'd like to vet that through. Number two, is it manageable? Do we have the personnel in Information Technology? I recently heard that we had to let go of our webmaster and I don't know what the cost of that, I think it was 40 \$50,000. Will that -- if we hire this person back, will we get in more than 50,000 plus through this type of project? Okay. And then number three, you know, is this ethical? Do residents want to go on a government website and see advertisements when they're looking for, you know, specific information relating to Social Services or senior services? So I have those three issues. I'd like more information.

Like I said, I think this is a great idea. I think it needs a stronger foundation to make sure that we don't fall through, but I'd like to get some more information from Don.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Thanks for having me. Since this came to our attention, we've spent a decent amount of time investigating it from the standpoint of defining the requirements that we would have to assume, and exactly what we need to do to go forward. I have put together a packet, which members of the committee are more than welcome to review, which contain some of the information that we have looked at. And on -- on it you will find the various websites that -- the various websites that the County currently manages that we're aware of. This in and of itself has been problematic in that the registration of these websites is not in the past been completely under the control of DOIT. So we have had to do some research to identify these various sites. Some of these sites clearly should be under the auspices of the dot.gov extension as according to Federal regulations. You know, in our investigation, which let me just say I, too, think this is a great idea if we can do this. What we have looked at is what kind of volumes would we need to generate revenue. What kind of costs or charges are currently out there to get an idea on what we might see. In your packet what you see on the first cover sheet is the security certificates that we hold for the various websites. In the past, because departments could basically register their own website, they could select the extension they wanted. And a dot.com extension costs about \$15 a year, a dot.gov costs about \$125 a year. And I can only assume that since the decision was within the Department hands, they would make that decision themselves. So some of those clearly should be a subset of suffolkcountyny.gov. And to say that this has, for lack of a better term, opened up a whole set of issues for us to look at; would be minimizing it. And these are things that have to be done. So we don't have a problem with doing that. And as I conveyed to you, Legislator Cilmi, I mean, we're happy to look at this. I think it's a terrific idea if we can generate revenue this way. We just need to make sure that we have all our ducks in a row on this.

Additionally, in your packet you will find the regulations as put forth by the New York State CIO who I am waiting to have a conversation with Dr. Chan with regard to some of this.

And you will also find some information from LA County as they have moved forward and done a branch off of their own website with regard to advertising and you will find the Federal regulations as well.

So I think the bottom line with us is we're not there yet, we'd like to be there, but we're not there yet. We don't have all the information that we need in order to provide you with what I think would be an intelligent response. Our effort to do this would be significant. We have seen, as other departments -- we seen a 27% reduction in staff since January. And, yes, one of the individuals we did let go was very proficient at web development. So, you know, that is a concern. I have -- am currently in the process of also reviewing how some of the maintenance is done on the various County websites with regard to departments' capabilities to manage their own environment.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

I have a quick question for you now. How long have you been in office in your office?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

I started in April.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

So about four months.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Four or five months.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

When I first started this Committee Chair, I didn't realize that there are many departments, I believe 15 departments, that have their separate IT division. So is there a possibility that those IT divisions will be under one type of, you know, command so we have a better idea of what our websites are doing?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

We are currently -- there are 15 distinct areas that identify themselves as having IT departments within Suffolk County. I am currently in the process of assessing exactly what those departments can and cannot do in terms of being able to support themselves and how to better provide the information technology structure that I think the County needs to really move ahead. So, yes, I am assessing that situation from the standpoint of staffing, purchasing, administration, policy.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

So you have your hands full. You have your hands full with a lot of things. Now, you know, the example that Legislator Cilmi had given was -- was it Cook County has a website and that was -- and they actually allow advertising and it is a government website. How does that work related to what we can do and what revenues are generated from that website?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Cook County is one of the areas, State of Washington is also an area. We have done some research. One of the articles that we came across did discuss what the actual revenue generation was and it would appear that Cook County received significantly less revenue than they had hoped to receive. They anticipated, I think, about a \$50,000 return and over a six-month period it was much less than 10% of that. I'm trying to find the article now, I believe I had it with me.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

So that's \$1500 -- \$1,500 over six months.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

-- that they received in advertising revenue?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Do you have any other information and, maybe even Legislator Cilmi might be able to help -- help me out, that shows that advertising will generate, you know, funding specifically municipal or government websites?

LEG. CILMI:

Well, the comparison is difficult because every website gets a different quantity of users, a different, you know, amount of traffic. So typically when you're selling advertising on websites, the revenue that you get is in direct correlation to the number of visitors that come to your website. I don't know how many visitors go to Cook County website or any of the other five or six or seven different municipalities that I had e-mailed the committee about, but given the size of Suffolk County and the number of residents in Suffolk County as compared to many states in our country, I would suspect that the traffic that we generate on our websites is significantly more than the traffic that's generated on those websites. Of course, you know, we have to do a full out investigation to come to that conclusion with certainty. I'm not sure if that answers your question. But I mean -- so the more traffic we generate to our sites, the more sites that we have available to generate that traffic, the more revenue we could derive from a program like this.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. So let me ask you a question with that in mind, would you consider tabling this for another cycle, I know you tabled it last time for Don to get the information, until we can find out specifically if we, number one, and again, I guess it depends the eye of the beholder if this is legal we're going to hope we have our attorney, I think Ben's here from the County Exec's Office, but again if this is a viable project that we can move forward with this that we're not going to have to hire someone for \$50,000 where the revenue may only be 20,000 or whatever for a certain amount of --

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

(Inaudible).

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Right. Well, again if we could focus on those loose ends, like I said, I think we could move forward. I know it's -- you know, Don is new in the office and I really would like to see some progress made in centralizing the IT departments. I think that's the first step to avoid missteps with doing this type of project. So what is your thought on that?

LEG. CILMI:

My thought is that I've heard members of this committee and members of the administration say that this is a great idea, quote, unquote. And that I, you know, I recognize there are issues, but that's exactly why I wrote the bill the way I did, in that it allows the administration and the Department to develop a program that works within the confines of what makes sense financially and otherwise. So, you know, your questions were threefold. Number one, is it legal and are there any fines associated and the answer to those questions is it is legal and therefore there would be no fines. You asked whether or not it's manageable in the context of a government that's apparently just lost or fired its webmaster. This is the first I'm hearing about that. Why that would happen I have no idea in today's age, but be that as it may, I would suggest that there better be somebody that's looking after our websites because our web presence is quite significant. Number three, from an ethical point of view, again, it's being done in other places, and I'm confident that the

Department and the administration and for that matter the Legislature, because at Legislator Schneiderman's request I amended the bill to include a provision, that -- and if my recollection serves me well, I think the Chairwoman was likewise concerned, that a program would be developed without us having a second look at it. I added a clause in the resolution that requires the program to come back before us for approval.

So all that said, I really find no reason why we should hold this up any further. There's significant examples of other municipalities that are doing it. There's absolutely nothing that says that legally we can't do it. There's every reason to do it given the nature of our budgetary concerns. And frankly, to not do it, just is -- it just doesn't make sense to me.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay.

LEG. CILMI:

I'm not even sure -- George, does the bill give any timeframe as to when the Department should come up with -- I don't recall, I'm sorry.

MR. NOLAN:

It's open-ended.

LEG. CILMI:

It's open-ended. So I mean, they're not even held to a time certain as to when this program should be -- needs to be developed. If we all think it's a great idea and they're held to no timeframe, why not give the Department the ability to go ahead -- I mean they've already started doing it for goodness sakes.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Well, my answer to that is I'm not a hundred percent convinced that it is legal. I have -- I don't know, Ben, would you mind coming up here. I don't know if the attorney is here. I don't see him. If you could just speak on that. The last thing we need to do is create legislation that's illegal and get fined, you know, and it defeats the purpose.

LEG. CILMI:

If I may, I'm not sure that Mr. Zwirn is an attorney. I don't think he is.

MR. ZWIRN:

I am an attorney.

LEG. CILMI:

All right. He is. I'm sorry. Forgive my --

MR. ZWIRN:

But I'm not the County Attorney.

LEG. CILMI:

Who knew? However, I'll ask --

MR. ZWIRN:

You mean I haven't riled you with my pros, my legalese, I'm shocked.

*(*Laughter*)*

LEG. CILMI:

I won't comment because I'll surely get myself and others into trouble.

MR. ZWIRN:

I was just going to support you. Now I'm not so sure it'll help.

LEG. CILMI:

I'll ask our Counsel. You certainly at this point you've looked at this. Do you have an opinion as to whether or not this bill is legal and whether or not it's legal for a government to do this?

MR. NOLAN:

Well, I think at the outset of this resolution when we originally talked about it, I did point out that when I was in the County Attorney's Office I had done research on the issue of advertising on government publications, and so forth. And there have been a couple of advisory opinions that threw up a red flag that perhaps not. But by the same -- on the other hand we do have a law on our books regarding park properties that call for naming opportunities, sponsorship that would generate revenue to the County.

So there are a couple of advisory opinions that throw up a red flag, but the County's already proceeded with the law in terms of our park properties where we are looking to generate revenues through naming opportunities, which is, you know, very analogous to advertising naturally.

LEG. CILMI:

Have you read the GSA -- the GSA website on, you know, where this is allowed and where this is not allowed?

MR. NOLAN:

I know I read something from the -- that would be from the Federal Government that came down?

LEG. CILMI:

Yes.

MR. NOLAN:

Yeah, but I'm talking about where more state comptroller, attorney general opinions. I don't think I read the opinions you're speaking about.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay. Because the GSA website specifically -- specifically indicates dot.gov websites, and there's a variety of other domains as we know. I'll let -- I'll defer to Mr. Zwirn, esquire, for future comment.

MR. ZWIRN:

My parents would be proud. I don't know. I don't know if it's legal after all that. *(Laughter)*. I have not researched the issue and I would leave that to Counsel and the County Attorney's Office. I -- I can't help you either way.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Legislator Horsley.

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

All right. Where do we go with this? I've got to tell you, I am disposed to say that this is a good idea, I agree with it. I would vote for it. It is apparently open-ended. Could Counsel, could you give us an opinion by two weeks from now and -- so we can vote this out?

MR. NOLAN:

I don't think there's going to be a definitive opinion as to legality. Like I said what -- I can try to go back and dig out old opinions, and they are old opinions from the attorney general, the comptroller. Those are advisory opinions. That's all I recall there being in terms of direction, legal direction, legal precedent. And as I noted --

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

So at the end of the day you can't say nay or yay.

MR. NOLAN:

I could tell you what the old advisory opinions were in terms of advertising. This is pre internet also. This was government publications, but I think the principles carry through. But, you know, the reality is the County has gone down this road. We have passed a law saying we are seeking sponsorships at County park facilities.

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

When we were going to wireless, the entire County of Suffolk County with the former County Executive, the way to do it was, at least what was proposed and had everybody on board with it was that we were going to do advertising. What we found out that it wouldn't pay for it. That there wasn't enough monies in it and the business model wouldn't work. But that's besides the point. That doesn't mean that this is a bad idea; any monies is good monies in terms of raising revenue.

MR. NOLAN:

There was much expense -- there was expense involved in doing a wireless system and they were looking for ways -- without raising taxes.

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

Right. That was going to be the business model that we were going to follow.

MR. NOLAN:

This is something you already have created, I guess, you know, County internet websites and, you know, anything you generate, I guess, would be positive.

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

If we gave you two weeks could you get a yay or nay out of this thing?

MR. NOLAN:

If you want it, you request it, I can certainly do it.

LEG. CILMI:

Through the Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

I'm going to -- I'm going to maybe ask also, Don, if you could -- if you could give us more information in two weeks about if your Department can, you know, can get this thing up and going without incurring an expense. Again, my concern, and, you know, is the fact that this one government group started this thing, they thought they were going to get 13,000, they got 1300 or 15,000 and got 1500, and I just don't want this thing to cost us \$50,000 down the road and find out, you know, it's a great idea but it may cost us more money than -- you know, different spin on, you know, I hate to say this; pay to play, you know, you're playing because you wouldn't be on the -- you know, there's some issues behind this that I don't want this great idea, and I'll keep saying it, to be defeated because of loose ends.

LEG. CILMI:

If I may, the legal opinions are going to be -- I mean, clearly there are other governments doing it, which says that there may be differing legal opinions on whether or not this could be done. So -- and it's up to us. I mean, as some folks remind me, we make the laws. I mean, that's the bottom line. That's why we're here. So, you know, and certainly we've pushed the envelope before and we will continue to push the envelope on what we believe and what even our Counsel believes is legal for us to delve into.

And as far as the question of affordability and whether or not it makes sense, I'm in complete agreement with yourself and with Legislator Horsley that, you know, that there needs to be obviously some positive cash flow out of this, otherwise it doesn't make sense to do at all. With that said, we won't know until the -- until the IT Department comes up with a program to do it.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

You know, again --

LEG. CILMI:

If they come up with a program that doesn't make financial sense to do it, of course we're not going to do it.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

What the Commissioner is saying is that they're in the midst of reorganizing the entire IT Department at this point. Because this legislation is open-ended gives you the ability to say this isn't going to be done overnight, but they may be able to do that. I just have to get a better idea legally that this is -- I'm sorry, I'm stuck on that. I don't want to have to get -- we make laws, we don't break laws, kind of thing and I want to make sure not only is this legal, that this is going to be productive and effective. You know, you think, you know, decades ago, doctors never advertised. There are certain professions that you would never see an advertisement, now you can't get rid of them off TV. They're constantly on there.

And, yes, this is a new avenue. I just want to make sure this is the right avenue to be taking at this time.

Legislator Schneiderman has a question.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Thank you. You know, I've agreed with tabling this in the past because I wanted Commissioner Rodgers here so, Don, I'm glad you're here because now hopefully you'll be able to answer some of my questions. I think the point Legislator Anker is making in terms of revenue is an important one because certainly this could bring in money, but if it costs more to implement than it's actually going to bring in then we're, you know, obviously nobody's going to support it.

So let me start with this dot.com versus dot.gov, which is really this legal issue that we can't advertise on dot.gov. You had mentioned earlier that some of our websites are dot.com's, but they should have been dot.gov's. So that could be potentially skirting that legal issue if we advertise there. Which websites, if any, do we have that are legitimately not dot.gov's? I want to start with that question, I'm going to build from there.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Are legitimately not dot.gov?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Yes.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Meaning that it's okay for them to be not dot.gov?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Yes. In your professional opinion as Commissioner -- I know, but he's saying that some of the ones that are dot.com's should have been dot.gov's. Which ones legitimately are not dot.gov's?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

The *suffolkbetterforbusiness* was registered through a third party and was originally managed through a third party as a dot.com.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So that's one.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

I would assume. I would -- I believe that's one.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

How many -- well, can you give me the hits on either per month, per day, per year basis on that website?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

The packet that I gave you I gave you a breakdown on the suffolkcountyny.gov.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I'm asking on the record --

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

I don't know.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Could you pull the number out for me? Because I was having trouble identifying those visits per website. Do you have it?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Yes, I will. I will get those for you. I don't have them in the packet that I gave you. The packet that --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. Okay, cause obviously advertising, you know, if you're getting a 1000 hits a year you're not going to get a lot of advertising dollars for that. You need to look at how many people are going, who's going, how long are they spending, why they're going. I mean, you have a lot -- there's a lot to it in terms of determining how much your ad space can sell for and who is going to actually buy that ad space.

So that would be important information before you go spend a lot of your time because you're paid and staff time, they're paid, at least we'd have a sense. Now, is that the only website because I've never been to suffolkbetterforbusiness.com. I've never been to that site. I don't know if anybody here has been to that site. I don't know when was the last time it was updated or maintained, what it's linked to, I have no idea.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

I think part of it what we have to keep in mind here is that a lot of things have changed over the last few years. A lot of these regulations if you look at them may have went in the early 2000's. A lot of things with the web have changed since then.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Sure. Very few people type in those web addresses.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Exactly.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

It's all HTML.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

When some of these things were registered they were registered because people felt they needed to know the name.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Right.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Nobody types in the name anymore. People do a search and they'll find it.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Right or it would be on another page that's linked over and click a button and they'll get there.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Correct. If the agency is a direct subordinate of the County, and I have this question in with the County Attorney, it should be a subgroup of suffolkcountyny.gov. So when we originally encountered this and saw suffolkcountyfilmcommission.com, this is an agency within suffolkcountyny.gov. Should be suffolkcountyny.gov/filmcommission.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Right, film commission. So, Don, you mentioned one site, suffolkbetterforbusiness.com; any others that are legitimately dot com's that we own or are we just talking about that one site?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

We're still going through them and that's the only one I can see so far.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

The only one you've identified so far. So we're spending a lot of time on potentially something that could bring in maybe nothing in terms of advertising revenue. It doesn't mean it's a bad idea, though I wonder how much time we should spend on it. Because I had brought to you some where I thought there might be real money, you know, and licensing of our, you know, our data we collect, real property data, we have application software developers, you know, a lot of people buy apps for their iPhones and people are, you know, looking for various things to get access to, you know, a lot of the data that we own and license and there might be a lot of money there. This might be some money, but there may be other areas and maybe you've had some time, you've been there a couple of months now to think about where the real money is, maybe this is where the real money is, I have a feeling if that's the only website we're not talking about much.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Quite honestly, we need to do this research. We need to identify these sites. We need to know where we should have them, shouldn't have them and we need to establish a policy going forward so that we can deal with it in the future.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. So let's -- if I can, I'll just ask, and I brought this up at the last few meetings you weren't here, so. Let's say we do have a site that is getting some activity where people are going to and it's basically paid for with taxpayer dollars, and now we're going to start selling advertising on it, I need to know how that advertising's going to present itself, is it in the way of the data, is it off to the side, what types of advertisers, are we going to be allowing advertisers for things that maybe this body would not support, whether it, you know, maybe it's these energy drinks or some other product that we have, you know, tried to reign in the usage of and now suddenly the use is being promoted on a taxpayer funded website.

You know, I would like to know if we are going to start selling it, what mechanisms we have in place to make sure that the advertising is appropriate. And also in terms of who gets it. So let's say there are a million hits on a site, how much are we going to charge and if there's only one little box that you're going to be able to advertise on, is it first come first serve? How do we determine who gets that choice little location there? You know, what I mean? They're taking advantage basically then of a taxpayer funded site that's producing a lot traffic and they get to position themselves on it. I want to know how we go about deciding who gets that little corner.

LEG. CILMI:

Through the Chair, if I may, just very quickly.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Yeah.

LEG. CILMI:

The fourth resolved clause, Legislator Schneiderman, reads: "Resolved, the Department of Information Technology shall submit the proposed sponsorship program rules and regulations to the County Legislature for approval prior to implementing same."

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I understand that, but I also think it's prudent to ask in advance or at least throw this idea out to the Commissioner who may be developing this plan that that is important, at least to me as a Legislator, particularly with taxpayer funded websites that we're not giving a, you know, an undue unfair advantage to any particular for-profit company.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

I agree. And, Legislator Cilmi, you are correct, that was one of the items that was charged to us within the resolution to come up with the particular guidelines for how we were going to determine this. The best answer I can give you right now is that is part of what we are considering. We have been out looking to see how various other entities have made these determinations. Ads have been known to move around on sites based upon what kind of revenue they do or don't generate. So you may be able to acquire what would be considered a, for lack of a better term, prime location, which may not be sustainable.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Yeah, if we have a prime location. Could you comment though on the other issue I brought up too in terms of other avenues within your Department whether you have any ideas particularly in terms of licensing data, that we maintain that certain, you know, individuals might be able to make money

or, you know, share money with the County through creating applications based on that data?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

I think the only thing I'd like to say right now is that we are looking at the County as a whole in terms of IT as to where we are spending money that we think we could perhaps spend less or do better. And as to -- based upon the environment that we currently have, what we can do to generate revenue, whether it be from other municipalities or from the private sector. So we're not at a place right now where we can say to you, yes, this is what we want to do, we are at a place where we are looking at those things because we do think the County has a wealth of data and a wealth of information. Right now, I'm trying to make sure that that data is what it needs to be.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

You know, clearly we need to protect anything that's confidential. But I know with real property data we already are licensing and allowing certain people in to see that, they pay a fee. There might be ways to generate revenue by, you know, through creating applications whether we do it or we work with software developers or they do it on their own and license data through us. I think there's money out there; I do. In that field.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

I agree. I think there is money out there.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Yeah, yeah. There was a, you know, one developer was -- I know had -- was working on an application that was tied in with GPS and, you know, could basically drive by a house and know what the last sale was, how much it sold for. That's data we keep, that's data we keep. So that's obviously valuable to anybody in the real estate business. Those types of applications is, you know, is a whole area where we can potentially make money on.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

We have extensive GIS data in this County and we need to utilize it.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Exactly. And we're the only ones who have it, I believe, that GIS system -- would that -- to tie it into our real property data.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Yes.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Commissioner, I mean, I don't want to just keep delaying and delaying this. I think it's -- it's in essence -- anything that could potentially make money is worth pursuing. You're the Commissioner, you're asking for some more time. Is that correct?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

That's correct.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

In two weeks what will you bring forward to us that's different than what we have today?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

I'd like to be able to bring forward a structure for the regulations that we would want to put in place in determining --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Well, that I don't need right away. Because, as Legislator Cilmi says, you're going to have to come back to us with the plan. I think what I, you know, I would like to know how many websites we're talking about and what the traffic on those websites are so we can have some estimate of what revenue.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

I can break those down for you by then.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

That would be -- that would be important. Before we go and task you with doing a lot of work in developing a plan, I think I'd like to -- you know, if you only project a thousand dollars let's say in advertising revenue based on what we've got and it's going to take you 50 hours to develop that plan, I think then this is probably not worth pursuing. So I'd rather see that personally first, how many websites we have that are legitimately dot com's, how much traffic we have on those. Is there anything else that we really need to have before we make a decision to roll forward?

LEG. CILMI:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Legislator -- are you done? Legislator Cilmi.

LEG. CILMI:

Yes, there is. You know what, if it's one website, Legislator Schneiderman, then in all likelihood, it's not going to make sense to do. But I would say, I would suggest that we need to be more aggressive than that. And I composed a list, and this is just my off the top of my head list that I threw together in all of about two minutes, I'm sure there's much more that could be done. But just for the record, where I would envision this being used in an expansive way, not just, you know, relegated to suffolkbetterforbusiness, but where I could see it being used is bus transportation, historic buildings and properties. Suffolk tourism, farms, wine country, parks, golf courses, and beaches. Adopt a highway program. You could have a page where those people who have adopted a highway in Suffolk County further promote their businesses by way of a web page that does that. Gabreski Airport, the arts. There are all kinds of companies whose endowment and individuals whose endowments support the arts. We could list all of the arts programs that we support through our -- through our -- the hotel/motel tax, for example, and allow companies to sponsor that page. Our health clinics. John J. Foley Skilled Nursing Facility, if that facility continues to be a County facility. That is just a handful, a dozen or so different suggestions on where something like this could be applicable. And there's probably dozens more.

So if the committee decides to --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So basically you're saying you could create new websites that could fall into this dot.com category.

LEG. CILMI:

I'm saying register new websites. You don't necessarily have to create new websites, but, you know what, you could get a kid out of Suffolk Community College, for that matter, and have them create these websites in all of about two hours. I mean, it's not -- it's not rocket science these days. The school, I'm sure, has a very robust computer science and web development program. So this is not difficult -- you don't have to pay somebody \$100,000 a year to do it. In fact -- in fact, that just gives me another idea of what a wonderful cooperative program this might be with Suffolk Community College.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I just, you know, Tom, and again, and I --

LEG. CILMI:

I mean we're all figuring out --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

There's lots of ways to get revenue.

LEG. CILMI:

-- looking for ways to prevent this when we should be looking for ways --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

You know, I know you've done some work with SCAT buses. We don't advertise on SCAT buses. They're all over the County. There's a good spot we potentially could get some money off of advertising on SCAT buses. There's tons of them out there. We advertise on Suffolk County regular buses, but we probably could up the advertising there too. There's a lot of places.

You know, I think you're thinking in the right way, in the right direction, but I don't think it's unreasonable to give the Commissioner also a little bit more time and let's keep the conversation going as to other ideas, other places we can advertise, because maybe there's some room in the parks or in concessions and places that we can -- bus stops, there are probably places where we could add advertising revenue too so.

LEG. CILMI:

Well, how long are we going to talk about this? I mean, the Department and the County -- the County Executive's Office has been supporting this for the past two committee cycles.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

And we've got one potential website, suffolkbetterforbusiness.com that nobody seems to have ever gone to.

LEG. CILMI:

Currently.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Right.

LEG. CILMI:

But that doesn't mean there has to be.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Right. So now you're talking about a whole new program.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Well, I -- again my suggestion would be to wait two weeks, we'll get -- we'll have two weeks for our legal Counsel to get more information from GSA and also Don Rodgers, you'll be able to give us more information on the sites available and the number of hits that they're getting. Again, we just want to get more information. It's moving along, Legislator Cilmi. This is -- it's a great -- again, it's a great idea.

I've said it probably --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Pass it, I don't care. Pass it. Pass it. All we know is we have one website that qualifies. Do you want to pass it, Tom?

LEG. CILMI:

I want to pass it, and I want our County government to be a little progressive and a little aggressive in terms of how we do things. We have to start thinking outside the box. And if we're going to confine ourselves to a structure that we currently have in place, then we're going to continue to run hundred of millions of dollars of deficits. If we want to do things differently then we'll be successful.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

You want to move it out of committee knowing there's only one website that might apply and not knowing the traffic on that website.

LEG. CILMI:

I want to move it out of committee and give the County Executive's Office an opportunity to develop a program that makes sense. That's all.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Fine. Go ahead. Close the vote on it.

MR. NOLAN:

What do you got?

MS. LOMORIELLO:

You have a motion, motion to table, lack of a second, and you have a motion to approve with a second.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I think the sponsor should wait, but go ahead.

MR. NOLAN:

Do we have a second on the tabling motion?

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

Okay. May I, Madam Chair, may I? All right. I'll second the motion to table with the understanding that this is all going to be wrapped up by -- in two weeks time, and we're going to then we'll be able to vote it. If the information that is before us today I will vote yes. So, I'm not sure of my colleagues, but, you know, that will give two weeks for all those issues that are going to be resolved, and then we're going -- I'm going to vote yes and the others can vote as they may. Motion to table and there's a second.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. Motion to table.

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

Two weeks. October 9th.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

All in favor? Opposed? This is for tabling.

LEG. CILMI:

Opposed.

LEG. MURATORE:

Opposed.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Abstain? Motion to approve. All in favor? Opposed? Opposed?

MS. LOMORIELLO:

I'm sorry, can you go over the motion to approve?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I'm going to make a motion to discharge without recommendation.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay, fine.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So I can vote on it.

MR. NOLAN:

You got a second?

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

All in favor to discharge without recommendation? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion passes.

DISCHARGED WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION (VOTE: 5-0-0-0)

LEG. CILMI:

If I may, Madam Chair. Commissioner, work fast. Come to our committee -- come to our general meeting on, is it Thursday, correct? So we have about a week-and-a-half or so. Put something good together.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

No. A week and two days.

LEG. CILMI:

All right. All right, just shy of a week-and-a-half. A week and two days.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

I'll be there.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Okay. Hopefully, again, we'll get more information and we'll see where this goes and hope it will go in good places.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Thank you.

INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Resolution 1869, Accepting and appropriating year three of a grant sub-award from Tidewater Community College for a Department of Health and Human Services Health Information Technology Project, 100% reimbursed by Federal funds at Suffolk County Community College. (Co. Exec.) All in favor?

MR. NOLAN:

Make a motion to place on consent calendar.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

I'll make a motion to approve and place on the consent calendar.

LEG. CILMI:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON ANKER:

Second. Okay. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion Passes. **APPROVED and PLACED on the CONSENT CALENDAR (VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

Okay. We have ***1878 - Appropriating funds in connection with Fiber Cabling Network and WAN Technology upgrades (CP 1726). (Co. Exec.)*** Make a motion, second by Legislator Horsley. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion passes. **APPROVED (VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

1879 - Appropriating funds in connection with the Suffolk County Disaster Recovery Project (CP 1729). (Co. Exec.) Same motion, same second, same vote. **APPROVED (VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

Okay. Are we done? We are adjourned.

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 2:25 P.M.

{ } DENOTES SPELLED PHONETICALLY