

**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 October 2, 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  
Renee Ortiz, Chief Deputy Clerk  
Don Rogers, Commissioner/Department of IT  
Dennis Brown, County Attorney's Office  
William Shilling, Aide to Leg. Anker  
Benny Pernice, Budget Review Office  
Kevin LaValle, Aide to Leg. Muratore  
Maria Barbara, Aide to Leg. Cilmi  
Ben Zwirn, County Attorney's Office  
Mike Pitcher, Aide to Presiding Officer  
Ali Nazir, Aide to Leg. Kennedy  
Ginny Booth, Suffolk Literacy  
Aldustus E. Jordan, Suffolk Literacy  
Susan Shiloni, Suffolk Literacy

**MINUTES TAKEN BY:**

Diana Flesher, Court Stenographer

**THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 1:04 PM**

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Will the Committee members of the Education & Information Technology Committee please come to the horseshoe.

Okay, we're going to begin our Committee meeting. Please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator Horsley.

**SALUTATION**

Please remain standing for a moment of prayer and meditation as we think of those across our seas in the military serving our country.

**MOMENT OF SILENCE OBSERVED**

Thank you. Do we have cards? No? No cards today. Okay.

**PRESENTATION**

We have a presentation this afternoon. Ginny Booth, she's the Executive Director of Literacy of Suffolk. Would you like to come up?

**MS. BOOTH:**

I have two colleagues with me.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Feel free to bring them.

**MS. BOOTH:**

Thank you very kindly. I'd like to introduce my colleagues: Susan Shiloni is the Director of Education and Program Services. Dr. Al Jordan is our Board President.

I'd like to start with the video.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

That would be fine.

**MS. BOOTH:**

I was told just push play.

**VIDEO PRESENTATION**

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Okay, thank you. That was a wonderful presentation. It was great meeting with you in my office to discuss this. You know, as Chair, working with education needs, it's surprising to hear there's so many incoming students that need remediation, that don't have the skill levels for basic college needs. Can you give us a little bit more information about your programs and what you have locally and what you have done here locally?

**MS. BOOTH:**

Well, I can tell you that we have about 400 tutors. We have about 500 students who are waiting to get help across the County. We have about 75 to a 100 active testers. And we have a staff of five.

We used to have a staff of 14. So it's a lot of work, but the need is there. And people continually knock on our doors. The -- during economic times that are difficult like now, we find that many of the basic literacy students are calling for the same reason. They want to get a job; they want to keep a job. So the work is there.

Fortunately August 6 Newsday did a wonderful cover story on literacy. And we benefited like you cannot believe. Within the first three days we had over 250 phone calls from people who wanted help. In the church sometimes they call it Call and Response. Newsday sent out a call and this community of Long Island in Suffolk County responded. We had 277 phone calls of people who wanted to become tutors and they are registered. And that was after the first week.

Newsday did an editorial. The following few days, I think it was a Thursday, once again it stimulated the community to help. Cablevision did an editorial, which further stimulated it. So we know that there are people who care.

But what I'm finding, and I was talking to my colleague earlier, I think that people take it for granted. They take being able to read and write and speak in English for granted. And that's what we're letting them know. Don't take it for granted. It's a gift.

In terms of the program, I'd like for Miss Shiloni to share a little bit about how we are held accountable for what we do.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

That would be great. Thank you.

**MS. SHILONI:**

Okay, I have to hold this one down (referring to the button on the microphone). Okay. I'm the Education and Program Services Director. And what we do is we train volunteer tutors to tutor our basic literacy students and our English language learners.

What I'm asking actually here to tell you is that we are held as accountable as all of the other adult education programs around New York State. Despite the fact that we are a volunteer organization, we have to meet the same benchmarks, meaning that we have to have a certain amount of students pre-tested, post-tested. They have to show a certain amount of gain. And our students meet with their tutors maybe two hours a week, whereas other programs are meeting six, nine, maybe twelve hours a week. But the standards are exactly the same.

We use all of the assessments that are mandated by New York State Ed. I have a little handout if everybody wants to look at it, about all the different assessments. This is the handout that goes to all of our new tutors. And basically we have to do what everybody else does, only we have to do it with volunteers. And that's the reason why we have, maybe, 70 trained tutors because they have to get to all 58 different libraries where our students meet. It's not like they're all congregated in one building. So we have to -- they're all over the place and they're putting the gas in their cars. Nobody's paying them for that and they are -- they just do a phenomenal job.

**MS. BOOTH:**

Any questions about the program? There's always, you know, different parts. There's the program, there's the nuts and the bolts of how we do it, the story of who the people are. And then there's another aspect to the organization. And that is how the Board and the volunteers help. And I've asked Dr. Jordan to say a few words about that.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Why don't we hear his presentation first. And then I have a number of questions that are sort of all over the map, so.

**DR. JORDAN:**

Well, good afternoon and thank you for inviting us. As Ginny said, I'm President of the Board. I've been involved with this organization for 12 years. I'm a person who basically grew up in a household with folks who were illiterate. Both my grandfathers could neither read nor write. They were English-speaking, born in the United States of America. But in a situation where coming from the South, they had to stop school because it was more important to work in the fields picking cotton, those kinds of activities, so they basically grew up in a world without being able to read or to write.

What I must tell you is they were very productive citizens. They always had jobs. And obviously they cared because a generation or two generations later, here I am. So in some respects it's a payback to them with my involvement.

Our Board is made up of regular folks, all of whom have a story with regard to literacy. We are and continue to be committed to the organization. We are keenly aware of the difficulties facing not-for-profits and in particular Literacy Suffolk, given the state of our economy across the board, given the fact that, as you saw on the pie chart, we rely on a lot of different funding sources to come together. And the fragileness of an organization like this means that all of them must come together at one time.

We're also keenly aware of the, you know, the generosity that our elected officials have been giving us over the years. And what we appreciate most is more than the fact that, you know, folks are putting us on their list of organizations that they want to help to fund. They're also committed to the task, which for us as Board members, we appreciate equally, because it means that we have commitments, not just financial, but we have commitments of the heart, which is what motivates most of us to be involved in this kind of work.

One of the things that we always say is that literacy has no face. You can't look at a person and know that they're illiterate. I think {Don Giopetta} who's in our video is a typical example. Don learned to read at 45-years-old. He was and is a successful business man. He was able to move through simply by being, my grandfather's words, very much aware of their shortcomings. My grandmother was always at my grandfather's side. I thought it was just pure love. It was love, but it was also the fact that she knew how to read. And so she always covered for him.

And these are the kinds of stories that we hear. These are the kind of things that we know. So, we are just hopeful that, you know, as you think about priorities, you know, given the long list of priorities that each of you have and the shortlist of funds, that you would keep Literacy Suffolk in mind, because we know that we are making a real impact in Suffolk County with the people that we serve. Thank you.

**MS. BOOTH:**

And I would hope that there would be an opportunity to show the video and make a short presentation to the general session. I think everybody could be tickled a little bit about this issue.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

I think that's a great idea. We'll look into that.

**MS. BOOTH:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

See if we can get you to a General Legislative meeting. I just wanted to add to that, the power of education creates success. And, you know, if you think -- what if the man that was in the video was able to read, how much more successful he would be. You know, again, it's such an important

topic to discuss and to create awareness about this. And you tutor privately? You -- is that how you go about tutoring?

**MS. BOOTH:**

One on one or in small groups in libraries. We have to do it in a public place. And the libraries are our best partners. They provide the space. The tutors know how to go about that. And we are housed in the Suffolk Cooperative Library System, which I think is a statement on its own. We've been with them since 1978. We were selected as the primary literacy provider for the County, libraries.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Wonderful. Legislator Cilmi has some questions.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Yes. Thank you. Thank you for being here. You know, one -- just a thought. I'm assuming this is the video that you just showed (referring)?

**MS. BOOTH:**

Yes.

**LEG. CILMI:**

So maybe -- maybe our IT people can put this on the County -- on the County Legislature's page -- web page. And then we can send an e-mail out with a link to every Legislator. And that would easily accomplish what you want to accomplish in terms of getting everybody to take a look at it, if we can't accommodate an actual, you know, a viewing in front of the full Legislature live. So, that's one idea. And certainly a compelling video.

This is an issue that's sort of near and dear to me. Every opportunity I have, I read to kids in support of all the -- there's a lot of, you know, literacy days and literacy months. The different organizations have their own. Rotary, for example, is one great example. And I belong to Rotary. So we do a lot for literacy. And it might be interesting actually to have you come to a meeting of the Islip Rotary club. I would love to facilitate that.

**MS. BOOTH:**

I would love it.

**LEG. CILMI:**

So, we'll talk about that afterwards. But I do have some questions with regard to not only the -- your program, but the issue in general. And I think it was -- one of the things that your video showed, which was profoundly remarkable, was the fact that 75% of unemployed individuals can't read. Is that what I --

**MS. BOOTH:**

Are non-readers, right.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Are non -- how do you define non-readers?

**MS. BOOTH:**

Low level reading.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay.

**MS. BOOTH:**

And the other thing that's important to know, it was in the video, 1 in 7 or 14 percent of Suffolk County residents are below basic reading levels.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Now, how do you -- give me the -- give me sort of a breakdown, to the extent that you can, of that population in terms of age, in terms of socioeconomic, however you can, if you can.

**MS. BOOTH:**

Well, for one thing, we deal only with adults. We do not --

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay.

**MS. BOOTH:**

-- deal with children. So, over 18. And they can range in age from 18, 20 to 80. I think our oldest might be about 80 some years old, someone who just decided to get help in the middle -- the end of their life or towards the end. Socioeconomic, I think, that's difficult to say. I mean, there are a lot of people who are below poverty level because being illiterate is a contributor to that.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Sure.

**MS. BOOTH:**

But there are people like {Don Giopetta}, who is not below the poverty level.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right.

**MS. BOOTH:**

Do you have any comments on this, AI?

**DR. JORDAN:**

Yes, I just want to comment, because sometimes, you know, as I alluded to when I talked, you know, folks -- specifically basic literacy students, you know, those for whom English is their primary language, they're very good at camouflaging, extremely. You know, you hear people say, you know, I'm at Med School at Stony Brook, and you can hear people say sometimes, "could you take a look at that? I left my glasses home." And I always -- that kind of does a little light bulb in my head, saying, okay now, let me make sure that I'm being very basic in what I say, not insultingly so, but at least a recognition that this is somebody who's probably -- you know, I was with -- one of the folks who works there, and he was having some issues. And I was talking to him. And I realized, it dawned on me, and I had known the guy for five or six years, that he could not read. I mean, he was having real problems.

So, you know, that's why I said, the face of literacy, and that's what makes it, you know, so difficult is, you know, you don't -- you can't look at a person and say, "oh, that person can't read." Like I said, there are clues sometimes. There are other things. There are things that people say, "well, let me take this home because I want to take a more careful look at it." Well, sometimes that may be true, but other times maybe they be going to having their grandchildren read it to them or their -- you know, their spouses or siblings or whatever.

So, you know, very difficult. But the one thing, I think, we can say is, I mean with that number of the 75% having difficulties with employment, while that is not totally definitive of the population, it does say something about, you know, people's ability to have upward mobility if they have low

literacy.

**MS. BOOTH:**

And they're very creative. When he was talking about the -- losing the glasses, we had a student who spoke very well, basic literacy. And every time she would go for a job interview, she would wrap her arm up with a bandage in a sling. And so when they would ask her to fill out an application, "this is the hand that I write with. Could you take down the information?" I mean very creative.

**MS. SHILONI:**

To put the reading in perspective of what literacy -- what a functional illiterate person is, we only tutor students up to a sixth grade reading level. So that means that they're all below sixth grade. And if you know anything about reading, children learn to read for four years. From first grade to fourth grade, they're learning to read. And then they read to learn. So these people are still learning how to read. They're barely learning anything by reading. So they're quite low readers.

**LEG. CILMI:**

You know, I view -- I view education as one of the greatest challenges of our time. It impacts the economy. It impacts our national security. It impacts, you know, the ability for us to sustain ourselves as a free country into the future; so many things. So, the fact that there are so many people who have -- in our country who are functional illiterate is, you know, a huge concern.

It seems to me that given the unemployment component, or the employment component, let's say, that New York State should think about, you know, some changes to their unemployment program such that reading becomes a component to the -- to the benefit -- the unemployment benefit, if you will. Right? So that, you know, we're giving people money, you know, now for 99 weeks or whatever it is in an effort to sustain them while they're looking for a job. But if we're not helping them, you know, with the skills necessary to get a job, then we're basically just, you know -- after those 99 weeks, then what?

So -- and I know we have -- we have job counseling and things like that that are available to folks. I'm not sure how big of a component to all of that, though, reading and education is. And I've always said that I believe that -- that we should require education as part of the unemployment picture. So, if we're going, you know, give somebody unemployment money, that we should -- rather than just give it to them, that we should somehow require education as a part of their, sort of, return on the investment. And reading would be a big part of that. I don't know.

**MS. BOOTH:**

The workforce -- workforce investment, as well as education, are two big things that are coming down from the Feds. So that is a possibility. And certainly it's something that we could explore locally. But one of the things that I think is really important, and this is why I was so eager to get to this body, with the speakers of other languages, they don't have the same level of shame. If anything, this is an advantage. They're improving themselves. But for people who are born and bred here, who are illiterate, they can speak the King's English, but they can't read or write. They're ashamed. And we're doing everything humanly possible to remove that barrier to literacy and learning, which is shame. And if you think about it, with cancer years ago, people used to whisper *so and so has the big "C"*. People were embarrassed. And that way they didn't get help.

Then there was the big "A". I think it was the big "A" and that was AIDS. Nobody wanted to talk about it. And then once people started talking about it and removing some of that shame, more people were able to get help. And I think that this is the big "L" or the big "I". The big "IL". And we need to do something to change that. And we need your help to help people move from that place of shame and take advantage of the help that's there.

**LEG. CILMI:**

So, let's just talk briefly about the program itself. You said there are 500 people that are on your waiting list?

**MS. BOOTH:**

About 500. And that number fluctuates.

**LEG. CILMI:**

And that's with how many volunteers that you currently have that are --

**MS. BOOTH:**

About 400.

**LEG. CILMI:**

So what's the commitment for a volunteer?

**MS. BOOTH:**

One year, two hours per week after a training. It's a 12-hour training. And as a result of that Newsday article, we had to scurry very quickly to get more workshops posted because so many people were unaware of the problem and wanted to participate.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Is the -- so the training may be a barrier of sorts to getting more volunteers given the time, you know, it may be.

**MS. BOOTH:**

Well, they have to be trained.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Obviously.

**MS. BOOTH:**

Yes.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Is there anything that we can help you with or that your organization has done to put that training on line to make it easier, more convenient for people?

**MS. BOOTH:**

We have a website.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay.

**MS. BOOTH:**

And that's [WWWliteracysuffolk.org](http://WWWliteracysuffolk.org). On our end we try to work with some of the libraries to have it posted, you know, links on theirs. And it would be great if we could have a link here, too.

**LEG. CILMI:**

So can somebody who wants to volunteer get trained from that website?

**MS. BOOTH:**

No. They would pick up -- they would be able to download an application and send it into us.

**LEG. CILMI:**

So my point is, if you could put the actual training onto the website --

**MS. BOOTH:**

No.

**LEG. CILMI:**

-- it would probably help you, you know, with some resources, save some resources.

**MS. BOOTH:**

We've tried that.

**LEG. CILMI:**

A-huh.

**MS. BOOTH:**

And we find that it's important for -- because you're dealing with human beings, you're dealing with people. It's important to have that face time and online training. For something like this, it doesn't work as well. You know, you need that face time.

The thing that I'm concerned about is I would like to see more attention sent out to the potential student and help them to remove the shame so that they will call and get help; either with us or some other program. We've got to remove that shame.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right. But if you have a waiting list of 500 people, you know, and I would certainly agree with you that you have to remove the stigma from -- and encourage more people who are illiterate to, you know, try and take advantage of your program. But if you don't have the resources to, you know, to accommodate those folks, then, you know, you may -- this may be a situation where you get one bite at the apple. Somebody may get over that shame for just enough time to make that phone call. And if they make that phone call to you, and they're met with "I'm sorry, we have to put you a waiting list." It can take as long as three months, a year, whatever the time is, you may have missed that opportunity and that person may never come back again. So, you know, I would say that somehow we have to find ways of increasing the capacity before we talk about, you know, increasing the demand. Just my opinion. Anyway, thank you for your presentation.

**DR. JORDAN:**

I just want to --

**LEG. CILMI:**

Sure.

**DR. JORDAN:**

-- comment on something you said earlier. And how much I appreciate your connecting dots with respect to, you know, linking with the employment issue because, you know, when you look at the literature and you look at, say, people who are incarcerated, you find a high number of folks who are incarcerated who have low literacy skills.

Another hook is in the healthcare system. It's something called Health Literacy. If health personnel are not explaining things in plain language, and, you know, we've all been in situations in the medical office where we hear things and we go like this (indicating a puzzled expression) and we walk out and we have no clue -- so that's another thing. I forget. It's something in the neighborhood of about \$800 million I'm hearing. Don't quote me on that. But it's huge. That's lost. Money just wasted in the healthcare system because folks are not compliant -- they're not

compliant because they're not good patients. They're not compliant because they don't understand what it is they're expected to do. So, all of these tentacles go out into many different aspects in what we do and how we do it, and have implications for saving money. So, you know, small investments can save a lot of money. So, I appreciate you sort of stepping on those stones.

**LEG. CILMI:**

You know, here's another question: So we -- I'm not sure what our jail population is in Suffolk County's jails. But, you know, I'm sure that part of that population is literate. I'm sure that a large part is probably not. It would be really interesting to have the inmates who are literate trained as part of their, you know, program, let's say, to help those who are not. And so you may be, in doing that, you're building two people's lives. Because you're building the literate person's life, certainly it's got to be incredibly rewarding. I know it's rewarding for me just when I read to kids. So, it would be rewarding for that individual who is the trainer -- trainer. And you may -- you may be inspiring that person towards, you know, some sort of -- you know, post-incarceration, you know, goals. And obviously it would be helpful to the ones who are being trained as well. Just an interesting idea. I don't know if you've explored that or maybe, you know --

**MS. BOOTH:**

It is happening across the country in different communities. And it -- like you said, it's two people who are being helped. The person who is providing the tutoring is also gaining something and feeling more confident. And then there are two more people who can go out and have skills that can provide better jobs. That would be wonderful. Maybe it's a conversation with the Sheriff's Department.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Yeah, and I think that would be a very good conversation to have with the Sheriff's Department. And I'm sure they'd be willing to have -- they'd be willing to have it.

**MS. BOOTH:**

Well, we're open. And I thank you for taking the time to listen to us. And I hope that the video will stay in your spirit. And as you move about, you might recognize there's an opportunity to help someone. Thank you.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Thank you, Ginny. Thank you. Are there any more questions? Thank you so much and we really appreciate you coming out here.

**MS. BOOTH:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

And I'm sure that we can continue this conversation. I know -- I've met with North Shore Youth Council Janine Gentile and Kristin McKay. They're working on recidivism issue they have with the jail. And they're, you know, trying to keep the youth from turning to jail. And, this again, like Legislator Cilmi had suggested, would be a wonderful implementation of this program within the County Jails. So we will definitely be speaking more on this.

**MS. BOOTH:**

May I just say one more -- just one little thing. When people think of literacy, they immediately go to helping the children in school. And I agree. I mean, I'm a mom. I'm a grandmother. I'm -- my heart is there, too. But think about it. When these children go home to illiterate homes where there are no books, there are no magazines, all of the help that happens during the day is almost lost when they go home and they only speak in Spanish or they only speak in Chinese. And

there are no books and nobody's reading. So just remember, you know -- because people always think about the children. And I do, too.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

But I think on -- yeah.

**MS. BOOTH:**

But you gotta really help the children by helping the parents.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Absolutely. And I know with new technology -- and without that, you know, books aren't used as much as they were. And I'm waiting for the time when an iPad becomes -- replaces the book. But words again -- words are creative and they're needed for communication, both analytically and communicably. And we need to make sure that is never lost within our -- you know, within humanity because it really -- you know, we're seeing what happens when people become -- when they don't have that quality, and shame happens, and then they completely walk away from it. But you're the saving grace, your organization. And I do thank you for coming here. Legislator Cilmi.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Yeah, let me just -- if I can remember now what I was going to say -- the problem itself, what percentage of it is, do you think, is caused by actual medical issues?

**MS. BOOTH:**

Like dyslexia?

**LEG. CILMI:**

Dyslexia. You know, I'm sure part of it is relative to, you know, situations in people's home and whatnot. And then I'm sure part of it is just an overall lack of interest. Can you give us any idea?

**MS. BOOTH:**

I think there are many reasons. Some people like to blame the schools. The fact is it happens. People fall into gaps. Dr. Jordan, do you have any thoughts on that?

**LEG. CILMI:**

Yeah, I'm just thinking about, you know, kids -- kids here are, you know, for the most part, going to school.

**MS. BOOTH:**

Yeah.

**LEG. CILMI:**

So you would expect that those kids would learn how to read and write. But I'm sure there are some that -- that -- it's -- they can't for whatever reason, so.

**MS. BOOTH:**

Could be distraction.

**DR. JORDAN:**

Yeah. I mean, I think, you know, as Ginny said, there are a lot of different reasons. I mean, some of it may be related to, you know, things like dyslexia. Some of it may be related to, as you said, just a lack of interest. I think of the story Don -- {Talis Don} was an excellent baseball player who kind of got moved through the system, okay, because of athletic prowess. That happens a lot. Some of it maybe, you know, just within the home itself. I mean, you know it's -- I mean I know of a school -- I won't name it -- but I know of a school in Suffolk County -- an elementary school that

has no library. No library. Okay? So how do those youngsters -- I mean how are they ever going to be on a level playing field? So, I mean -- so, you know, there are a range of different things. And, you know, I think that, you know, we could, you know, have a major discussion on disparities, but I know that's not what we're here to do.

But I think, you know, the trails lead. As I said, with my grandfathers, it was circumstance. They happened to be raised in the South. They happened to be sons of sharecroppers. They happened to have dropped out of school and worked in the fields. These were intelligent men. They could not read and they could not write. So I think that, you know -- we basically take all comers, you know. And, you know, I mean if there's a discovery of something that we know we're not equipped to handle, we will make referrals. But, you know, I think it's maybe safe to say that most folks who are coming to us are people that sort of learn later in life, that they simply can't make it without being able to read. I mean, they've either gotten blocked in a job or they've had an embarrassing moment or, you know, some people just say "you know what? I just want to be able to read to my grandchildren."

One of the things we do is, because these are adults, they pick and choose what they want to learn and why they want to learn it. So it may be something as simple as, you know, *I got four grandchildren. I want to be able to read to them.* Or, you know, *I just want to be able to negotiate the mall because all this stuff -- all that written stuff makes no sense to me.* So, it comes out of little things like that that motivates people. And, you know, like you said, everybody comes through the door, you know, we can help. We try to give them a shot. And fortunately our data lets us know that we're making a difference, that we are moving people from one level of reading to the next. And, you know, there are a number of -- a lot of success stories. We even have one student who's written a book. So -- but, you know, so it's all over the map. And I think that's part of the difficulty. It's all over the map.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

And, again, I think -- you mentioned the key word "motivation." Motivation is so important whether it's for a, you know, two or three-year-old or a five-year-old or an 85-year-old person. They need something. And if there's anything we can do as a County to help motivate, I think, create awareness -- I know, Legislator Cilmi, that's a great idea, maybe introducing your program into our jail system, you know, and again I do know working with the Community College, there are issues. Young kids coming in that need -- need help. And, you know, they don't meet the line there. But, thank you again for coming and we really appreciate it. So take care.

**MS. BOOTH:**

I wish you a literate day.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Ah, thank you. You, too.

**INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS**

We're going to continue. I see there are no Tabled Resolutions. We're going to move onto Introductory Resolutions.

We have **IR 1904, Appropriating funds in connection with the acquisition and implementation of a County Attorney Case Management System, CP 1811 (Co. Exec.)** I'd like to bring up Don Rogers and the County Attorney to discuss this. We have Dennis Brown, County Attorney.

**MR. BROWN:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. It's Dennis Brown from the County Attorney's Office as opposed to

Dennis Cohen from the County Attorney's Office.

(LAUGHTER)

**MR. BROWN:**

That's good, I got a laugh. He complained he didn't get one.

But in any event, from our perspective the bill is one of the most important you can consider all year. Right now we're working off a system -- a database from Oracle that probably dates back to the '70's and we do not really have an efficient way of tracking information except by doing it through various types of program. We do it through Oracle. We manually create charts and tracking sheets in either Word or we do it with Microsoft Office as well. You're smiling, so I see I should stop right here.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

I remember we were working on the Health Permit process and it was -- it was astounding to find out --

**MR. BROWN:**

Antiquated.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

-- well, antiquated. But to know that they're using a Fische or a Fish, you know. When I was -- as a bank teller --

**MR. BROWN:**

Right.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

-- over 20 years ago --

**MR. BROWN:**

Right.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

-- we were using that.

**MR. BROWN:**

Right.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Okay, so tell us more.

**MR. BROWN:**

So, you know, you've touched on some of the things that we're looking for. So when -- and I was private practice before I came to the County Attorney's Office. So I've had some experience in using it, you know, an efficient case management system. And so it'd be great if we can log on the computer in the morning, keep it on all day where we don't necessarily get bumped off of it. And either through any -- through -- through clearly any number of the multiple fields, we would be able to access data and it would all be accessible in one point.

We'd be able to do it by contact; we'd be able to do it by file number; we'd be able to do it by e-mails or word documents. And if all of those were accessible in one case management system, we would be much more efficient and -- much more efficient in tracking what gets done and where

anything is at any particular time, which would be great, because we do get status inquiries from the Legislators, from the Countywide elected officials and from the Departments as well. And we would be able to, like any efficiently run operation that you call to and you expect to get some information when you talk to people on the telephone, is you look at the screen and you can give that information right away instead of always having to tell the person *we'll get back to you*. And then it takes two or three people, you know, for over seven minutes or even longer sometimes to pull together information from different sources. So, it would be really great if we could have a case management system.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Okay. Now would this help the actual County Court system by having this information available?

**MR. BROWN:**

It -- possibly it could. Now, we're not affiliated with the court system but possibly that it could because of General Litigation Bureaus and because of the Tort Bureau, as well as the Family Court Bureau, that information in dealing with the courts would be more efficiently accessible as well.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Do you happen to know how their system -- is their system -- I'm assuming it probably needs a little improvement, but -- because you set -- would you be able to set an example for their system?

**MR. BROWN:**

I can't say that except that we would like to.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Okay. Thank you. Commissioner Rogers, would you like to speak on this?

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

The only thing I have to add is I've been to the County Attorney's Office. They are in desperate need of automation. And as part of our plans going forward, we are looking to create a collaborative environment. So, I'm happy to be here today with the County Attorney's Office to talk about how are we going to work to actually define what kind of case management system's going to work best for them and where we might be able to utilize the technology further in the County.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Legislator Cilmi.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Yes, thanks. This -- this is -- this appropriates how much money?

**MR. BROWN:**

It's \$175,000 for the planning and software stage. And I think it's 425 or 450 on the hardware stage.

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

I think it's 425 total.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

I have 425.

**MR. BROWN:**

I'm sorry. 425 total. 425 total.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay, so nearly a half million dollars. I completely appreciate the need for a case management system, but you must do a better job of convincing me that we should spend a half a million dollars on such a system. Our own employees did a splendid job of what I thought was a fairly complex task of automating our -- and they're continuing to do it, they build on it everyday, our permit system. And, you know, I know we have a fairly robust IT staff that's not only located in IT but throughout the County.

So, my question is, you know, in the context of that, what justifies spending, you know, more than \$400,000 on this system? Is it just computer equipment or is it software or -- how much of it's software, how much of it's consultation, how much of it's equipment? If you could elaborate on those questions.

**MR. BROWN:**

I can a little bit. And I'll let the Commissioner do that after I speak as well. But in the Law Department, we do have attorneys of -- we have approximately 60 attorneys and a support staff as well. So, we have to have enough licenses for it to be accessed by everybody. And we also would have to make sure that the data that we do have, they could be migrated from existing programs and existing applications to new software. It would be great to migrate as much as possible so that we don't have -- so we don't have parallel systems.

I also know that what we do envision is doing an RFP for -- seeking a consultant to work with IT on either developing it inhouse and/or seeking vendors as well to see what's out there and what's available as an off-the-shelf case management program. The amount that's in the Capital Program, I know, is \$425,000, but that doesn't necessarily mean that we would spend the full \$425 on the program.

**LEG. CILMI:**

So, in addition to the \$425,000, you're expecting to go out with an RFP for a consultant to tell us what sort of program to --

**MR. BROWN:**

No, not -- no, not -- not a consultant to tell us what we need, but if a consultant was needed to help develop applications internally, as opposed to using a vendor who would give us an off-the-shelf product. But I would love -- I would love to -- I was talking to the Commissioner outside about -- about what we would be seeking, an RFP, and I'll let him elaborate on it a little bit with respect to the consultants.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Yeah, somebody needs to tell me what we're spending more than \$400,000 on here.

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

We haven't decided or we don't know to what extent we would need all of this funding. A decision needs to be made as to what avenue we will follow. I'm not prone to just arbitrarily say we're going to go out and purchase a system, all right? We do have a significant base installed at the County Attorney's Office. We are going to have to invest in the conversion of that data from the Oracle environment to a SQL platform. That's a given. We expect to work with the County Attorney's Office to assess the entire situation and make a determination are we better served with a off-the-shelf product that's going to service them? Or can we look to develop this inhouse or in collaboration with staff that we would bring in for the short term to work on the project.

I appreciate your compliment on the portal for permits. And I think the staff did a wonderful job on that. This is extent -- quite more extensive than that system. It really is. And so consequently we really need to take a look at what's the level of effort that is required to absolutely develop this.

**LEG. CILMI:**

You know, I would make two comments. I understand that maybe what the Department's vision is for a system may be complex. But you'd have to do more to convince me that it's quite a bit more complex than what you've done with that portal system. And I'd want to know exactly what -- you know, the system's going to do for us short of, you know, brush our teeth for us, that we're spending all this money.

Further, it really concerns me that we're talking about appropriating money that you don't exactly know how you're going to use or if you're going to use. I would suggest that it may be more appropriate for you to figure that out first given our fiscal condition and then come back to us and ask us to appropriate the appropriate amount of money.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Let me interject just quickly. I'm assuming that you have a ballpark of what this process or system will cost. Is that what you're asking, Legislator Cilmi? That you're uncomfortable because there's no specific information or detailed information? Where would you come up with this figure?

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

The current -- there is a current system being implemented at the District Attorney's Office, which there had been discussions, could serve as an appropriate crossover to the County Attorney. That system has a current price tag of about a million dollars on it. We are in discussions with that vendor, but I am not at this time prone to make a commitment that says we want to implement that system. Only because I haven't finished assessing the actual benefits that may or may not come to us from the District Attorney's system. The amount that was currently being requested was developed based upon the potential to implement the crossover from there. But I can assure you the complexity of a case management system for the legal office is not a small one.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Explain it. What would it do? What makes it so complex?

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

Well, you have -- you have input from any number of areas here, as Mr. Brown indicated, with regard to an interface to e-mail, an interface to Word Processing, an interface through development of the actual database tables themselves and management of staff and interaction with all communications that come in and out of the office.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I mean with all due respect, that doesn't sound all that complicated. I mean, it sounds like something that you could accomplish using a Microsoft suite of products.

**MR. BROWN:**

In fact, if I may comment on that, through the Chair and with respect to Commissioner Rogers, we have a Microsoft suite of products. And the Microsoft -- Microsoft Office Suite does not accommodate our needs. We use Microsoft Office, for example, because it has notes, because it has a calendar and because it has -- it has e-mail. But those -- but none of those functions really simultaneously -- really interface seamlessly with respect to gathering all the information in one place. And it's not easily -- or it's not user friendly with respect to tracking data.

If I may, when I was -- when I was in private practice, to give you an example of what -- of what we envision and what an efficient case management system would do is when you go to implement data -- and before I even touch on that, you have to understand that we have a Family Court Division, a Torts Division, a Real Estate Division, a Municipal Law Bureau and a General Litigation Bureau and a Human Rights Division. So you have many different needs that have to be met by many different departments. And the system would be -- has to be accessible at all times during

the workday by all the different -- all the different departments.

Now so what do -- so what would we expect to see when we open up a -- the screen? The screen would contain -- would contain -- would contain an image of the case or the information that's needed for particular matter. I don't want to call it a case, but let's call it a matter. Because there are cases in Torts, but Real Estate has matters, Municipal Law has matters. There are cases in General Litigation but Human Rights doesn't have cases like the litigation divisions. So there would be information that would go into these various fields. And because of the diverse needs of the Department, the fields would all have to be modifiable by the users at the time that information is inputted. But it would -- it would have all of the contact information for all the people. And it should be able to import that contact information, that once that information is all imported, let's say, in a contact application, then when we go to put in the matter, we should be able to import into the matter all of the contact information that we have. All should be -- so that we don't have to do separate entries every time we put a matter in, that whenever we establish databases with information, that information can be imported to a particular matter.

And the matter card, for example, the matter file, should be able to show e-mails. It should be able to interface with e-mails and it should be able to interface with Microsoft Word. And it also should be able to interface with time tracking as well. Because we do do time tracking because sometimes we get reimbursements through grants. It helps offset some of our costs. So all these different functions that you would expect in a law office, from telephone messages to e-mails to faxes to case history, notes, data, contact information, all of that should be able to be brought together and easily accessible and usable by all of the people in the Law Department simultaneously as well as the field where all the information's going to go to be -- to be modifiable as well.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I would just say -- I would just say three quick things: Number one, just intuitively it seems to me that we can do what you're describing for a lot less money than -- than what we're proposing here. Number two, the fact that, you know, you're asking us to appropriate money for something that you're unsure of is a tremendous concern given our fiscal situation, given the amount of money. And three, we all know that -- you know, vendors tend to look at government as sometimes as a -- as a -- you know, a flush entity with money. And so they take advantage sometimes of that. And it seems to me that that may be what's going on here. Again, we can have a conversation afterwards about it, whether this passes or not, I don't know. But for the time being I'm uncomfortable with it. I'll make a motion to table.

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

If I can respond to that?

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Please do.

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

I think the fact that I'm sitting here with the County Attorney's Office speaks to the issue that we are looking at, is this an appropriate expense? And it's not a case of business as usual where we have a vendor that says "I've just implemented a system for twice this amount of money. And if you guys want to come along for half the price, I'm willing to implement in another department." We're not doing that. And to go back to what I said earlier, this is a complex application; to be able to synchronize all this data and ensure the security of it and who has access to it and the availability of it is a significant effort.

**LEG. CILMI:**

How much are we paying our IT staff these days total? What's your budget?

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

Department of IT?

**LEG. CILMI:**

Yeah.

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

The current salaries for the Department of IT are about four million.

**LEG. CILMI:**

\$4 million.

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

Correct. That's not for all IT staff throughout the County.

**LEG. CILMI:**

That's just in IT?

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

That's central IT only.

**LEG. CILMI:**

When you add the IT staff throughout the County, what does it come to roughly?

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

I believe it's about 14.

**LEG. CILMI:**

\$14 million?

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

Yes.

**LEG. CILMI:**

If we can't find in \$14 million of salaries the ability to do what you're describing and what would suffice, let's say -- we all have wants, let's face it. There are things that we want. There are things that we need. And there are things that we have to live with. If you can't within \$14 million find, you know, somebody or some group of individuals who are capable of accomplishing what you're suggesting you need to have accomplished within our own staff, wow, we have a big problem.

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

That's a discussion I'll be happy to have with you at another time.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Again, if you could tell me what we're actually paying for here, you know, you might be able to convince me. But you still can't really -- you're telling me that -- and I appreciate that you're involved, Commissioner, because I would expect that you're involved. But just because you're involved doesn't mean that, you know, we should sign a check for \$450,000 and say, you know, "God bless you, good luck," you know.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

I just wanted to mention, too, that \$14 million, that's salaries? That's salaries?

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

Salaries.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Okay. So you're talking about, you know, physical, tangible software, hardware programs. That's a completely different, you know, animal to consider.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Not necessarily. I still haven't heard an answer as to how much of this is hardware-related and how much of it is software related. If it's predominantly software-related, that's that physical, tangible. That's intellectual property. And if we have \$14 million of intellectual property in this County that can't accomplish this task, I'm telling you we have a significant problem.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Yeah, but I think software -- I consider that to be tangible. That's not people, you know, working. But I just want to ask you a question now. Again, you know, we have a concern about the financial implications of this project. The hours -- the man or woman hours saved with this type of project, what would that involve?

**MR. BROWN:**

To quantify it? I can't -- I cannot -- I can't answer that question, nor do we quantify -- how we would quantify it. But I can tell you is that the office -- my Bureau, the Municipal Law Bureau, would clearly act more efficiently. And the best thing that I can do is tell you what I do with respect to keeping track of assignments as a way to illustrate. So we might get a request for assignment from the Legislature or from the County Executive or the Comptroller or some other elected official. We would get requests for assignments from the department heads; even internally we'll generate our own assignments because questions come up. We use -- in our Bureau we use a -- multiple redundant systems just to keep track of something because we don't have a centralized way of doing it.

So if -- so if I'm working on assignments that were generated by the County Attorney, I keep a chart that's been generated in Word about the assignments that are pending. And periodically I'll pull those -- I'll have my secretary pull those assign -- pull those charts -- I'll have my secretary pull those charts and go over them. There are -- and -- they might be work assignments. They might be work assignments that we'll keep on those charts, but then we have contracts or agreements or leases that go into Oracle. And if we want to review that, that has to be -- and if we want to review that -- and if we want to review that, then I would ask my secretary to generate that separate and independent from different types of work assignments that we're reviewing. And I'll have to review those individually as well.

I could have -- a question could come in about the status of assignment. I'd have to find out -- I'd have to go back through records, through different sources -- I'll actually ask my secretary to do it so I don't have to take the time out to do it, when did it come in, who's doing it. And then I'll have to go and talk to that person instead of me or some other person in the Bureau to be able to go on line and look at that particular -- and look up that particular question without having to go through multiple sources and actually either maybe physically leaving my seat or getting on the telephone to find out what the status of something is when I could actually go on line and look it up.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Right. And, again, my concern is if we don't move forward with new technology, I have security concerns. I mean, anyone can go into a file and pull something out where when it's within a computer system or advanced computer system, it is much more secure, especially dealing with lawyers, paralegals, administrative staff. And we're talking about how many cases within Suffolk County? I'm assuming thousands of cases.

**MR. BROWN:**

In the Municipal Law Bureau, for example, we handle in excess of 500 just work assignments. We handle in excess of 2000 contracts a year. There are -- you know, there are many, many, many hundreds of cases that are handled in the Litigation Bureau. Probably -- I'm sure in the Family Court Bureau, I'm sure it's in the thousands every year.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Okay. Legislator Muratore, do you have a question?

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Yes, thank you. So this is going to increase productivity?

**MR. BROWN:**

Yes.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

We'll do more --

**MR. BROWN:**

Yes.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

-- with less?

**MR. BROWN:**

Do more with less, do more with a system that at least is up-to-date instead of -- when I was in private practice in the small office, in a two-man office, we had a better case management system than we do in the Law Department.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

So we can maybe lay off a few people and save some money to pay for this?

**MR. BROWN:**

I wouldn't agree with that, Legislator Muratore.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Well, you just said it's going to increase productivity and --

**MR. BROWN:**

But we would be able to -- it definitely would make our office more efficient.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Well, I'd have to agree with Legislator Cilmi. I mean, I think we need to know what we're getting here; you know, what's hard and what's soft, what product are we getting? And maybe we can buy someplace else. And maybe the Commissioner's people can install it for us. Isn't that the way it works? I'm really not that computer literate but --

**MR. BROWN:**

But actually -- and I was going to address that with Legislator Cilmi, there's not a doubt in my mind that the people in IT could develop a product. But it also might be simpler, cheaper and more efficient to go out and buy something that's off-the-shelf with respect to a case management system. I know it because I've seen it and I've worked with them myself.

**LEG. CILMI:**

If I may through the Chair? I don't know if you're done, Legislator?

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Legislator Cilmi.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Just to redress, you said we might be able to go out and find something off-the-shelf that's less expensive. Okay, well, then go out and find it and then come back to us and ask us for whatever the cost is. I just -- when we're spending \$14 million on IT staff in this County and -- listen, I'm not debating that you -- that you need to update your system. Anything that, you know, was utilized from 1970 in the IT field surely needs to be updated. I'm just -- I'm just concerned about how we're going to go about doing it. And you haven't really answered my questions nor have you said how we're going to spend this 400 and -- whatever, \$50,000. And I still am not convinced that we don't -- with \$14 million of intellectual capital and the IT realm in this County, we don't have the resources inhouse to be able to do this.

The Chairman -- the Chairwoman, you know, brings up, you know, important points about security and about hardware and -- but we don't know how much of this goes to security, how much of it goes to hardware, how much of it goes to software. You just don't know what it is even. You're asking us to appropriate money that you don't really know how you're going to spend.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Well, I tend to disagree, only because they've given us their concerns. It's in the resolution of what they're going to do with the funds. We -- you know, we have an idea. If we want to micro --

**LEG. CILMI:**

They've shared a vision with us.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

If you want to micromanage the IT Department, you know, that's something -- but, again, and I think it's an important step that we take. Legislator --

**LEG. CILMI:**

Madam Chair, with all due respect I'm not suggesting that we micromanage the IT Department or the County Attorney's Department. All I'm suggesting to you that they've laid out for us a vision of where they want to take the Department of Law with a new IT system. And that vision sounds reasonable to me; it sound valuable to me. But they haven't laid out how they're going to do it. They're asking us to appropriate half a million dollars for that purpose. And I just -- I can't see in our fiscal condition or any fiscal condition for that matter --

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Okay. Dennis, I think, wants to answer your question.

**MR. BROWN:**

With all due respect, Legislator Cilmi, and I do have a great deal of respect for you, and this was a program that was approved in the Capital Budget so the Legislature did adopt it. And, you know, we come forward with the request for this appropriation. And, again, with all due respect, appropriations are directly approved by the individual committees and by the General Legislature without knowing the exact details of every single penny that's going to be spent in the project and without knowing whether or not all of the money will be exhausted in a particular Capital Project. Every year we go through legislation where Capital Projects are closed out because not all of the money has been spent in the Capital Project. And why was this any different? Again, with all due respect, but it is -- it is our Department. And it'd be great if we could have a case management

system.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I have equal respect for you.

**MR. BROWN:**

Thank you.

**LEG. CILMI:**

This is certainly not personal in any way. But I'm not asking you for a penny-by-penny accounting of where you're going to spend \$450,000. What I'm asking you for is a rough idea. All you're giving me still is a vision. You say you need the money, but you haven't really explained -- you've explained why you need the money, but you haven't explained how you're going to spend the money.

**MR. BROWN:**

But do you do an RFP without the money available? Do we do that first before the money is appropriated to spend it? Why would a vendor respond to an RFP if the County doesn't even have -- hasn't even appropriated the money for a project?

**LEG. CILMI:**

Because we have a Capital Project in place that's in a Capital Budget that's been approved. And every time we look at that Capital Budget, we are reminded time and again that we're just approving a plan. This is just a plan. Each of the projects is going to come back to us for approval. Well, you know what? This is back to us for approval and, you know, I need some more specifics on how we're going to spend the money.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Okay, Legislator Cilmi, I think you made your point. Legislator Horsley has a question for you.

**LEG. HORSLEY:**

Yeah, I have a great deal of respect for both you guys.

**MR. BROWN:**

Thank you.

**(LAUGHTER)**

**LEG. HORSLEY:**

And respectfully mentioned, I'd just like to -- Tom, why don't you do this? Why don't -- you know, we can vote this out to the Committee today and -- why don't you go over there on, you know, Monday or -- Monday before the meeting or sometime during the week --

**MR. BROWN:**

We'll do it right after Committee. I'll take you over.

**LEG. HORSLEY:**

-- and go -- and give -- you know, go -- walk through this system because I think it's probably easier to see if you have a visual of how this system looks and, you know, the complications involved with putting it together. I think -- just a recommendation.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I appreciate that. My --

**LEG. HORSLEY:**

Respectfully submitted.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I appreciate that. My tabling motion stands. I understand the vision. Let me make that clear.

**LEG. HORSLEY:**

Okay.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I understand the vision and I understand the need and I agree that the need is there.

**LEG. HORSLEY:**

Maybe you're just not seeing other complications. Maybe that's all I'm saying.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I understand the complications.

**LEG. HORSLEY:**

Okay.

**LEG. CILMI:**

All I'm asking for is a schematic of how we're going to spend half a million dollars. And I haven't heard that today. So, I'm sorry, but I'm going to have to make a motion to table. And I hope at some point somebody will come back to us and give us that schematic.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

But, Legislator -- I'm sorry. Legislator Horsley, were you done? Legislator Schneiderman has a question for you.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I respect you, too.

**LEG. CILMI:**

We all respect each other.

**(LAUGHTER)**

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I supported the Capital Program and -- which had this project in it. And I also supported the Budget that had the debt service to cover this project in it. So, we knew this was coming. It's been talked about before. I just have a few -- the difference is -- Don, we didn't have you back then. And I know you have a real serious background in computer science as well as database development. Seems like this could be something that's pretty straight forward database. Is there something we can do inhouse? Are you recommending that we go to an outside agency to purchase this equipment? Do you lack the resources to do this?

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

I don't know if we have the resources to do it. What I do know is that the County Attorney's Office and I have spoken about taking a look at -- I put the brakes on it, quite honestly -- the purchase of the additional -- you know, just basically a knee jerk that says we spent a million dollars at the District Attorney. And we can now take that system and just transplant over to the County Attorney's Office. And we'll get that for half the price. Now clearly the cost of the system at the District Attorney's Office was significant. And the implementation of it took two years.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Was there a limit on that license to just the District Attorneys?

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

Yes, absolutely. Absolutely. I don't want to see the County Attorney's Office wait two years to get a case management system. If there was the possibility that I thought we could develop this inhouse, in less time than that and be able to manage our environment, I would absolutely do it. I generally like to make sure if there's a package that's available and it makes sense, then we'll do it, as Mr. Brown said, if it's more cost effective. I can't tell you that we can't develop this, but I can tell you that we can do it in a timely fashion.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Yeah, I'm just looking for your recommendation. Are you supporting this?

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

My recommendation -- yes, I support this. I support the funding appropriation.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

You know, it's very hard for me -- and I have some, you know, little bit of background in computers as well, but nothing like yours. And if you are telling me that this amount of -- well, A) this is needed within operational, within the County Attorney's and B) that the price for this type of management system is appropriate, then I'm going to defer to your knowledge there.

**COMMISSIONER ROGERS:**

Well, my opinion is we need to move forward with it. That's my opinion. So that we can get started on it and get it going.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Okay. I'd like to make a motion to approve this resolution.

**LEG. HORSLEY:**

Second.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Second. All in favor? Opposed?

**LEG. CILMI:**

We have a --

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Is there a second on the motion on yours? I'm sorry.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Second the motion to table.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Tabling goes first. For tabling, to approve? Opposed? Abstention? Do you have that?

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Opposed.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Opposed. Three opposed. (OPPOSED: LEGISLATORS ANKER, HORSLEY, SCHNEIDERMAN)

All in favor of tabling? All opposed of tabling?

**LEG. CILMI:**

Opposed.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Opposed.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Two to three, motion fails. Okay. Motion to approve? All in favor of approving this resolution?  
All opposed?

**LEG. CILMI:**

I respectfully oppose.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Opposed.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

Abstentions? Motion passes. **(VOTE: 3-2-0-0. LEGISLATORS CILMI and MURATORE  
OPPOSED)**

**MR. BROWN:**

Thank you very much. And the County Attorney thanks you, too.

**CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:**

All right. I see nothing else on our agenda. Thank you for coming out here today and we are adjourned.

**THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 2:19 PM  
{ } DENOTES SPELLED PHONETICALLY**