

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 May 28, 2013.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Leg. Sarah S. Anker, Chairwoman
Leg. Wayne R. Horsley, Vice Chair
Leg. Thomas Cilmi (excused absence)
Leg. Jay H. Schneiderman
Leg. John M. Kennedy, Jr.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Presiding Officer William J. Lindsay, 8th Legislative District
Leg. DuWayne Gregory, 15th Legislative District
Leg. Al Krupski, 1st Legislative District
George Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature
Sarah Simpson, Assistant Counsel to the Legislature
Renee Ortiz, Chief Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
Donald Rodgers, Commissioner/Information Technology
Shaun McKay, President/Suffolk County Community College
Chris Adams, Executive Assistant/Dr. McKay
Gail Vizzini, Vice President/Business & Financial Services/Suffolk County Community College
Ben Zwirn, Intergovernmental Affairs/Suffolk County Community College
Benny Pernice, Budget Review Office
Kevin Peterman, Faculty Associate/Suffolk County Community College
Jon DeMaio, Suffolk County Community College
Jim Morgo, Suffolk County Community College
Michael Pitcher, Aide to Presiding Officer
Thomas Vaughn, County Executive's Office
Paul Perillie, Aide to Leg. Gregory
John Stype, Aide to Leg. Krupski
Kevin LaValle, Aide to Leg. Muratore
Amy Ellis, Aide to Leg. Anker
Terrence G. Pearsall, Chief of Staff/Legislature
Pramila Venkateswaran, appointee/Poet Laureate
Edward W. Steves, former Poet Laureate
Joseph Dujmic, Vanderbilt Museum
And all other interested parties

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Diana Flesher, Court Stenographer

THE COMMITTEE WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 1:06 PM

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Will all Legislators please come to the horseshoe.

Okay, we're going to start the Education and Information Technology Committee meeting. Please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator Schneiderman.

SALUTATION

Please remain standing for a moment of silent meditation as we remember those in our military overseas.

MOMENT OF SILENCE OBSERVED

Thank you. Clerk, do we cards today? No, no cards.

PRESENTATION

Okay, we're going to continue to our presentation. Today we have Dr. Shaun McKay, President of Suffolk County Community College and Gail Vizzini, Vice President for Business and Financial Services. They're going to present the College Operating Budget for 2013 and 2014. Welcome.

DR. McKAY:

And we want to say thank you and -- for having us here today. My team and I will speak in regards to the College, its operation and you'll support accordingly.

I must say that, I want to thank the Guild of Administrative Offices, I want to thank the Faculty Association and the AME staff, that they have worked with me in regards to my budget for the last two years. For the Faculty Association, we have zeroes in regards to increases in their budget. They've worked with me in regards to class sizes, in regards to increasing the class size and not increasing my budget. Quite -- you know, the other part of it is that I was able to also inside of the budget that I have -- able to retain what we have in regards to cost increases.

The other side of it is you have to know that when it comes to retirements -- when I have faculty members that are with me for 30 and 40 years, I -- you know, I embrace that. That means that the faculty are committed to the institution. However, when they retire, I have cost-of-living increases and I have retirement costs that I have to pay out. When they leave, I have to pay out. I had faculty members that -- for 140, \$150,000 that I have to pay out one-shot; pay that out right away.

The other side of it is that if I have to hire someone within that discipline, I have to hire someone within that discipline and then still pay out a cost. So part of it for me is -- as a President, I have to look at -- do we have to -- and Gail is next to me here and she'll talk to that in a minute -- but part of it for me is how do I retain that cost and how do I support the growth of the institution? When we look -- when we look at nationally, we look at the cost and we look at, you know -- you know, the leveling off of enrollment. Part of it for us will be you're leveling off, but you still have to level off in the sense of maybe two and three or four persons per class, but still, you know, you have to maintain the operation.

When Gail -- when Gail comes to me in regards to operation, you have to look at not only leveling off, but you have to look at, you know, how do we maintain the infrastructure, how do we maintain what we do every single day? And at the same time how do we produce the quality of education that Suffolk County Community College must produce as a college of excellence? And that's difficult. You know, so we are not going to sacrifice the quality of education. We're going to make sure that

we do produce that. And that's the difficult part that we have.

So, I thank all of you. I thank you for what you've supported, for what you've done. My charge as President is to make sure that we produce a high quality level of education for all of our residents, your residents. And that's what we do, you know, every single day. And I would not sacrifice that for one minute. That's what we do. And that's what you've supported and that's what we thank you for. Because then on the other side of it, our taxpayers, your taxpayers, your voters are the ones that are going to thank you for what we've done. And I could tell that you every single day when we meet in our cabinet meetings, we don't sacrifice that for a minute. We don't. And I want you to be assured that that's what we do. So, thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

You're welcome. I also wanted to congratulate you on your commencement ceremonies. You know, we had attended, some of our Legislators here. And it's just so -- it's important to know that Suffolk County provides an incredible educational value through Suffolk Community College. And, again, I think you're going to explain how you -- how we get to that point. So, welcome. Welcome, Gail.

MS. VIZZINI:

Thank you, Madam Chairman, Legislators. I prepared for you a brief overview of the 13/14 College Operating Budget. And I'll walk you through it. The first page basically lists the assumptions.

First of all, we began with what we projected to be an eight and-a-half million dollar shortfall, meaning that our 13/14 year was going to be impacted by the leveling off of enrollment by approximately four and-a-half million dollars in terms of loss of tuition revenue and expenditures were going to increase about \$4 million.

Overall, the -- compared to the 2012/2013 adopted college budget, there is an increase of expenditures of \$4 million or a modest 2.1%; with grants, it's a little bit more. Our grants, actually, we're very happy that we're projecting an increase in grants over last year of \$322,000. That's primarily for our Adult Literacy Education Program, our GED Program, our Liberty Partnership and our Step Program.

The increase of \$4 million is due primarily to \$2.8 million in employee benefits. It consists of 2.4 million for the employer contribution to the retirement system; \$400,000 for health insurance and related expenses; and \$1.3 million in contractual salary increases, which are primarily the 2% that is now due to the faculty; and, of course, the step increases for the other bargaining units. The faculty, as the President indicated, had two years of zero, but now they're at the 2% increase.

New York State included a \$150 per FTE increase in State aid, which was wonderful news. Therefore, that brought our rate per FTE from 2,272 to 2422 and gave us a little bit over \$3 million in revenue.

The Board of Trustees' threshold for increasing tuition -- they wanted the tuition to remain affordable. Their threshold was to increase tuition by \$75 per semester or \$150 annually. That brings the per semester cost for a community college from 1995 to 2070 or from 3990 annually to 4140. This helped us to increase tuition revenue because the rate not only for -- per FTE increased by \$150, but now tuition will be increased by \$150. Part-time per credit will go from 167 to 173 or \$6 a credit.

I'd like to point out that last year the Community College was able to hold the line on tuition, but we were only among 4 of the 30 community colleges that did not increase tuition. This year there are only two of the 30 community colleges who are not increasing tuition. Last year on average, tuition increased by 4% among the community colleges. This year the average increase is about 3.4%.

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In light of the County's fiscal condition, we aren't -- this is the second year in a row where we are not asking for an increase in the County contribution. But in order to hold the tuition increase at a 150, the Board had the threshold that they would access our reserves. They are accessing the reserves \$1.8 million in order to offset the -- and present a balanced budget to you.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

What's the total?

MS. VIZZINI:

There's about \$22 million in the reserve. Over the past several years, we have endeavored to bring it up because of the concerns that we have a certain threshold and Middle States has a preference for 15%, which would be closer to 27, \$30 million. And we have done that by belt tightening. We have, you know, monitored enrollment and held the line on expenditures so that we would have -- we would end the year in the black.

DR. McKAY:

And I must say that, that is something that we have worked diligently to ensure that is not a problem for the institution. I must say that there are other colleges throughout the State of New York that have not done what we did in regards to ensuring that our fiscal status is in place. It is difficult, you know, similar to the County. We are in a very difficult situation. And we have to make sure that when it comes to the fiscal nature of the institution, that we preserve that. And that's what our unions, the Faculty Association, the Guild of Administrative Offices and AME, when I met with them, they were able to look at what we were doing in regards to transparency. And our books were open.

And understand that when it comes to Middle States, that we were able to -- fiscally be able to present, you know, our books that indicate "here's where we are," you know. Now, I got to tell you there are several colleges in New York State that have not done what we did. We're not there yet, you know. When it comes to 10 to 15%, when it comes it comes to GASB and GASB 45 and when it comes to Middle States and all of that, we are not there yet, you know. So we have to keep working our way up. And the 10 to 15% that Gail and I and Ben, all of us, we are working on preserving, we are close, but we still have to move another step forward.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Legislator Horsley has a question.

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

Thank you very much, Gail, for -- and, of course, the good Doctor. I just wanted to get an idea -- and, first of all, I always -- I've always been somewhat hesitant to applaud the Middle States illustrious goals of what you need to have in reserves and the like. I feel like sometimes they're running the train rather than the people that should be running the train, trying to reach their goals and their attainment. But let me just say, last year my recollection, if I can just -- if my memory serves me, your reserves were about \$18 million. And so now they were up to about 22 this year, what you just said. So we're coming down to about a million eight. So you increased over last year's reserves.

MS. VIZZINI:

That's what -- I think they were a little bit more. I think it was closer to 19 --

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

Might have been 19.

MS. VIZZINI:

And then we were somewhere above that -- about two and-a-half to three million in to bring it up.

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And, of course, the one accessing it by the 1.8 will potentially bring it down again.

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

Okay. So we're basically -- we're above -- your reserves, they will still end up higher than the reserves of last year.

DR. McKAY:

Let me just say for point of clarification --

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

Not that it matters.

DR. McKAY:

We do -- we do have -- we do have receivables, you know, that are in that number and that we have to collect. So I'll defer to Gail but I think --

MS. VIZZINI:

Yeah, it's not -- it's all cash is the point. About 6 million -- 6 to 7 million are accounts receivable, monies that are owed to the College.

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

Oh, you mean us. You didn't have to say it. I'll say it for you. I got it. Thank you very much for pointing that out, though.

MS. VIZZINI:

It's more, you know, a -- collections, things of that nature.

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

Okay. So, anyway, but I guess my point is, is that -- and we looked at other schools in the past, other schools across the State, the reserves are still in a rather healthy state compared to other institutions across the -- across the State.

MS. VIZZINI:

Suffolk is, yes.

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

Yeah. And I just wanted to make that point. And I appreciate the fact that you're dipping into it. I know how hard that is for you guys.

DR. McKAY:

Yes, yes.

MS. VIZZINI:

Thank you, Legislator Horsley.

DR. McKAY:

It is indeed a tough position. And our Board of Trustees have really worked hard to keep the costs down for our students and for your residents. And it's a very difficult position for us whenever we try to raise tuition and fees, you know. As you know for the last two years, we kept tuition down. The County has asked us to not increase, you know, tuition or not come back to you for any increases in regards to your contributions. And we've done that, you know. But it's not -- it's not easy. It is very difficult for the College. And we have to find a way to make those cost increases minimized. It is not easy. And I got to tell you -- and we try hard not to -- make sure that it does not impact the academic side of the house.

And then -- and I got to tell you, tuition and fees, when you look at the Operating Budget, the Operating Budget, when it comes to payroll is about 87% of our budget, you know. When it comes to health care, when it comes to retirement and those things, you know, it's hard for us to try to manage that. So, you know, for us right now in regards to moving forward, when we are asked to not ask for anything from the County, it is difficult. So we are with you on this. And Gail and I, you know, we have a difficult time, you know, trying to manage that. So I want to thank you and I want to ask that you know that we are with you as you work through this difficult process.

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

Doctor, I absolutely appreciate the fact that you're coming in this year with a zero increase. You know, we -- we're in this. We are, as you say, partners. And, you know, there may be other ways in which we will be able to help you this year that is not going to be adjusted today, but we thank you very much for working with us. Our operational needs, as you know, are tenuous at best. And the fact is that by working with us, partners share. And we will, you know, the future is the future. And thank you. We appreciate it.

DR. McKAY:

Thank you.

MS. VIZZINI:

Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Legislator Kennedy has a question.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Thank you. And I agree with everybody else around the horseshoe here. You are managing your budget well. And you are making the buffalo cry, which is what we all want to see. But give me the flip side; give me the back of the napkin as far as the product going out the door. What -- we had about 3,000 students, I guess, that graduated?

MS. VIZZINI:

3890.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay, there we go. How many of them are going on for four year, how many of them are going to work, what are the metrics, just approximately, as you track it? And what do you do to make sure that those students take this opportunity and maximize it?

DR. McKAY:

Legislator Kennedy, last year we had 4,015 students that graduated. This year we had 3890. The difficult path for us at the College is those students that would transfer without graduating and -- that is not counted as part of our success story. That's a whole 'nother number. So it's not just 3,890 students; we have another batch of students that have left. So now in order for us to get back to where we were, we would have to then get first time full-time students, 3890, plus those who transferred that we don't even count as success. So that could be 6,000, 7,000 students. And that impacts our revenue in regards to baseline. We have to then go out and get that number of students to come back to us and be part of the baseline in order for us to even count that as FTE. That's a whole 'nother story. Now, when it comes to jobs, we are --

LEG. KENNEDY:

Well, wait. Before we leave that point, let me just go to, so -- but you make that case to

Commissioner {Zimpfer}, that if a student elects to, let's say, do first year of their four-year Bachelors here at Suffolk, nevertheless, we should get some recognition. And that's a simple number to ferret out with the transcript requests, I would imagine.

DR. McKAY:

Yeah. And that's a national issue that all institutions are struggling with.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay.

DR. McKAY:

We have -- we have to be able to say that those students who transfer before they graduate are part of our success. Now let me say this: On our application, we do ask students, "tell us why you're here, tell us where you're going" and all of that. And we have that as well. So we can produce that to you to say, okay for all the students who applied first time full-time that said that "we are here, not to graduate, but we are here to transfer", or "we are here to leave sooner", or whatever it is, we can produce that. And to me that's success.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Right. It has value. There's no doubt about it. And, again, all of our constituents who want to get their kids educated are trying to figure out the most economic way to do it. I mean, if you have two or three children in school at one time, maybe one of them for one year is going to be local and that's part of the calculation. But nevertheless it's still something for us that is providing a product that we should be able to capture and demonstrate to our constituents.

DR. McKAY:

And, again, it is very important for us to be able to find those metrics; you know, graduation is a key point. And when I talk about stay on Long Island, which we -- we have cost \$2 million in regards to other institutions giving our residents, your residents full tuition, to attend after they finish two years with me. It's something that we have to celebrate and laud. But at the same time, we have students that are transferring before they even complete, you know, their undergraduate degree. So part of it for me is how do we keep those residents here? When we have students that are transferring out of State, North Carolina, and we got the best of them, I mean my students, I would love for them to transfer and go wherever they want to go, but -- however, I want to keep the brain here on Long Island instead of having the brain drain leave and go somewhere else. So my job as President is to try to get students to stay here.

The other side of it is this: We have a cost factor where students are looking to other places and where they're saying, "okay, so I'm getting lauded to come to North Carolina, to Duke," to wherever, how do I compete with that? I can't. You know, so part of it was a stay-on-Long Island, which I did. And that has worked remarkably.

The other side of it is now how do we support our students here? Now, I have students, so you know, when I ask them do you have one job? They put their hands up. Do you have two jobs? They put their hands up. Do you have three jobs? Want to come into college, they put their hands up. Do you have four jobs? I have students that are doing four part-time jobs right here on Long Island. And I got to tell you, I don't know how they do it, but that's what we deal with, you know. And the flip side of it is, you look at the workforce side of it, they are doing jobs so they can maintain what they do here on Long Island. It's difficult. And as the President, you know, I have to be able to work with my students, you know, when that comes up. I don't know how to do it.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Look, I get what you're saying. And as a matter of fact, I admire the extra efforts that you've made.

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And I noted all the scholarships that you mentioned at graduation, which were excellent, too.

DR. McKAY:

Sure.

LEG. KENNEDY:

I'll have an offline conversation with you about some of those -- the transfer numbers and things like that. Because, again, the product is a good product. It's an excellent product. It facilitates education. But the more ways that we can go ahead and demonstrate value to our citizens, our taxpayers, the easier it is for us to continue to promote it. So thank you.

DR. McKAY:

Yes.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

More comments from Gail? No. Okay. I think we're good? Anybody have a question? Thank you so much for coming out here and giving us an update on your financial status, your budget.

Okay. We're going to move forward with the resolutions.

TABLED RESOLUTIONS

We have **IR 1296, Designating Poet Laureate for Suffolk County (Pramila Venkateswaran). (Anker)** And I believe Pramila is here today, if she would like to come up to the podium. I'll make a motion to approve. Second, okay. And for discussion. Hi, welcome.

MS. VENKATESWARAN:

Hi.

MR. STEVER:

I'm going to say hello first because I'm the outgoing Poet Laureate Edward Stever.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Oh, welcome, too.

MR. STEVER:

I'm passing the baton and I thought I'd bring and present her to you. So, I had a great reign of terror and -- oh, yeah, I have to press the button, right. Okay. And I thank you for the opportunity to serve the County for the past two years, but now I give you Pramila.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Well, welcome and thank you for coming before us. We do have a number of your poems that you have written. I know the Legislators have reviewed them. Do you have a few comments you'd like to make as far as your work and how you would like to complement our efforts here in Suffolk with your talent as a poet?

MS. VENKATESWARAN:

Thank you. Thank you for inviting me here today and for appointing me Poet Laureate. I also would like to thank the outgoing Poet Laureate Ed Stever for nominating me. I teach English and Women's Studies at Nassau Community College. I'm in the English Department there. I've been writing poetry and non-fiction. I mostly write poetry. And I think you may have some of the selections for my poems that I sent you. And if anyone's interested, I have copies -- some of the copies of my books here.

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As Poet Laureate I plan to do a few programs in Suffolk County, mainly a mentoring program that I want to set up for high school students, probably also middle school students. And I'm also planning to have workshops for young women who may be having body image issues that result in health problems. So writing is a way of, you know, finding one's self-esteem. So these are some of the mentorship programs that I'm planning.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Wonderful. And I see you're a resident, of course, of Suffolk County in Setauket.

MS. VENKATESWARAN:

Yeah, I've been living in Suffolk County for the past 28 years and very happy to be a resident of Suffolk. And if you wish, I would like to read a poem for you.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

That would be lovely. Thank you.

MS. VENKATESWARAN:

Here's a poem that Amy Ellis, your Aide, liked very much so I thought I would read this. It's called "Swimming in Walden Pond."

"I stand in my teal bathing suit in the pale dawn light skimming the still water of Walden Pond. White wings in the distance, red and blue caps of swimmers cutting the pond's glass. Behind me woods hiding, stones marking Thoreau's cabin with its desk, chair, camp cot, a jacket hanging on a rusted nail behind the door, a lantern swinging in bottle green dark. I am up to my neck in philosophy, my toes touching its shifting floor. What else but to reach forward and swim toward the opposite shore, prostrate before Thoreau's god - nature talking to him, buoying him up with lessons of the spirit? I tumble and float facing the sunless sky, light breaking through knitted branches of oak. I stand the Vedic admirer's secret joy, above prowling water lilies, feel drops of drizzle cool as pearls. Swimming back and forth, you would be lulled by his words spawned here - be the best you can be that you can imagine for yourself; a day's earnings are enough to live on for a longtime; the earnings from a whole week is greed. Listen to your conscience; Henry fades as the hour grows. I dry off, drift into Walden's lot and claim the road back to town."

Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Thank you. That was very nice. Do we have questions? Good to go?

MS. VENKATESWARAN:

If anyone has questions, I'm willing to answer.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Legislator Schneiderman.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

No questions. I appreciate you coming out today and sharing some poetry with us. You know, Suffolk County has a very rich tradition of poetry. And being the home of Walt Whitman, it's a long legacy. And it's great to have such talented people in our community who are sharing their artistic creation. So thank you for sharing. And use the title well. I'm sure that you will be officially designated as our Poet Laureate so I know you'll do great things with it.

MS. VENKATESWARAN:

Thank you very much.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Okay. Well, thank you for coming out. And, again, I guess you can be seated. We're good to go. I basically have the vote out. All in favor? Opposed? Abstention? Motion carries. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-1. PO LINDSAY INCLUDED IN VOTE/LEG. CILMI ABSENT)** Welcome. Congratulations.

Okay, we'll continue with the resolutions. We have **IR 1300, Ensuring Suffolk County Government Internet Content is accessible to the print-disabled. (Schneiderman)**

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Motion to approve.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Motion to approve. I'll second that motion for discussion.

LEG. KENNEDY:

As we had talked about at the last meeting, I did make a number of contacts. I was not able to meet with Miss Lewis. We spoke a little bit about her. I wasn't able to make the appointment. She did talk about a number of different pieces of software; but, nevertheless, I don't want hold the resolution up. I'll probably just abstain on it and I'll try to have the conversation with Miss Lewis before next Tuesday.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

And if I might, if, John, you're able to secure an additional funding or partial funding, that's great, we can always do that at a later date.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

In terms of the timing of it, you know, I had kicked around the idea of amending it to make it happen quicker. I was concerned about the offset issues. So if it happened in this calendar year --

LEG. KENNEDY:

Right.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

-- we'd need an offset. This gives us a budget. But I'm also concerned about the timing of it, because to do it right -- I don't want it rushed. So I think by giving Commissioner Rodgers -- I want to say Mr. Rodgers, but it doesn't sound serious enough, I'm sorry -- giving Commissioner Rodgers a year to implement this policy and focus on which of the websites have the most critical information, emergency notifications, community meetings, those kinds of things -- and there's an incredible amount of content that we offer through our websites. I thought a year to make it happen was a reasonable amount of time.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. Fair enough.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

So I have a question, Jay. Again, it's \$6,000 that we need for this type of project?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Well, again, it's not -- it's something that'll have to be budgeted for next year when we do the budget. That is a number that Commissioner Rodgers gave us based on one particular piece of software. I think personally that's a low estimate. I think that it may be more, but I think it's

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certainly well within our abilities -- reasonable abilities. And I don't know, Commissioner, if you wanted to comment more on that. I'm expecting it to cost more than 6,000 but probably not more than 20,000.

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

Next year budget.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Next year. Yeah, this doesn't require an offset because the deadline for implementation falls into next year.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Then, again, my -- you know, I'm reading through some of the -- the information; 17,000 pages? That's a lot of pages. I just want to make sure that's going to be doable.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Well, what these devices do at the user end is just basically just translates the text that appears on the website into -- into spoken word. But there are some programming -- that has to happen on the County side that will take what the programmers put in in terms of text and encode it so these print readers can read it. So, I'm not sure to what degree -- how labor-intensive it is. It might be more on the software end, that the computers itself do it. But Commissioner Rodgers, I think could --

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Hi, Commissioner, if you'd like to speak on this.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

-- fill us in on the technical aspects.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Good afternoon. Donald Rodgers, Commissioner of IT. There is some work for us to do on our end with this. The one particular piece of software that we have been looking at, which is Read Speaker, does not require any effort on the enduser side. It interacts with any browser. It doesn't require a plug-in. So the work would be on our side and our staff on hand can do that. So the -- our costs that would be incurred would be for the initial purchase and then for the ongoing licensing fee.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

And that's what you estimated about 6,000. Is that --

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

For the one package, the Read Speaker that we were looking at, the annual license fee is \$5,600. And then there's a \$600 setup fee.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

And that would automatically make all of our websites accessible?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Yes.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So, you wouldn't have to necessarily pick which is the most important. It would just do everything.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Yes, that's correct.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

It sounds too good to be sure.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

It does. I'm very happy about it.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

I'm just curious, do we know the amount of people that are print disabled? I'm assuming, you know, people that have vision issues -- I'm just curious.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I don't have the number. Certainly if you're blind, but a lot people just have difficulty reading. I don't know who would have that number, but, you know, even if there was five, I think, it would be worth doing. But I think there are quite a number. I think the Disabilities Advisory Board might have a better sense of that. If, you know, we can try to get that.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

We have met with Frank {Krasinski} with regard to this. And I don't have any numbers for you. Hopefully he might have some, but I know that he's interacted with individuals with regards to this and other aspects of the website.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Okay. So, again, it's about a \$6,000 cost for our budget for next year, which, of course, is going to be another challenge. But the amount of use that it will have, it seems like a well-worth investment for the County. Is that what you feel?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

I would agree, absolutely.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I would also add to that, we're supposed to do this. You know, ADA does require us to make these changes if they're readily achievable. And it would be hard to argue that 6,000 wasn't readily achievable.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

That's it? Okay. All right. Any more questions? No? Okay. We made a motion to approve and we seconded. All in favor? Opposed? Abstention?

LEG. KENNEDY:

Abstain.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Motion carries. One abstention. **(VOTE: 4-0-1-1. LEG. CILMI ABSENT)**

All right, we're going to continue **IR 1382, Appropriating funds in connection with the acquisition and implementation of a District Attorney Case Management System (CP 1136). (Co. Exec.)** I'll make a motion to approve.

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

Second.

LEG. KENNEDY:

On the motion.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

On the motion.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Commissioner, can you talk to us about this Case Management Program? This thing seems to have been here and in progress almost as long as I have been in the Legislature. And that's quite a while.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

If you give me a moment, I have -- I have the breakdown on it for you.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

This project was actually started in 2011 when the District Attorney started to reconfigure their environment for this. In 2012 we had a continuation of the conversion for \$250,000. The appropriation for this year -- this system is active, by the way. They are currently using it. They have gone live with it. It is in place. The appropriation for this year is to move into the document-imaging phase. They want to significantly eliminate the amount of paper that they're currently using in the District Attorney's Office.

LEG. KENNEDY:

So my question to you, then, is -- and we may have appropriated money in 2011, but trust when I tell you, we were talking about it a lot longer before that. We had one vendor who dropped out. We pulled in another vendor. And so if the individuals are actually being statused and monitored now, and these pieces now to go ahead and add the, you know, criminal information, the summons, the complaints, all the other stuff, why are we spending 500,000 for a scanner; an imager or a scanner?

COMMISSIONER ROGERS:

It includes the programming component, the software that's associated with the imaging as well and -- for it to integrate with the existing system that was put into place.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Do you -- are you -- you've seen what the configuration is for the actual equipment that -- are we going to acquire it? Is it being leased? What's the configuration?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

The equipment is being acquired.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER ROGERS:

And it does include top desktop scanners and the background software and licensing for that software.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Do we have any bulk scanners? I mean the desktops are fine. I have a desktop over there. But if you take 100, 200-page document, a summons and complaint, you want a larger high-volume scanner; correct?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Yes. There are a variety of scanners that are being purchased with this.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

We may have the bulk and the desktop. And, as you say, the bulk scanners obviously are necessary for large volume.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Are we acquiring the scanning software as well?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

The scanning software is part of the overall case management system and is integrated into it.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. Is it off-the-shelf stuff or is it proprietary?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

It is proprietary.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

The vendor.

LEG. KENNEDY:

And so they're continuing to work with us with the changes and items that we need or -- what's your assessment? As you know, the devil's always in the details with a piece of software as far as when the client wants to come forward and get some accommodations or changes, the programming or software mods can choke you.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

The vendor has worked well with us. When I first came on board, there were some issues with going live. The vendor has, for lack of a better term, come on board and is working well with the Department now in terms of implementing the necessary requirements for them to go live. My last conversation with the representative from the DA's Office, they were happy with the progress they're making. The system is active and the vendor is working with them on this.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. Who is the vendor? And I guess absent that, if it works for you and you've got a good contact with them, then I guess we should move the ball.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

The vendor just went out of my head. Give me a second.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Also, you know, this has to do with the District Attorney's Office in facilitating those cases. And I know they are very backed up with their, you know, with office; so whatever we can do to make the County function more efficiently.

LEG. KENNEDY:

All right. Whenever you get the name, Commissioner, that's fine.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

I'll get that to you, Legislator. I'm sorry.

LEG. KENNEDY:

All right. Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Okay. Any more questions? Questions? Okay, thank you, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Okay, so that was 1382. I make a motion to approve.

MS. ORTIZ:

There's already a motion.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

All in favor? Opposed? Abstention? Motion carries. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-1. PO LINDSAY INCLUDED IN VOTE/LEG. CILMI ABSENT)**

MR. ZWIRN:

Madam Chair, the two next items on the agenda are Capital Projects for the College. John DeMaio's here to answer any questions. And I'd just like, if I could on the record, that Trustee James Morgo, who is head of the Budget and Finance Committee for the Board of Trustees of the College is here. He was here -- he was going to testify in support of the College's Operating Budget, but he's here if you have any questions for him.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Okay, Legislator Schneiderman.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I just was trying to get some information on the question you had asked me earlier about numbers of visually impaired in Suffolk County. I got a number for New York State of 300,000 visually impaired. And if it's the same percentage population-wise, it would be about 25,000 in Suffolk County.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

That is a significant part of our population. That would really benefit from your legislation. So, thank you, Legislator Schneiderman.

I also wanted to mention that Legislator Cilmi has an excused absence.

I would like to invite Jim Morgo from Suffolk Community College to come up and we're going to discuss two of the -- two of the resolutions, reso 1402 and reso 1403. Welcome.

MR. MORGO:

Just before that, Chairwoman Anker, first of all, hello. And thank you for the opportunity. As some of you know back in the 19th century I sat up there. But I'll be uncharacteristically brief.

I just wanted to let you know that as Mr. Zwirn mentioned, I'm Chair of the College's Budget and Finance Committee. And beginning back in February, we met monthly. We -- I think we were assiduous in trying to hold the line. Finally the recommendation for the \$150 tuition increase, \$75 a semester, was made after much inquiry. President McKay, Vice President Vizzini were responsive.

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They let us know that they were doing everything they could to hold the line. And, as you probably know way back in the 19th century I worked with Gail Vizzini and I, you know, trust her financial acumen very much so. But we did meet. We met monthly. We looked at everything. It was a very good committee. And I wanted to let you know after a lot of research, we endorsed the proposal.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Well, thank you. I appreciate your insight.

MR. MORGO:

I told you I'd be brief. Okay. Take care all.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Yeah, thank you. You, too. Okay. So I will -- for discussion -- **IR 1402, Appropriating funds in connection with the Traffic Circle - Ammerman Campus (CP 2143). (Pres. Off.)** I'll make a motion to approve.

P.O. LINDSAY:

Second.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Second. And on the motion for discussion, would you like to discuss this project?

MR. DeMAIO:

Good afternoon. This moves planning forward for the traffic circle at the Ammerman Campus. It will address the single most significant traffic safety issue we have on that campus at the intersection of North and West Road. It's for planning only. And it is State-supported for 50%.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Discussion Legislators? No. Okay. All in favor? Opposed? Abstention? Motion carries. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-1. PO LINDSAY INCLUDED IN VOTE/LEG. CILMI ABSENT)**

Okay, **IR 1403, Appropriating funds in connection with Infrastructure - College Wide (CP 2149). (Pres. Off.)** Now, we have Dr. McKay.

P.O. LINDSAY:

Motion.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Motion. I'll second the motion. And we have the Community College representatives. Would you like to comment on this?

MR. DeMAIO:

This is another appropriating resolution for a project that's included in the adopted Capital Program, year three of our infrastructure project, which has been incredibly valuable to the College to maintain all of its physical assets. This will continue HVAC upgrades, building envelope repairs, paving; any HVAC upgrades that are made, there'll be an energy savings associated with using more modern technology. It's been a fantastic program and this helps us move it forward.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Okay. Legislator Krupski.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Yeah, with the repaving, resurfacing and I'll go back to the traffic circle, will there be drains worked on associated with the -- with all this construction?

MR. DeMAIO:

Yes.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Also, I want to comment, too, is, you know, when you have a structure and you don't take care of it, it's more money down the road if you don't take care of it so -- and I know, you know, with so many people involved in these projects, I feel very confident that you have reviewed all these structures and you're using the best value for the dollars that you -- that you have. Okay. Any further discussion? Okay. All in favor? Opposed? Abstention? Motion carries. **(VOTE: 4-0-0-2. LEGISLATORS KENNEDY/CILMI ABSENT)**

(*PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY LEFT THE AUDITORIUM*)

Okay, we have **IR 1410, Amending the 2013 Capital Budget and Program and appropriating funds in connection with an upgrade to the Payroll System Database (CP 1740). (Co. Exec.)** I'll make a motion to approve.

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

Second.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Second. Okay. Discussion? Commissioner Rodgers, would you like to come forward?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

And if I may, with regard to the District Attorney database, the vendor is New Dawn.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Okay. So we have the payroll system database. As far as the actual system, can you tell us a little bit about this?

COMMISSIONER RODGERS:

Sure. This is a -- this is a project to address our current operating environment with regard to the payroll system. Payroll system currently runs on a Unisys mainframe. And that mainframe is located here in Hauppauge. There is a disaster recovery machine that is located in Riverhead. These two machines are approaching end-of-life. The disaster recovery machine will hit end-of-life in October of this year.

Now, what that means is although the machine is still functional, the vendor will stop supporting it and you cannot run it. So it's not as if you had your PC and you were running Windows 2000 or Windows XP and Microsoft said "we're not going to support it anymore," you could still run your PC.

In this case the vendor says "not only are we going to stop supporting the software, it will stop working," period. So consequently we have a choice of not running payroll or of buying a new machine. What we are doing is we are migrating off of the mainframe. The County does not really require a machine of this size. Its costs are continuing on a yearly basis. We pay for the operation of the machine. And we really don't have much running on that machine other than payroll.

So what we are looking to do is completely migrate off of the mainframe onto a -- what's considered an X86 platform, which is the same environment we're returning everything else on in the County now. One of the reasons we want to do this is because we will be able to integrate the data with everything else we do as opposed to having to operate in two separate environments.

In addition we will -- we will avoid these yearly costs that we constantly pay for the operation of the

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machine and the proprietary operating system through Unisys. The funding at this point is for us to be able to start that migration process and put a machine in place that will operate after October and that we can migrate over to the standard platform when we have completed the process.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

Okay. Any questions?

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

We do want to get paid.

CHAIRWOMAN ANKER:

We do want to keep our payroll rolling along so -- well, thank you. Thank you, Commissioner.

Okay, so I believe there's a motion and a second. Is that correct? Okay. All in favor? Opposed? Abstain? **Motion carries. (VOTE: 4-0-0-1. LEGISLATOR CILMI NOT PRESENT - PO LINDSAY LEFT AUDITORIUM EARLIER)**

Okay. I believe there is no other work here for our Committee, so Committees is adjourned.

**THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 1:59 PM
{ } DENOTES SPELLED PHONETICALLY**