

**EDUCATION & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE**  
**OF THE**  
**SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE**  
**MINUTES**

A meeting of the Education & Information Technology Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York on September 30, 2014.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Leg. Sarah S. Anker, Chairperson  
Leg. Monica Martinez, Vice Chair  
Leg. Thomas Cilmi  
Leg. Lou D'Amaro  
Leg. Robert Trotta  
Presiding Officer DuWayne Gregory

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Leg. Robert Calarco, 7th Legislative District  
George M. Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature  
Sarah Simpson, Assistant Counsel to the Legislature  
Lora Gellerstein, Chief Deputy Clerk of the Legislature  
Jason Richberg, Aide to Leg. Gregory  
Doug Miller, Acting Commissioner/Information Technology  
Patrick Connolly, Director of Telecommunications/IT  
Mike Johnson, Telecommunications/IT  
Jon DeMaio, Suffolk Community College  
Chris Adams, SCC  
Gail Vizzini, SCC  
Ben Zwirn, SCC  
Kevin Peterman, SCC  
Julie Heitleband, SCC  
Carmeline Jean-Francois, SCC  
Rebecca Goldberg, Cameron Engineering  
Benny Pernice, Budget Review Office  
Tom Vaughn, County Executive's Office  
Michael Pitcher, Aide to Presiding Officer  
Amy Ellis, Aide to Leg. Anker  
Justin Littell, Aide to Leg. D'Amaro  
William Shilling, Aide to Leg. Calarco  
Maria Barbara, Aide to Leg. Cilmi  
Greg Moran, Aide to Leg. Trotta  
And all other interested parties

**MINUTES TAKEN BY:**

Diana Flesher, Court Stenographer

**THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 10:04 AM**

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

We're going to begin our Committee meeting. Please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator Martinez.

**SALUTATION**

Please remain standing for a moment of silent prayer and meditation as we think those in the military fighting for our freedom.

**MOMENT OF SILENCE OBSERVED**

Thank you. Okay. We're going to begin today. We do have some cards. And we have Kevin Peterman. Kevin?

**MR. PETERMAN:**

Good morning. I filled out a card today because I just wanted to bring to your attention something that is going on up in Albany with SUNY Central, as we call it. They are assessing a fee on community colleges throughout the State. And it concerns me because they're basically saying that their -- their budget is inadequate so they want to assess a fee on all -- all the State-operated colleges, including the community colleges, to offset their lack of a budget.

And what concerns us is I believe it's a foot in the door. I believe there was a resolution that was passed by the SUNY Board on September 9th that basically assesses an administrative fee on all the community colleges. And I believe originally they wanted to assess each community college based on their FTEs. And originally they wanted to assess Suffolk Community College \$186,000 per year to be sent back up to Albany to offset their lack of budget for SUNY central, as we call it.

My understanding there was quite a bit of pushback. I know the unions were pushing back as well because I think it's a foot in the door, as I said, for them to start using our money, our resources down here to offset their issues up there. I understand with the pushback, it's now a pilot project for one year. And I believe the assessment for Suffolk is about \$37,000.

I did meet with Senator LaValle, who's the Chair of Higher Education in the Senate about two weeks ago and explained this situation to him. And he sent a letter to the Chancellor, Nancy Zimpher and Carl McCall, who's the Chairman of the SUNY Board, basically saying that he opposes the fee. And he actually has a serious reservation, to quote him, that the -- they have the authority to levy the assessment on community colleges. And, again, I just wanted to bring to your attention that it's something that I'm concerned about and I just wanted you to be aware of.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

And we appreciate your, you know, your information and we will definitely keep that in mind --

**MR. PETERMAN:**

-- okay.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

-- in the future. Thank you.

**MR. PETERMAN:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

So we're going to continue with the Committee meeting. We do not have a presentation today.

**TABLED RESOLUTIONS**

We will go right into our Tabled Resolutions. Okay. And we have **resolution 1513, Appropriating funds in connection with the traffic circle Ammerman Campus (CP 2143). (Co. Exec.)** I'd like to make a motion to approve. We have a second. All in favor? On the motion.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Can we have somebody from the College come up to the microphone?

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

We have Ben Zwirn.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Yes, Madam Chair, I think, there are a couple of students who filled out cards who wanted to speak to these issues during the Public Portion. I don't know if the cards got to the Chair, but they're here. And if they have an opportunity to speak -- and then we'll -- we have a number of people here from the College to make a presentation, if necessary, or answer any questions with respect to this Capital Project.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Absolutely. So I guess at this point would they like to go ahead and come on up. Again, I don't have their cards, the students. The students. I'd like to hear from them. That would be great. And then if you could have your college administration come up after the students are here and give us some information about these resolutions that are in front of us.

Come on up. Don't be nervous. We're here to hear what you have to say. I know it's -- it's always important to hear from our students. And we really appreciate you coming. So, again, don't feel nervous. You're very welcome up here. And, again, let us know what's on your mind.

**PUBLIC PORTION**

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

Okay. My name is Julie Heitleband. I'm actually in my fourth year at the school. And I'm primarily from the Brentwood Campus, but I've actually had a lot of experience driving, parking and everything in Selden. Parking has always been an issue for us. There are certain areas that, like as you guys know from like all the paper work and everything and what we were briefed on yesterday, a lot of the parking areas, like it's hard to turn around in; there are some areas that you just -- you really can't see like if a car's coming or not, like where they're interested in putting the traffic circle. That area has actually always been an issue for like newer drivers, people who just have issues making a left turn coming up from Nicolls.

And like parking, there's actually a lot of people that I know complain about, like, receiving citations and everything for parking in fire zones, parking on grass, parking in faculty parking when they have an issue.

Like, honestly I think that we do need more parking spaces however it's being expanded. We were told that they're interested in adding about 500 spots. That, I think, will help. I mean, I'm not really sure if there'll still be a further parking issue, but I think it will definitely help.

And then that -- a lot of people just need to, I think, manage their time a little as well as adding,

like, travel time, time for parking and just different areas that'll make it easier for them to get in and out of the parking lots and make it quicker for them to, like, just get in and go to class rather than, like, waiting in a traffic line; or even if they're leaving class to go to work, just so that they have enough time, like -- because there's -- there have been times where I've been in the parking lot and I've been waiting to, like, to get out of campus. I've been stuck on campus for, like, 15, 20 minutes and I'm only five minutes from home from that campus. So that's definitely -- has been an issue. But I am in favor of adding the parking additions and -- as well as the traffic circle to hopefully make that area a little more safer.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Okay. We have a question. Legislator Trotta.

**LEG. TROTТА:**

When did you have classes in Selden last?

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

I go -- like my schedule's scattered throughout the day. The rougher times for getting out of there have been, like, the early afternoon. Like when I go -- when I go in the morning, if I go later -- like say I have an 8:00 class, if I go to school -- like if I go to campus at 7:50 it's actually really, really difficult to get in but that's understandable because it's all like the last minute people getting in and everything. But if you get there 7:27, 30, I haven't really had an issue getting on campus, parking.

**LEG. TROTТА:**

I'm so glad you said that. So if your class starts at 8:00 --

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

U-huh.

**LEG. TROTТА:**

If your class started at 7:45 and you had to get there 7:30, and then other classes started at 8:00, do you think that would relieve the traffic?

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

I think that would actually increase the traffic, because there's always a lot of people who, like, they're running late to class or they might get stuck in the traffic from the previous class. I think having the 15-minute intervals would actually make traffic worse.

**LEG. TROTТА:**

And why is that? Specifically --

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

Because --

**LEG. TROTТА:**

-- why do you think if the classes were staggered, it would make traffic worse?

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

Say you had -- like as you were saying, like a set of students coming in at 7:45, another set coming in at 8, another set coming in at, like, 8:15, for example, there's going to be overflow because there's no way in 15 minutes that all those students, however many there are, can be safely parked and in their classes on time.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

You mentioned when you first said that you were briefed, were you briefed on answering that question?

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

No, absolutely not.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

No one asked -- no one told you to say that?

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

No.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

When you said that?

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

No.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

So you got -- so using your logic -- what if the classes started at 7:30 and then 8:00?

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

Like having -- like having classes -- like instead of having a 7:30 -- well, what's the morning class? Like 6:30 to 7:45 and then 8 to 9:15? Having --

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Let's say for argument -- I'm having trouble following your logic that -- you said that people are rushing at the last minute, 7:50 to get to class.

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

A-hum, yes.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

So if they were rushing at 7 to get to a 7:45 class, that would be at 7:40. So that would certainly reduce the people rushing from the 8:00 class if they were rushing to a 7:45 class. I think you'd agree with that.

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

I think traffic would still be overflow. Because there's 15,000 students on campus this semester. Say --

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Right. So if there's -- let's say there's 10,000 students going to an 8:00 class. Okay? They're all rushing to that 8:00 class. Let's say 5,000 of those were rushing to a 7:45 class. Using your logic, it doesn't make sense because if they're coming ten minutes before, the rush would be at a different time.

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

There would still be overflow, though.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Legislator Trotta, I just want to mention to you this is her opinion. I know you have your opinion,

she has her opinion, you know, we're really talking about a 15 difference. But honestly I think right now people wait more than 15 minutes in a very long line of traffic to get to classes. And I understand the staggering of schedules, but it's still, you know, half hour, you know, 20 some minutes. You're talking about a 15-minute overlap. There's so much happening within -- you know, within that time but we can respect each --

**LEG. TROTTA:**

I have another question for you.

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

That's okay.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

If you got out of class now -- let's say the class was 7:45 and you got out at 9:15 --

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

Okay.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

And you were leaving the campus. When you pulled out of that parking spot at 9:15, the next class is starting at 9:45 or 9:30, I think you'd agree your spot would be empty when you pulled out?

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

I think that somebody would be waiting to take that spot.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Exactly. So but -- because the classes are staggered, now the parking is being freed up. Because you're no longer -- someone's hanging around talking after class, they get to their car, the class already started. This would give you a 15-minute grace period to get to your next class, unless, of course, you spoke for more than 15 minutes.

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

But what about all the students who don't leave at 9:15, that their parking spot is being occupied for the next 3 to 6 hours?

**LEG. TROTTA:**

But if 20% of them left, you'd have 20% more parking.

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

Not necessarily.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Again, we need to respect each other one's opinions. Legislator Trotta, do you have more questions for her?

**LEG. TROTTA:**

No.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Okay. Again, you know -- any of the Legislators here -- no? We appreciate, again, your input and encourage you to come to our meetings and speak freely and know that, you know, we're here to make -- try to make good decisions for the College and especially for as a constituent so you can continue to, you know, use the facilities, you know, that we supply the Capital Budget. I mean,

we're there, and part of the Operating Budget, to help you find a better future. So we really appreciate it. And, you know, hope you're not detoured in any way working in our -- with our political system.

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

No.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

And we hope to see you more. And maybe one day you'll be right on the other side of this horseshoe.

**MS. HEITLEBAND:**

(Laughter)

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

So, again, thank you so much for coming out. Appreciate it. Okay, we have another -- another constituent. Welcome.

**MS. JEAN-FRANCOIS:**

My name is Carmeline Jean-Francois. And I'm a -- this is my second year at Suffolk County Community College. And basically I'm -- I'm really an advocate for this extra parking space and the traffic on -- the traffic circle that they're trying to build just because -- we had a head count last year about -- as we know, about 15,300 students. And if you actually did the math, we would -- and there's 3700 spots, we would need about four students per one car for there to be enough space for each student to get a parking spot. And we know of several -- a whole bunch of these students do not car pool. A lot of them come individually on campus. So the four-to-one ratio way is way too high number when we're thinking of parking spots and students. So that's something that I definitely wanted to put out there.

And he's also saying that -- talking about staggering classes on top of each other, but I wouldn't think that's a good idea because a lot of students don't leave right after their class. They have -- as being someone that's part of a club or someone's that's involved in the school-- I'm there from 7 AM. And I can leave at 6 PM, 7 PM at night. And my class ends at three, but I'm involved on campus so I have to stay on campus. So it's not -- students aren't always just, you know, come to school and leave right after the class. They have common hour. They have a lot of clubs to do, activities, events going on. And a lot of students stay on campus to study as well. And there's students that have class gaps. Because when I was working admissions, I saw a lot of students that would have a class from 8 to 9:30; and then again when they -- they would have to wait all the way until 2 to 3:15 for their next class. So they obviously were not trying to give up their parking spot. They would just stay there all day and that would unfortunately have -- someone else that has a class around 1, 2:00 wouldn't be able to get a spot because they have to stay all day or study because -- lot of my friends know, and my colleagues, they won't leave campus because they know if they leave, they're not going to get a spot in time for their class. And also --

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

You know, I just wanted to mention that -- Legislator Trotta, I'm sorry to interrupt you -- she made a very, very good point. The issue -- can you restate what you just said about leaving campus and not -- and staying on campus the entire day?

**MS. JEAN-FRANCOIS:**

Yeah, I was saying that a lot of students actually -- being a student myself that's really involved with clubs and activities, I can be on campus from 7 AM 'til 6 PM, 'til 7 PM at night just because -- my class ends at three, but I'm involved and I'm trying to do better things for the school. And there's a

lot of events going on, community service. And I can't leave immediately. And there's students, you know, they're not going to leave because they have to -- they won't be able to find a parking spot when they come back because someone that probably just has a class, one class, whatever, took their spot. So obviously someone's going to stay on campus all day there. You know what I'm like --

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Yeah, but certainly not everyone stays on campus.

**MS. JEAN-FRANCOIS:**

Yeah, but a good amount of them do. We have over like -- hundreds -- like a hundred clubs, I think. I'm not sure. But, yeah, we have a lot of clubs on campus so there are a lot of students that are involved with these clubs that do actually like to be involved and do go to events. And, you know, even when we have dig pink events and volley ball games or whatever, these students are involved and do like to come out and support so -- and also with the full parking lots, we have a problem where the students can't find a parking lot. And basically they'll be looking in every single parking lot. And there's dead ends. And then when they look, they have to make a tight maneuver and have to make a really tight U-turn, which is really dangerous because -- just because some people aren't thinking about other people's cars. And they could hit them and then no one will know about because they'll just leave. So that's something, also, that's a problem. You know, we need more parking spots so we won't have as many parking spots full as we do now.

And also when we have full parking spots, we do have students that will pack in illegal -- oh, I'm sorry, you have a question?

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Well, your time is up another, you know, maybe 10 seconds, if you could wrap it up.

**MS. JEAN-FRANCOIS:**

I'm so sorry. Okay, okay, yes. So, I'm really a big advocate for that. Okay. I'm sorry.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

No, no, we really appreciate you coming up and, you know -- you know, I apologize for our time restraints but we do have to continue on. But, again, if you have further insight, it's always welcomed. And, again, we appreciate your public speaking portion here so thank you.

**MS. JEAN-FRANCOIS:**

Okay, thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Okay, we're going to continue with Suffolk Community College's administration input regarding -- right now the legislation that we're focusing on is the traffic circle. And I do want to mention that the Education Committee did take a tour of that specific area just to get a better idea and visual of what happens. And if you'd like to chime in and let us -- give us some more insight into that.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Well, we have folks here who could answer any questions that you might have. I know that the Faculty Association did a video just yesterday, I think, of that intersection to show the kind of traffic that can happen. I know yesterday anecdotally I left for lunch going that way. I normally go out College Road, but I got a chance to see trying to make a left-hand turn back there. And as people come over the rise, they come down and they really just naturally pick up speed going down. So it's free-for-all at that intersection when classes are starting and when classes are exiting. But we have folks here -- we appreciate that you folks came out to visit on the campus. That was very nice and

very appreciated.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Okay.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

We're here to answer any questions --

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

I just want to mention you have the video, right, you have the Traffic Study. We're looking at it right now.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Right.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Unfortunately -- well, our audio, people can hear us but not see. Okay, go ahead, Ben.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Go ahead.

**MR. DeMAIO:**

Good morning. So these shots were taken by College folks. It does show the T-intersection where we want the traffic circle. You can see the amount of congestion we're dealing with here.

**LEG. CILMI:**

It looks like traffic's moving pretty quickly.

**MR. DeMAIO:**

Well, that's a little -- that's a little sped up. Impressive video.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Oh, I'm sorry.

**MR. DeMAIO:**

You'd have real big problems if that was actual speed.

**LEG. CILMI:**

A little levity never hurt anybody.

**MR. DeMAIO:**

We appreciate that. I'm just keeping a -- I want to keep an eye on the time here. There are a couple near misses that the video shows. One at 1:43; one at 1:50. And what we're dealing with there is something that the traffic circle will correct; and it's that the T-bone type accident where someone coming off West Road making that left misjudges oncoming traffic from North Road and there's a near collision. That's really the major accident we're trying to avoid at that location.

In addition, the other advantage of the traffic circle is it is self-enforcing. Everyone who approaches the circle must slow down. They can't simply speed through because there's a long straightaway there. So we appreciate that aspect of it. We appreciate that it keeps traffic flowing. You don't stop unless you need to stop. So in periods where traffic get's reduced, you could move a lot of cars. And it addresses the poor sight lines as you could see from the views before coming up that hill. You don't know you're on top of the car until it's too late.

We're about to come up to our first near miss. Right there. (Indicating)

**LEG. CILMI:**

How long a time period did you record before you got to that near miss?

**MR. DeMAIO:**

The entire video's less than 20 minutes. So in 20 minutes we have two near accidents and a wonderful U-turn by a very impressive driver who should probably be in NASCAR.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

And, again, you gotta understand, too, though that a lot of these people driving are students. They're young, you know, young kids that -- a little bit -- and probably more challenged perhaps than some of the older adult drivers. A little less patient because they're getting to their classes in a bit of a rush. And there's --

**MR. DeMAIO:**

This is a wonderful maneuver here (indicating).

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Oh, my God, a complete U-turn. So, again, I just wanted to add to -- clarification as to why this particular spot, I think, is very important with a traffic circle -- traffic safety circle is really --

**MR. DeMAIO:**

And I think the circle also, as you say, we have a lot of young drivers. The circle's almost a behavioral modification as well as a physical one. Because, again, it is self-enforcing. You must slow down. You get used to how the circle works. You're yielding to traffic that's within the circle. When there's not a lot of congestion, a lot of cars can move through. When there is, they can at least move through more safely. So we're not only modifying it physically, but you're modifying the behavior of drivers that approach that intersection.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Okay, Legislator Cilmi has a question for you.

**LEG. CILMI:**

While we were at campus last week, we talked about the safety issues at that intersection and we asked for a history of accidents and, you know, an analysis of the severity of those accidents. Were you able to come up with anything?

**MR. DeMAIO:**

Insofar as total number, I was able to pull that from Cameron Engineering's original Traffic Study in 2009. Rebecca Goldberg from Cameron Engineering is here again today to provide the answers to any technical questions about the recommendation.

Between 2004 and 2009, a five-year period, there were 26 accidents at that location. So you were averaging anywhere between two to eight accidents a year. The severity of them varied. Clearly the most severe condition we illustrated in some photographs when the Committee visited the campus last week, which is the T-bone type accident. I wasn't able to pull from that data how many T-bone accidents there were, but that's clearly the one we're worried about the most.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay. Well, I think we agreed when we met that having a traffic -- Rebecca, correct me if I'm wrong, a traffic circle is not necessarily going to prevent accidents in the entirety, but rather would prevent, to some extent, probably not prevent completely but prevent to some extent the T-bone

accidents, which are the most dangerous of the accidents. And so I'm sorry that you don't have some of that information because I think that's important information to have. I mean, clearly there are many things we could do on our roads, in our parking facilities, at our College to make driving safer. Some of them are practical and some of them aren't. Some of them have costs associated with them that are prohibitive. So I'd love to have that information.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Okay, well, it's not -- it looks like they don't have that specific information. But I'm just curious, I know you had -- you said 2004 to 2009. Do you have any current information? Because not only has, I'm assuming, the student population increased, you know, current traffic, you know, accidents probably would be interesting to see, you know, unfortunately --

**LEG. CILMI:**

Well, I mean, here's --

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

-- that are current.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Here's a question. And this is -- I mean I asked this question, you're not going to be able to answer it, but I put this question to our Committee as, you know, something to sort of think about. In East Islip, as an example, in the district that I represent, Union Boulevard, which is a County road, intersects with Carlton Avenue, which is a County road. There's a traffic light there. I'd be interested to know how many accidents occurred in that same time period, you know, at that intersection. Because if we're going to use that as a gauge to determine whether or not to install a traffic circle somewhere, maybe we should be installing a traffic circle at that intersection. I'm sure -- you know, I don't know how many other similar intersections we have in the County that are two County roads intersecting with one another, but my point is that while -- while it may be true that installing a traffic circle is going to improve traffic flow to some extent and improve safety maybe to a greater extent, it's just not practical to install them at every single intersection where we have -- where we have the potential to have accidents.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

But even if it just saves one accident, you know, that --

**LEG. CILMI:**

But by that theory, then,, we should be installing them at every single intersection now. Let's not wait. Because we can prevent one accident and possibly save one life, you know.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Listen, Legislator Cilmi, let me -- let me just inter --

**LEG. CILMI:**

It's just --

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

I know your passion. This is good. We want to save lives. We want to create a safe environment. But, again, we're looking at the value of this. The value is -- number one, is the safety value. We need to protect our residents. And a lot of our kids go to the College.

Number two, it's a financial issue. It's \$250,000. Actually \$500,000. The State takes half of it. So we have a partnership with this particular project. But, again, if -- the college students, and I believe they have -- they have some case where the college has been sued, there's been hundreds

of thousands, if not millions of dollars over litigation because of this traffic issue. I personally feel it's a very important investment, not only to safety but also financially, this one particular traffic circle. And I think you're absolutely right, we should look at other locations throughout Suffolk County if this is a proven way of, you know, taking care or looking at safety issues with traffic. We see it in Riverhead. You know, we go to Riverhead a couple times a year. And it seems to work pretty well. But, again, you know, we're asking experts. We have an engineering firm. We have the Administration here. Could you elaborate on some of these issues that Legislator Cilmi has?

**MR. DeMAIO:**

We can certainly do that. I just wanted to provide additional information for Legislator Cilmi's question. In speaking to our Director of Security, there have you been four severe accidents in the last five years at that intersection. So by "severe", that means transport to an emergency room and hospitalization, just to give you that statistic. And then Rebecca Goldberg from Cameron can talk about the other technical merits of the roundabout.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Okay, can everyone hear me? All right, very good. Just for the record, Rebecca Goldberg, PE, Licensed Professional Traffic Engineer with Cameron Engineering. We're headquartered in Woodbury.

I was one of the engineers who walked this campus, performed the Traffic Common Safety Study back in 2009, was involved in the revisions through today. Just to answer a general issue about roundabouts, first, Legislator Cilmi, if the County wants a study of that intersection on Union Boulevard, we'll open ourselves up. Levity goes both ways.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Ka-ching.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Yeah (laughter). But I will tell you, in general, what roundabouts do is -- the first thing is that they take the typical what we call conflict points when -- at a typical intersection between you as a driver and other drivers, between you as a driver and other pedestrians, bicyclists everybody there. The roundabout will basically take the number of conflicts and then reduce that by about 75%. So that reduces the total numbers of crashes typically from a standard intersection to a roundabout.

Then what they do is when a crash does happen, because we can never say that we'll always prevent every single crash that could happen, but when you do have a collision at a roundabout, they tend to be less severe because you can't have a T-bone, a right angle, a head-on. It's typically more of a rear end or a rear end or a side swipe, which tends to be low speed and just the type of collision is less likely to cause severe injury.

What also -- just as a general thing with roundabouts and trying to build roundabouts, often there are two things that make a roundabout not feasible. One is the cost of property acquisition. Not an issue here. Two is the cost and the feasibility of utility pole relocation and major utility relocations, which we also believe is not an issue here. So roundabouts have a lot of benefits. They're not feasible everywhere, but this is one location where based on the reported conditions, the observed conditions, where we've come back numerous times and seen the sight issues, the congestion issues, the near misses and the severe accident history, we look at all of that. We look at the fact that you don't have to acquire any other property; you already own it. We don't believe there's major utility relocation to be done. And we look at other possible ways to fix a number -- a numerous number of problems. And that's how we come up with the roundsabout as the feasible and supportable solution.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

I wanted to mention, too, that when -- that when we took the tour, the geographical landscape was -- you know, it wasn't a positive place to have traffic. In other words, there was a lot of blind corners. This particular spot is very dangerous as far as I'm concerned when you -- we saw the visual. Because as the cars are coming up a hill -- coming up the hill, and the driver that's turning doesn't always see, you know, the car. So, again, can you elaborate a little bit about the geographic landscape.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Sure. When you're coming up the -- West Road, which is the north/south side street road, you're basically looking around an uphill as you turn to your right. There's actually -- when you're looking north, and then you have the cross street and then parking field four is on, let's call it the southeast corner, so there's a retaining wall. So where people are parked, they're actually parked at a level about five feet above where you are at the intersection. And so if you're looking towards your right at oncoming westbound traffic, it's somewhat difficult to see. Part of any improvements, roundabout or other improvement, would involve some type of grading so that you're approaching the intersection from all directions on a more level approach, which would hopefully improve sightlines. And then also with the roundabout, you don't need to see in multiple directions at once; you only need to look to your left at oncoming traffic coming to you around the circle.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Okay. Legislator Cilmi has a question for you.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Rebecca, when we met last week, we discussed that Cameron had explored a number of different options to not only improve traffic flow, but to increase safety at that intersection. Among those options were a traffic signal potentially, stop signs potentially, table tops in the road. Could you discuss those options from the standpoint of effectiveness in reducing the potential for severe accidents at that intersection as well as -- as well as the financial implications of those options.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Sure. Okay. So one thing we would look at is what's called a multiway stop, which would mean just installing a stop sign for eastbound and westbound traffic in addition to the stop sign that's already on the northbound approach. Based on the volumes that we saw, all that would do is create queues for people going east and west and making everybody stop whether they need to or not.

A traffic signal, we can't say yet if it's -- what's called "warranted." New York State Law says there are various traffic features: The numbers of vehicles coming over eight hours, four hours, peak hour and on so where you need to meet at least one of those conditions to justify a signal legally. Let's say you do justify a traffic signal, it addresses some of the problems, but not all, because it doesn't really affect oncoming speeds; and actually at some times it can actually encourage people to go a little faster. If you see the traffic light has been green for a long time and you think it's going to turn red, *oh, I better hurry up and make the light*. If the light is turning yellow, *oh, I better hurry up and make the light*. So signals can have many benefits when they're warranted, but they don't address necessarily the sight line issue or the speeding issue. And like anything else, that's really not a physical prevention of intersecting movements. It's not a self-enforcing condition. So, again, I mean we try to look at other solutions.

**LEG. CILMI:**

What about the bumps and the table tops? Not speed bumps, but the wider --

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Speed tables.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Speed tables.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Yes. And they are also -- they've been already installed at other locations on the campus. Along East Road I believe there's six or eight -- six or seven.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Have they proven to be effective in terms of slowing traffic on those roads?

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Yes. The way they function the best is if you can install speed tables about every 300 to 500 feet apart, because you slow down to negotiate over the table. And what you want to do is not give people enough room to accelerate before the next speed table. So speed tables are good for -- if you have a crosswalk, they help consolidate all pedestrians and they go to the raised crossing like they do today. Of course the fencing that's been installed also helps. And they also act for traffic coming for through moving traffic. So you can't comfortably negotiate a traffic table at 30 miles an hour. You really negotiate it closer to 20 miles an hour. Similar to a roundabout; they're basically designed to be negotiated at 15 to 18 miles an hour.

For this particular intersection, traffic tables along North Road would help the speeding issue. And we actually -- you know, that's one of our recommendations in our report, was to install traffic tables. But, again, it only solves one of your problems. It doesn't address the sight lines; it doesn't address the near miss issue when you're actually at the intersection. And unless you raise the entire intersection, which is -- you know, again it's for speed control, but again it's not for sight lines, it doesn't address congestion or other issues.

**LEG. CILMI:**

How many speed tables would you -- did you recommend in your report for that particular stretch of North Road?

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

I believe -- I mean we have the figure in our report. I believe four or five going from the intersection east to the curve around fields five and six.

**LEG. CILMI:**

And for four or five of them, what was the -- what's the cost associated with that?

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Generally they're about 30 to \$35,000 a piece depending on the drainage -- if you need drainage, depending on how much construction that you need to do.

**LEG. CILMI:**

So if we did five as an example --

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

That's about \$175,000.

**LEG. CILMI:**

\$175,000 total. If we could avail ourselves of a State grant for those, that would reduce the County's investment to something like eighty or \$90,000, let's say. What if you just installed two or three? I mean coming right up to that intersection? Because although I'm sure it would be beneficial to have them all along the road there, really the important -- you know, the important

ones would be right at that intersection there; right?

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Again, I mean it would be a benefit. Does it solve every problem? No.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right, it doesn't -- it certainly does not solve the volume problem.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Not the volume and not the sight lines, which is one of the main safety issues.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Well, but if you're necessarily slowing down traffic as a result of those built-in, you know, those built-in --

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Tables?

**LEG. CILMI:**

-- tables, then the sight line doesn't necessarily -- isn't as much as an issue any longer.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Well, what happens is, as you slow oncoming traffic, you don't need to see the oncoming traffic as far in advance to know when to turn in.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

But if you can't see an oncoming car, you can't see an oncoming car. I mean, there comes a point where if you can't see more than 100 feet passed you -- I mean let's say there's somebody waiting to make the westbound left turn, it's very difficult if you're in the northbound left or right -- really the northbound left lane to see westbound through vehicles. So if that westbound through vehicle is coming at 20 miles an hour, 30, 15, I mean, again, if you can't see them, you can't see. So either the person's going to wait until the westbound lane -- sorry, the westbound left turn moves and you can see a little further leading to long queues or they'll go. And you get a near miss or you get the type of collision that we're worried about.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I think the last question, what is the typical speed on the road throughout the College that have the speed tables in them?

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Well, the speed tables on East Road were installed in late 2012. So I don't know that we have post condition speeds there. I know that when we did our speed study and that when the College did a recent speed study on North Road in -- I believe August or September of 2014, the general speed -- and remember the limit -- the posted limit is 15. There's very few people actually going 15. The typical --

**LEG. CILMI:**

Which is a whole other issue. I saw very few people stop at those stops signs as well.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Right. So the typical speed range was more like 25 to 35. And there were people, although don't ask me how, they were reaching speeds in excess of 60. Six zero. 60 miles an hour. I believe it's mainly off-peak, but still it's -- it's not a situation where people are obeying the speed limit.

**LEG. CILMI:**

But when you install -- you must have some benchmark when you install those speed tables what typically -- and if you install them properly separated, as you described, what would you expect, you know, an acceptable -- or not acceptable, but a reasonable reduction in speed to be? What would somebody be able to drive in those conditions?

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

I mean typically we're looking at about 20 miles an hour, which even if it's above the limit, I'd rather have someone going 20 than going 30 or 40.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right. Okay. Thank you very much.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Also I just wanted to mention the element of nighttime and evening classes, you know, the community -- a lot of folks, residents go to the Community College after work. So, you know, a lot of classes are taken at nighttime, which makes it even more dangerous regarding, you know, traffic issues. Legislator D'Amaro has a question for you.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Thank you. Good morning. Your traffic observations are coming to a conclusion of let's reconfigure the road. But did you give any thought as to ways to reduce the traffic at that intersection?

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Okay. Well, part of our recommendations, and the College Administration can speak to this better than I can, was to -- what -- we'll call it leveling the class assignments between Monday through Thursday and then adding more classes on Friday, maybe Saturday or Sunday. When we were there, we had -- we looked at the number of what I'll call student registrations. So if you have one student taking five classes, that's five student registrations. So we looked at the totals on --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Okay. So you did look --

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

-- and then we recommended that -- okay, we offer maybe fewer classes --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

-- Monday through Thursday and try to shift them more towards off-peak days.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right. So that would be one way to reduce the traffic at the intersection.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Some. Up to about 15 or 20% from our report.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Okay. I appreciate that answer. That's not what I was thinking of. What I was thinking of was when you come off at Nicolls Road and enter the campus, there's a roundabout there already, you're on campus. The problem is that anyone going towards lot four, five and six in the back, what I call the back of the campus, has to intersect with cars that are just coming onto campus as well. So even though you're already on campus, you're not being taken into the campus before you're meeting up with the next access point. Is that accurate?

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

I know when you come up the traffic circle, I take that counterclockwise route passed fields 8 J, 8 A, 8 B and C.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Well, you're going up West Road, right? West Road, is that what that's called? To North Road.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Oh, you mean passed fields three -- 3 A, 3 B, 3 C and those along West Road? Is that what you mean?

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

No. So when you come in off Nicolls Road at the traffic circle, if you follow that to the right and then get onto West Road --

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Yes.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

You follow West Road to North Road?

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Yes.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So North Road is an access to the campus from off campus.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Yes.

**LEG. D'AMARO;**

Right. So my point is that what you're doing is once you enter off of Nicolls Road and get on West Road and you're on campus, we're directing the traffic to another access point. As opposed to taking the vehicles that enter on Nicolls Road onto North Road and getting them into the campus, we're in effect keeping them just off the campus and intersecting with more oncoming traffic onto the campus. My point is that if you want to reduce the traffic at the intersection of West Road and North Road, what you need to do is get the cars that are on West Road off of that road sooner before they reach that intersection. So was there any thought given to that?

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Not from that specific path. I do know if you're going to create a physical connection from West Road to somewhere else in the campus --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

I mean that gets into heavy road construction. And without having a specific project, I can't give numbers but 250,000 or half a million dollars would be a low cost.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Yeah. And I also want to mention, too, though when we took the tour, as you drive around the campus, the geography, you're talking about, you know, seven or eight foothills up and down and valleys. I understand what you're saying. That's a good idea as far as trying to get the traffic within the parking lot instead of going out on the road. But there's already, you know, buildings and some major geographical challenges to do what you're suggesting, which is again, great idea, but much more expensive, but we'll have the engineering firm comment on that.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Okay. So let me continue. If you're on West Road heading towards North Road, and you make a right onto Ross Road before you hit the intersection, you hit Ross Road and eventually turns into Washington Avenue, okay, is there any entry from Ross Road or Washington Avenue onto any parking -- into any parking lot?

**MR. DeMAIO:**

Currently there is no entry, say, to lot four, the first lot you would come to on Ross Road, the large lot there.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right, I see that.

**MR. DeMAIO:**

From the rear.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right.

**MR. DeMAIO:**

So part of Cameron study was -- and it wouldn't alleviate the entire problem, but if someone wanted to get to lot four and not need to go to that intersection, is there a way we could get them to lot four? The -- let me get my geography right -- the southwest corner of lot four, the topography there would allow the addition of another node from Ross Road to that lot. As you travel further east on Ross Road, the change in elevation from Ross Road to those parking fields is very substantial. It's not physically possible to connect the two. But as part of the parking expansion project, the other project on the table today, we would look at those potential connection points to those lots in addition to making them more efficient. On a cursory review through the study, geography is the primary challenge there. The difference is in elevation. So it can be done to a degree to help alleviate that problem, but there are physical limitations.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So you would have or you think it's more feasible to get into lot four off of Ross Road. But as you continue on, you cannot get access to five or six from that road which turns into Washington Avenue.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Yeah, if I can try to explain the topography, if you're looking at Ross Road as one leg and field four and field five as another, it's almost a reverse seesaw, where the parking fields go down in grade and Ross Road goes up.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Approximately where the guardhouse exists today is where they're closest in elevation --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

-- where we think it's the most physically feasible to do a connection. But beyond that, again, it would take such extreme construction to try recreate for a separate connection. It makes it much more expensive and much less feasible.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Well, if I could just say that looking at it between lots four and five, you have, I think, enough room to do a gradual slope down into both lots.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

And that may be the case. Again, we're not going off a detailed survey. We're looking at our own observations, at general relative elevations between two areas.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right. See my feeling on this is that I'm not opposed to the traffic circle because clearly you need to do something. But, you know, putting in a traffic circle to slow down too many cars is not eliminating or maybe not sufficiently addressing a hazard. And so that's why my question upfront was rather than look at how do we deal with all of these vehicles at one time at the intersection, maybe we should change our thinking and say how do we get some of these vehicles out of that intersection.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Well, I think both are a terrific idea. If we look also just at the volume through that intersection --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Well, let me just take issue with the "terrific idea," okay, because the testimony that I'm hearing with respect to a traffic circle will somewhat improve safety. But the hope is that you only have fender benders and not injury. You know, to me that's not the type of reasoning you want to rely on when you're talking about safety.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Well, it also reduces the number of collisions outright. I mean there have been before and after studies.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Sure. Fair enough.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Many, many places.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right. So it just seems to me that have an awful lot of room to configure access to the lots. So that rather than having folks that are already on campus merging into another access point to a campus, you can keep them on that campus and further into the campus and park their vehicles before those

other cars even get onto the campus.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Okay. Well, if we look at relative numbers, the volume through the intersection of North Road and West Road is anywhere from five -- about 5,000 vehicles in a day. Lots four is -- has capacity for about 400 cars.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

I can look in my report for the specific number, but order of magnitude it's about 400 cars.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

So even if everybody who parks in field four was to divert off of West Road and use a new Ross Road connection, that's less than 10% of the approaching traffic. So it would be a reduction. It was one of the things that we --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

But that's not the point. The point is that once you're on Ross Road, if you had -- and you continue along Ross to Washington, you're staying within the campus. So where are the other 90% of those vehicles going, then, if only 10% are going to lot four? And what you need to think about is how do I get not 10% but maybe 50% of those vehicles to turn onto Ross and figure out where are they going. I'm not saying that you can do this sitting here. But what I'm saying is that -- you know, I don't think the traffic circle is going to solve this problem. Because you're going to have an enormous volume of traffic now negotiating that circle, rushing to class, just like they are now, at the same times with the still school schedules, or even if you try to improve on the school schedule. And I think the thinking in the future has to be more about getting and understanding that once you get onto the campus, you can't direct the traffic towards the exit -- or the entrance where other vehicles are coming on. You have to get them deeper into the campus and figure out where they're going and how do we get them access.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

One thing I'd just like to point -- and then I know John wants to speaker right after, is that if someone is -- let's say they don't want to go to field four, they want to go field six or field seven or somewhere else on campus --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right, right.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

We do not want to create a condition where we encourage people to cut through a parking lot to get to that main destination.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

But I didn't say that. This road's here.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Well, no, but if we're not going to physically construct a new road connection to get elsewhere into the campus, and we're forcing this new connection only into field four or only field four and field five,

that you could possibly encourage what we call cut-through traffic.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

No, but what I'm saying -- I'm not looking at price right now or cost. We're talking about safety, right?

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Of course.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So my point is that instead of spending 250,000, maybe we spend three million, but we solve the problem and solve the safety issue as opposed to just, you know, hoping for a fender/bender and not a fatal injury. That's my point. So you have a large campus. You have a road system. And you're an engineer. So what I'm saying is, you know, put aside the cost. I mean it's always something that has to come into play, of course, but maybe we should look at redirecting traffic throughout the campus and figuring out why all these vehicles are winding up at that one location and redirecting them in other directions before they get there. See, that's my point.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Well, I will say in traffic -- planning and traffic engineering, nothing happens in a bubble. So if you reduce the volume at this one particular intersection, these cars are going to go somewhere. So what we want to do is get people where they want to go, where they need to go in a concise, clear path as safely as possible.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Well, I think that's exactly what I'm talking about.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Yes.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

The traffic circle doesn't accomplish that. So my question is not to be adverse to you. I'm not against this traffic circle if it's going to help. But I really, to the College, I think you need to think more about if you have this enormous volume of traffic, you know, where is everyone going and how do we better direct the traffic and let's use our -- you know, some other access points.

**MR. DeMAIO:**

Understanding your point, we feel the traffic circle will help. We also feel the parking expansion reconfiguration project will help. And the two together will help even further. If you're providing more efficient parking, better parking, key locations on campus that will be part of the detailed design study that will go into the parking expansion project, we would look at just what you're saying. Given our geography, given physically what is possible, how can we better access lots --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

You know, let me make a point here. I recall -- I went to Stony Brook. And they had a large commuter student population. And you had to park off campus and take a bus. And that was another way to, you know, reduce the traffic on campus. It's a large campus. You know, looking at the aerial view of this --

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Legislator D'Amaro, if I could --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Just one second. Looking at this -- at the aerial view, the problem that you have is that you're -- the way the College is configured, all of the parking is on the perimeter basically of -- then you have the campus, the inner section is the campus. And you don't have access from the inner campus to the parking lot. You bring it around the outside to get to the parking lot. So maybe you might want to consider buses as opposed to reconfiguring roads if that's too costly. Or maybe you do that already. I don't know.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

There's really no additional space on the campus to put anything. That's why the second resolution Capital Project is for reconfiguring the parking lots. Also taking a look to see if we can get some of that traffic before it gets to that intersection, as you had suggested, to try to make that parking lot before the intersection more accessible to the students coming up the road -- up West Road.

There are 62 acres that the County owns directly adjacent to the Community College on College Road that the College has had explored conversations with the County Exec's Office about taking some of that property for additional expansion for parking. Right now the County doesn't seem interested. Empire State College -- in fact, that is probably going to be building on a ten-acre site in that -- in that -- and there may be some symmetry -- might be able to get some roads coming from that new facility into the College. We'd have to take a look, but that's -- that's part of resolution number two that will be before you.

This is one that's -- in the scheme of things is not as an expensive project as building a parking garage or things of that sort. We think it's a public safety issue. We appreciate the time and effort that this Committee has put in to taking a look at this issue. We would hope we would get it to the Leg to, you know -- and make another presentation, if necessary, before the other Legislators. But I think the points that you've made are well taken. I know Legislator Trotta, who was out there, was walking the site, trying to see, I think, the difference between one road and the parking lot to see how that could be configured so that he could get into that lot before getting into the intersection. I think those are things that are considered in the second resolution, which is a lot more expensive. But, again, it's -- with respect to parking, which is a real issue, everybody understands that. And down the road perhaps the County can make available, you know, 10 or 15 acres of that 62 acres for additional parking at some point. I know Legislator Muratore, whose District this College sits in, has been in favor of that.

So there are a lot of things that are going to happen down the road, but if we could, you know, get your support on this one to get to the full Leg, we'd appreciate it.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Your comment that --

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Hold on. Legislator D'Amaro, are you done?

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Yes.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Okay, Legislator Trotta.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

To get to your comment about 10% of the cars, the 4 or 5,000 cars is throughout the whole day. It's not fair to say there's 400 spots because people come and go.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Right. I'm not saying that it's exactly 10% or whatever it is, but I'm just saying it can't be more than ten -- maybe 20% tops at any given time going to the lot.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

When I was there, I watched cars come to that intersection, make a right and then make another right into the parking lot.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

Yes.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

More than half of them were doing that. So if you could relieve that much stress on the intersection, put the raised walkways at that area -- I checked with the Police Department. I went to the precinct. I talked to your security personnel afterwards. I went back. I talked to the cops. I used to work that sector. No one can ever remember a serious injury on the campus. I don't know if there's a lawsuit. I asked the County for the statistics. I called the Police Department. They haven't got back to me yet. I talked to the Administration of the College about staggering the classes. Staggering the classes, I checked with the National Association of Community Colleges. It's a standard practice. Because what it does is it also frees up parking. Because when you get out of class 15 minutes earlier, when those other kids are now rushing to a class that starts 15 minutes later, the parking frees up. It's not going to be every spot. But if there could be 20% of the spots, that's 20% more parking without spending a penny.

So this has not been vetted whether or not we can stagger the classes. I think we should look into that. That's something, you know -- how it wasn't looked into 10 years ago was beyond me. But that is clearly -- and I thought it was something that I thought of. And I checked with this Association. They said it's something they do very often. So I don't think we're at a point now -- there's a lot of things we can do before spending half a million dollars on a circle that may or may not solve the problem.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Do you have any other comments here? Okay. Legislator Gregory.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you. I've been sitting here listening. And I missed part of the conversation. You know, I've been on campus on more than one occasion where, you know, stuck in the traffic and, you know, inevitably running late to an event. And I don't know the parking lots, but the other other parking lot next to, I guess West and North Road, and having to run up the stairs, which is probably about -- I think at least a 60-foot elevation at a minimum, going to the Babylon Building, where Riverhead is -- so I think there's certainly a need. I think there's some -- some good suggestions have been pointed out. If you create an access point to the -- to the north parking lot or right of North Road there, but, you know, obviously that would reduce some of the concern. But I think a traffic circle will actually in addition to that, I think what's probably more pressing is the expansion of parking altogether. And I think Legislator D'Amaro makes an excellent point that the way the parking is structured, everything's on the exterior. There's really little interior way to navigate through the campus. But I think because of the topography, it's going to be difficult to do that.

So I think we have to do -- you know, we have to try to do our best with what, you know, the circumstances are, the layout is now. And I think for me that is to put in the traffic circle but also -- did you say that you recommended another node or whatever you call it, or access point? So is that going to -- is that a recommendation that you're going to do or is that something that you recommended that's not going to be followed through in addition to the traffic circle? Or it's just the

traffic circle?

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

That was one of our mid to long-term recommendations, was constructing a connection from Ross Road, again, near where the guardhouse exists today to get to field four.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay.

**MS. GOLDBERG:**

To try to divert some of the traffic away from the intersection.

**MR. DeMAIO:**

That's part of the seven --

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay, so your plans are to do that. Okay.

**MR. DeMAIO:**

Yes.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Right. And the cost is 250,000, right?

**MR. DeMAIO:**

For the traffic circle, yes.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Right, right. Okay. Yeah, that's really all I had, you know. I support the project and what you're trying to do. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Okay, we'll take a vote. Okay. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**LEG. TROTТА:**

Opposed.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Opposed.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Motion carries. **(VOTE: 4-2-0-0)**

And I do want to reiterate the issue of safety. You know, let's not be blind sided by, you know, the issue as far as financial -- the financial issue. And, again, I don't want to go back here too much but I do believe there's litigation that you've experienced -- Suffolk Community College has experienced due to these traffic issues. And I definitely support the issue of protecting our kids. That's it. That's the highest priority. So thank you, Legislators.

The next resolution is **1514, Appropriating funds in connection with parking expansion (Ammerman Campus) (CP 2152). (Co. Exec.)** This is at the Ammerman Campus. I'd like to bring up the Community College again. Could you -- I'll make a motion to approve. Do I have a second?

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Second.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Okay. And the Administration, would you like to comment on this resolution.

**MR. DeMAIO:**

Yes, this -- this, as we've been discussing, would improve the parking additions on the campus. Looking at our, you know, topographical limitations, there's still much room that we can improve. We would focus on the easiest lots first, focussing on ones that are closely adjacent, don't work very well, try and eliminate the dead end style of parking, as a student testified earlier, of going in and trying to find a parking space, not finding one and then having to create a series of three point turns to get back out. That, again, can result in damage to other vehicles. It results in congestion. If we can add additional spaces, make it easier to get to, direct students more effectively once they're in the parking area by making physical improvements, we not only help with the traffic congestion, but we improve our parking capacity as well.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Legislator Trotta has a question.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Again, the same thing over and over again. No one has ever looked into staggering the times of classes, which will free up parking, that will free up traffic. And, you know, in a perfect world, I would do this. But, you know, we're \$2 billion in debt. And the enrollment's going to be going down based upon public school enrollment. And I just don't see spending the money for this.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Madam Chair, Dr. Chris Adams is here. He could speak to that issue. I know I think he had an opportunity to talk to Legislator Trotta yesterday but -- Dr. Adams?

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

That's fine. Welcome. Thank you for coming.

**MR. ADAMS:**

Thank you, Chairwoman. Legislator Trotta, we met yesterday morning. Thank you for hosting us. We are looking into the aspect of a staggering schedule, but I also wanted to just alert the Committee of some creative ideas that we've come up with, we've implemented; one of which was the creation of more 6:30 AM classes at the College to put more of our bread and butter core types of classes earlier in the morning. We found -- we did a study to look at what was our demographic. We found that the 18 to 22-year-old student -- we further inquired why that was. And we found that most of the students coming to us that are taking the 6:30 AM classes are graduates of high school that were used to getting up early and starting early morning classes.

So we're trying to be very creative in spreading out our classes, sort of the concept that you're talking about, staggering, but increasing more of our offerings in the morning, evenings, weekends. We have classes seven days a week. We go up until 11:00 at night most days Monday through Thursday. In addition I just want to add that we are offering more online class. In fact, our online offerings are up 9% this year. That is pretty -- pretty incredible. We're going more to the online format because we do think that that's the way of the future and it's going to help with, you know, the congestion, especially at the Ammerman campus.

I also want to make clear that we've been in contact -- one of our big initiatives at the College through Dr. McKay is sustainability. And we now have an Executive Director of Sustainability, Nick

Palumbo. Nick is charged with coming up and working with both our faculty and students on other ways that we can generate sustainability on our campus. We've met recently with the Commissioner of Transportation and the Director of Suffolk Transit so see what we can do to use more of our buses and use the aspect of bringing more of our students onto campus using public transportation. We've also been in contact with New York Rides on implementing a creative program to work with our students to put out a job posting online through New York Rides. It's a share program. Recently we just did a car-free day. You might have read about that in the newspaper. I certainly did. And it was very successful at the College. And it shows me that we can do more creative things.

Now, Legislator Trotta, I would say, you know, we always welcome ideas. We welcome ideas from our Legislature, from our residents, from our students, our faculty. I will do my due diligence. I will look into the American Association of Community Colleges, your idea. And I certainly, as I said yesterday at our meeting, I will get back to you, you know, to be able to speak to that. But I do want to be clear that we do welcome ideas from all of our constituents and certainly the Legislature.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Legislator D'Amaro.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Do you know specifically which lots are being improved? I'm looking at the Ammerman Campus guide where the lots are labeled by number. Do you know which are targeted?

**MR. DeMAIO:**

Certainly we would focus on the lots that are labeled three as you come up West Road.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right.

**MR. DeMAIO:**

It's a primary location. Lots four and five would also be part of the evaluation. The eight lots coming off of East Road is another prime location. And then you have those outer lots six and seven.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So all of them?

**MR. DeMAIO:**

All of them are (inaudible) for some improvement. Not -- not the one lot that --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

What is that lot off the circle of Nicolls Road?

**MR. DeMAIO:**

That's lot two.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

That's lot two. What building is that in front it there?

**MR. DeMAIO:**

The Brookhaven Gymnasium.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Oh, okay. So in all of these lots you're going to make these improvements and wind up with 500

more parking spaces.

**MR. DeMAIO:**

That's the estimate right now, yes.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

All getting to them through the traffic circle.

**MR. DeMAIO:**

Say again?

**LEG. CILMI:**

Withdrawn.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Okay. (Laughter) All right, so. How many lots -- how many parking stalls will you be deficient after the 500 are added? How many students do you have? Fourteen -- what'd you say, 14,000?

**MR. DeMAIO:**

Fourteen fifty.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

How many parking spots do you have?

**MR. DeMAIO:**

Thirty seven hundred.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Thirty seven hundred. That's about one fifth, something like that.

**MR. DeMAIO:**

Around.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

But they're not all there at the same time.

**MR. DeMAIO:**

Correct.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

You think 500 will help -- where are the vehicles parking now? On the grass and illegally and all of that?

**MR. DeMAIO:**

Everywhere they can.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Yeah, I would think so. Well, if they're doing that, why spend the money? (Laughter) All right. So, what is that County share, 1.5 and State aid is already secured for 1.5?

**MR. DeMAIO:**

Correct.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

All right. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Legislator Cilmi has a question.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I just want to explore something for a minute or two. So we have between 14 and 15,000 students at that campus now. I guess one of the questions you have to ask is what is the ultimate or maximum capacity of that campus? And, in fact, what is the maximum capacity of our College? And I guess capacity would be constrained by a number of different factors. Certainly the physical space in the buildings, the number of parking spaces, the, you know, the infrastructure in terms of the roadways, the amount of time in a day, the number of teachers that are available and the amount of funding that can fund expansion.

So all of those things impact capacity. And I'm sure there are a couple of others that I haven't thought of. So I mean does the College know what the maximum capacity is? If you were to do everything you could potentially do, how many students can you effectively teach at that campus?

**MR. DeMAIO:**

As you've stated, there are a host of variables there insofar as which one would be limiting. That would be -- we would have to look at that. I mean you have the physical situation certainly insofar as how many classrooms do you currently have. And our Capital Program as a whole tries to identify that and say, *okay, where do we need help insofar as physical assets are concerned?* Then you, of course, have how many teachers and the funding.

What we do feel is evident here is from a parking perspective we're at capacity. So given our current enrollment now, we need more parking. If the enrollment remains flat, we need more parking. If it goes up, we need more parking. If the campus is going to expand, any additional space is -- is a benefit: Be it two, three, five, six hundred. Every available space will help a difficult condition.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Legislator Cilmi, you make a very good point. There are different types -- right now there are no extra classrooms. And I can tell you that because of the Startup New York Program where we're working with New York State to bring in businesses from outside the State. We have had inquiries, but we have no physical place on campus where we could place a company that wanted to come in. So because of that, we work with all the other state universities. If we have somebody who comes in, we would recommend them to Farmingdale. We would recommend to Stony Brook, but they also don't have any classroom or any building office space that they could make available for any new startup New York company.

So from a physical plant point of view, we're pretty much max'd out. And there are no other -- except for the STEM Renewable Energy Building and the Health and Wellness Facility, that's pretty much the extent of where we can build out. There's no additional land at the Ammerman Campus to build another building. They increased classrooms. And the Brentwood Campus is now for the first time seeing them have -- have a parking issue for the first time. Because there's plenty of parking in Brentwood, but the enrollment is such that people are coming that parking is becoming -- just on the radar for the first time.

So we're pretty much built out. So we're pretty close to capacity. If the College were to expand programs, if we had an increase in enrollment -- you know, we have a Sayville Campus for nursing. So probably we would -- I would assume look maybe to other colleges that might have space. We

share some of our space with Long Island University, Southampton at the Southampton Campus and also with the Brentwood campus.

So physically as I say we're pretty much as far as the STEM Renewable, Energy and Health Wellness, that's pretty much all that we have on the radar. This parking and trying to fix the lots so people can turn around in them doesn't have the sex appeal of a major new building, but I think it would add to the quality of life for the students there now. You know, they pay a tuition to come in. At least what we could try to do is provide parking for them so they can get to class.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay. What sort of -- how are we fixed for capacity -- for parking capacity specifically at the other campuses?

**MR. ZWIRN:**

There's parking available at the Eastern campus, which has seen the most growth, I think, of all the three campuses. There is parking there. But you cannot build anything else in there because it's in the Pine Barrens. And anything that we build out there, anything, has to go before the Pine Barrens Commission before we can even get approval to do anything.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Talk then about building capacity at the other two campuses. At Eastern and at Grant. What I'm getting at is if we have a capacity problem at Ammerman, isn't there a way of moving more classes to Grant than to Eastern campus?

**MR. ZWIRN:**

I think the problem that -- what we have now and that we've seen, and you're very much aware of this, that the Towns of Babylon and the Town of Huntington, a lot of those students cross over into Nassau County because it's more convenient for them geographically.

Going out to the Eastern campus is, you know, it's 25, 30 miles from Ammerman. I mean so if anybody's living in the western part of the County, to go all the way out there, they don't like -- may not like the drive as much as I do every day. But it's 60 miles from my house to the Ammerman campus. It's still 35 miles from my house to the Eastern Campus. So coming the other direction where most of our students are from, that would be quite a -- quite a distance. And the Brentwood Campus is pretty much built out except the last building we have in mind is the STEM Renewable Energy Building, which you have approved and the State approved it but they didn't put it in the budget so we're waiting for January when that can be rectified.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I mean it looks to me like -- I'm looking at the enrollment numbers that you distributed in a meeting prior to this meeting. And it looks to me like there's a significant number of students -- I might even go so far as to say more students from the eastern end of Suffolk County than the western end of Suffolk County that are attending Suffolk Community College. And I think, if I'm not mistaken, one of the students who spoke to us, both of whom spoke to us very eloquently before, by the way, congratulations to both of you and thank you for coming, one of them said that she lives close to the Ammerman Campus but she spends most of her time on the Grant Campus. So my point is to the extent that we could utilize those other two campuses and maybe, you know, you'd have to look at it, maybe it's more practical to say use the Grant Campus. But to the extent that we can disperse students to those other two campuses, that might help us with our capacity problem at Ammerman, again, without financially impacting the College or the State or the County. It sort of goes to Legislator Trotta's thinking as far as, you know, staggering of classes. This is not staggering necessarily from a time perspective, but it is from a location perspective.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

My understanding is the Brentwood Campus is now for the first time beginning to see parking problems. And that we're going to have to watch that. But from the East End, the numbers we gave out, there are about 2400 students from Legislator District number one and number two. But the vast majority are from Legislator Muratore's district, which is where the Ammerman campus is. And Legislator --

**LEG. CILMI:**

You said it's a half hour -- roughly a half an hour between Ammerman and Eastern Campus? You said it's about 30 miles.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

But it takes more than a -- it takes more than an hour to get there. There's no way around traffic. I'm 60 miles away and it takes me at least an hour-and-a-half to get to the campus in the morning. Anybody comes from the eastern part -- even if you're coming to Hauppauge, you hit the traffic on the L.I.E. at exit 62 everyday. It's like clockwork. It just -- you're just stuck. And a lot of the, you know, the students that we have also work. So it's not only just them getting to school and staying there all day, they're leaving to go to a job and --

**LEG. CILMI:**

Well, I mean --

**MR. ZWIRN:**

-- family. I mean, it's a difficult --

**LEG. CILMI:**

Listen, I went to New York Tech. I lived -- I grew up in West Babylon. It was a -- at least a 45-minute drive for me.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Well, I lived in Port Washington and it'd take me an hour to go seven or eight miles because of rush hour.

**LEG. CILMI:**

My point is that I worked as well. And you have students from all over the County who are going to Hofstra University and -- who are going to Hofstra and Adelphi and many other -- you know, other colleges that it takes -- you know, it can take time to get to a college that you want to go to. Clearly -- so, anyway. That was all the questions I have. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Okay. Legislator Gregory.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

That was interesting. So this plan seeks to expand parking spaces, not structured parking.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Right.

**MR. DeMAIO:**

Correct.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

And obviously you haven't decided -- made a final decision yet, in your plan you're looking at, you

know, where to best do that. So you're looking at -- okay. All right. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

And I also want to comment, too, you know, envisioning the future of Suffolk Community College, this campus, and the partnership with the -- what was it, the State's economic -- Startup New York. Again, you know if this resolution goes through and, you know, you're able to expand the parking area, maybe consider, too, attachment to the area where the expansion's going to be for Startup New York, of course, because we'll need parking over there. But, again, I feel it's vital. We need to complement Suffolk Community College.

Most universities are losing students incredibly -- at a rapid rate. We're not. We're maintaining. We're actually increasing in some areas, but I think it's vital that we provide not only safety on the campus but also accessibility. And the additional parking will provide that for the traffic that goes to the College. So, again, anybody else? Okay. We made a motion to approve. We had a second. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Opposed.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Opposed.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Motion carries. **(VOTE: 4-2-0-0)**

Be prepared for the Legislative Cycle.

Okay, we have Resolution **1717, Directing the Department of Information Technology to develop policy and Pilot Program to facilitate opening data to the public. (Calarco)** And we have Commissioner Doug Miller, if you'd like to come up please. Or your IT Department. Okay, welcome to our Committee. If you could give us a brief description of this resolution and what it will do for the residents here in Suffolk County.

**COMMISSIONER MILLER:**

Okay. Well, this bill is similar to one we've done in the past under Legislator Beedenbender -- oh, Suffolk County Open Acts. This is on our website now. This one goes a little bit further and it provides more data for the public to access. And our thing is, it's been amended to include, I guess, an oversight committee, which will help us to determine the best way to package the data and make it available to the public.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

And I have Legislator Rob Calarco here, who is the sponsor of this legislation. Legislator Calarco.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

Sure, thank you. And thank you to the Committee for having me today. Yeah, this resolution, the intent here is to try to make more of the data and information available to the public in a readily and easily accessible format. You know, what we're looking to try to do, or at least what I'm trying to get out of this, is not necessarily to, you know, create work or anything along those means, but there's -- there's reams and reams of information that the County gathers in our various departments. And much of that is actually, you know, useful information to the public. In fact, I was trying to think of items. And there is one that we keep on Consumer Affairs in terms of contractors and which ones are licensed and which one had violations against them. And while there are various -- if you look through our websites and the various thousands of pages of website we

have, you can find some of this data sometimes and some of the data is not up yet. It's cumbersome.

And so the idea here is to create one central location, one web -- one page that you go to and actually look for whatever data information you might be looking for. What we've done in the resolution, the amendment I made, and this was at the request of the Administration, was to create a oversight committee to help craft the actual policy we would utilize in terms of developing the protocols and what information specifically is going to become -- be funneled into this department; and also to assist DOIT in developing the policy in terms of how that information is going to be transferred to them so that they can then take that information and put it in that one central location.

What I do have is we have an exemption in there so information that is proprietary in nature is not necessarily required to go on there. So when you talk about the AREIS system that is held by Real Property, that is something that would not be subject to this resolution.

There's also a disclaimer that goes along with it so that information that's on the website is, you know, if you are a, say, a title company, and you need to do work to ensure that a title has got clear -- a clear title there, you still have to go to the Clerk's Office; you still have to go through the process of getting the official documents. You can't just go to this website and assume everything there is going to be accurate. But it's intended to just provide more access to the public of information that's out there that the County has. And a lot of times this can be become useful.

The idea is that this actually will help us transition to the next stage, which is something the County Executive's actually put into his budget in terms of trying to get to more of a data-based analysis in terms of how we do things in the County. And then it -- once you know what data we're collecting in the various departments and add that into a central location, then from the administrative standpoint, you have a better idea of how to start analyzing that data and looking at it. And this is for our own internal workings, not necessarily the public workings, but how that data is actually -- you could use that to look at how we're doing things and how efficient we're being and how effective we're being in certain things that we do. So it goes to that without actually being that right now.

But we've worked with the Department. I think that they are supportive of the resolution. I think the Administration at this point in time is on board. And I think this a good project.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Question.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Legislator Cilmi has a question.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Question for the sponsor. So you mention some of the contractor information in Consumer Affairs. Just give me two or three other examples of information that might be there that's not accessible now through what we have available to us.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

Sure. So --

**LEG. CILMI:**

And then, if you could include a discussion of -- if there's potentially any fiscal impact to what you're proposing in terms of reduction of revenue as a result of stuff that might be available now that residents might pay for, but that may -- you know, will not have to pay for afterwards.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

So other examples: The Health Department in their ratings of -- they go into the restaurants and they do checks. So that's information that might become available. Accident data that might be out there might become available for people to take a look at. That's not only useful for, you know, maybe not necessarily the general public is going to look for accident data, but certainly those entities that are out there that do advocacy and transportation issues might be interested in that information.

There is a, you know, a whole host of different information -- beach closures at our beaches that happen periodically due to storm events. Even some of the water quality testing that's being done out there, all this information should be public information. But the only way you get it is going in and doing a FOIL for it. And that's really what we're looking at, putting out there, is the information that would otherwise be readily, publicly available information that you would go there out -- and right now the only way to get that information is to file a FOIL request. Or sometimes it is on the website and we just -- it's just buried somewhere in a page someplace and so this just creates a more unified one-stop type of location for you to find any of that particular information you're looking for.

I think Budget Review has in their Fiscal Impact statement that there is a fiscal impact per say. And obviously there's the opportunity cost that you look at in terms of time that it might take from some of our staff. I think, primarily, would then do itself. We're not asking departments necessarily to generate new data that they aren't generating now. It's just a matter of what they do generate. Let's figure out a way of getting that transferred over to DOIT so they can put it on the central page.

In terms of lost revenue otherwise, you know, again this information is not -- it's not going to be -- it's got a disclaimer on it. It's going to say "this is not" -- you know, "you can't take this as accurate." So if you're someone looking to do certain things in the County, like a researcher for title research, you're still going to have to go do that process. You're still going to have to pay for these certified documents to make sure that what you're getting is -- is accurate and you can rely -- it will hold up in a matter of a court of law if that were the situation.

So we may, I guess, lose some revenue in terms of money that comes in from people who have to pay the associated costs with filing a FOIL request, but at the end of the day we're also not expending the cost of having somebody having to go out there, collect that data for that individual and -- what do we get off that? Aggravation.

**LEG. CILMI:**

And there's enough flexibility, I guess, within the legislation that you created for this committee to decided based on the potential of fiscal impact loss of revenue to not make information --

**LEG. CALARCO:**

Absolutely.

**LEG. CILMI:**

-- available that's otherwise available.

**LEG. CALARCO:**

Yeah, absolutely. We kind of -- I painted some broad terms in terms of what should be in and should not be in there just to kind of give some guidance. But, yes, the idea here is that this committee is going to kind of -- is going to develop that policy, what needs to -- what is accessible, what should be made publicly available and how to best facilitate that process. And there's -- part of the changes that we made were -- in creating the committee was not just to have the committee develop the policy in the first instance and walk away and never -- never be engaged again. So the

committee will have a responsibility to reconvene once a month or so to take a look at what is being put up there and what is being missed and seeing -- and just reviewing the policy to see if there's any glitches that need to be worked out.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

I just want to comment, too, working with IT, you guys have really -- and women, have done a spectacular job in bringing some of the -- you know, older technology up to date, you know, working different websites. This is just another, I think, good example of what we're doing to try to facilitate new technology and making Suffolk County more efficient and effective. And I think this is -- and I will support this resolution. Okay. I'll make a motion to approve. Actually -- you have a second?

**LEG. TROTТА:**

Second.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Okay. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **(VOTE: 6-0-0-0)**

**LEG. CALARCO:**

Thank you.

**INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS**

We have **IR 1821, appropriating funds in connection with the acquisition of Suffolk County Telephony** -- is that how you pronounce it -- **Structural Improvements (CP 1814). (Co. Exec.)** Okay, could you explain, Commissioner Miller, the resolution?

**COMMISSIONER MILLER:**

Okay. This is part of our Capital Program request. It's a \$200,000 request that we would like to use to do a study countywide of our existing phone system and how to improve it going forward. You might say, why would we do that? The phone system's in place, it's working, it's been working since 1989. It was put in 1990 and we still have that same existing technology we're using today. And it's rather inexpensive. We enjoy the lowest rates in the State for our Centrex phone lines.

So what would cause us to do this is the fact that our contract expires next year in 2015 with that vendor. And we expect an increase. And so we were trying to keep the operating cost as level as possible by putting in areas of voiceover IP, maybe a hybrid system here and there. And in order to do that with the size of the county that we have, we wanted to make sure we spend the money the best way we can. And to do that, we'd like to do a study from a professional to guide us along that path.

I also have our Director of Telecommunications with us, Pat Connolly, if you'd like a history of the phone system and exactly where we're coming from on this.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

A brief -- and could you pronounce that? Is it telephony? Is that really how you pronounce it?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Good morning. Yes. Yeah, as Doug started to say, the history of our Centrex, basically Centrex came on the market in, like, 1970. It was installed in the County in 1990 as Doug just mentioned. The -- our current Centrex contract expires May 31st, 2015. We do have a one-year renewal at the County's option. For us to do that, I believe it needs an RFP waiver. It is in the County Attorney's Office and has been for a few months. Actually we've discussed it with them for the last several months, but on -- in November we were actually going to go forward. They said it should be six

months -- within six months of the expiration. So we've been discussing it for quite a while, but we are going to move forward with it in November and get it over to them where -- we have that prepared and ready to go.

After we take the one-year renewal, beyond that -- I spoke to Verizon, our account manager, to see if they would be willing to go beyond that if we wanted to. And they said they would. Currently they said that other Centrex customers around other municipalities that are renewing are basically doing at about a 5% increase. So based on our current spend with Verizon, that's about \$125,000 a year we could expect to go up.

Doug mentioned -- I think mentioned earlier that our line grade is 1244. The New York State OGS rate is \$20 a line so we actually have a very good line rate. Three years ago when we renewed the current contract that's in place now, we not only were able to maintain the 1244 rate that we had, but also we got in that -- a \$23,000 one-time signing bonus. I'm being told from the -- the account team has changed, you know, hands. But basically they're telling me that that's not happening anymore, they can't see us getting that. I mean I will still try to negotiate to get it. However, they're kind of preparing me for, you know, an increase of probably around 5% because that seems to be what they're getting. Verizon is increasing contracts that are renewing.

The RFP that we -- that we're looking to put out to -- if we get the appropriated money today that we're asking for -- I'll just give you some of the bullet points of what we're looking to do and what we're looking to put in it. We welcome any others, if there are any ideas, if anyone thinks that there's other stuff. These are some of the major ones but they're not all of them.

We're looking to evaluate what options are available including our current configuration and recommend to the County a voice network platform that will improve features, increase reliability, and is less expensive to operate than and how we are currently; perform sight surveys at all County locations and provide a comprehensive report based on the findings; recommend design requirements for the hardware and communication wiring that will be required to transfer the County to an alternate platform; assist the County in preparing a request for proposal detailing the scope of work to procure, install and implement a countywide telephone system, if a system or platform is found that is more economical that can -- than our current phone system. The awarded vendor will not be eligible to bid on the system, but only make recommendations to the County of what we should implement. The single vendor will then perform and complete the requirements within six months after they're awarded the contract.

So these are some of the things that we're looking to put in it. As Doug mentioned earlier, what we envision is, we have 15,000 locations, many -- you know, hundreds of buildings and phones are in, you know, legislative offices, everyone at the table, I'm sure, at the horseshoe. Also basically everything from Huntington to Montauk we have many locations. And over those many locations, we have 15 -- approximately 15,000 lines. So what we figured going forward is if we do get the money and if we do get recommendations on what -- where else we can save money, we would put in hybrid systems around the County, the smaller locations such as parks locations where they're collecting revenue, basically if they have one analog line now or two analog lines, we're not looking to give them an expensive handset to go up to, you know, a couple hundred dollar product. Wherever it's working, fine. And that's what we hope, you know, will -- my staff will work closely with the consultant, whoever we select. And wherever we see that exactly -- is in place is working, we will stay with that.

In other locations where they had need automation, they need better communications and better call center activity, that's where we're really looking to -- if the recommendation comes back and such, improve those kind of locations where, you know, it's necessary to serve the constituents better.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Okay. I just wanted to mention it looks like it's the -- what is it -- VOIP system that you're going to be implementing. And there's a voice -- voiceover internet protocol. In many of our areas here in Suffolk County we have issues -- you know, I don't have cell service where I live in Mt. Sinai. Most people don't along the north shore. But, again, is that going to affect the implementation of this system?

**COMMISSIONER MILLER:**

Well, the VOIP system, we'd be using the County's internal network instead of separate phone lines. So it's sort of separate from the cell network. But as we said, the study would then kind of vet out the locations that would be appropriate to install the VOIP system. And we wouldn't be looking to do that 100% around the County; just where it is appropriate, where the the departments need more metrics on the calls, we were not giving them that information now. Because the current system does not provide us with the ability to do that. Simple things that you expect these days.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Legislator Cilmi has a question.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Thanks, Madam Chair. So how long have you been with the County?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

I've been with Suffolk County a little over seven years.

**LEG. CILMI:**

In this position that you're in now?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

The last five.

**LEG. CILMI:**

The last five. What's your knowledge -- what do you -- what do you think is the universe of potential contractors -- not for this project, but for rather the provision of the VOIP service or whatever -- whatever other type of service we might employ? I mean are we talking about a handful of potential vendors? Are we talking about dozens of potential vendors? What do you think?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

I think when put we it out, I think we'll get many responses to at least take it and read it. And then, you know, obviously the companies will, you know, decide for themselves whether this is something they want to go after. But I would think that we would have many RFP responses to go through and sought through and try to figure out the most qualified.

Also we're going to look for, you know, who have they done this -- something similar in the past for, maybe other municipalities close by or, you know, other schools or whatever that are close to us in size.

**LEG. CILMI:**

How big of a contract are we talking about eventually? How much money does -- whoever -- what do we pay our contractor now? Annually?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

If you're talking about for phone service, roughly around two-and-a-half million dollars.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Two-and-a-half million. So it's conceivable that it would be something less than that given the potential user was offering that service. It's less expensive typically than --

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

When -- the sites that we would upgrade, basically what we would be putting in is larger capacity trunks. Right now Verizon Centrex is like having a line in your house. I know many people might have Cablevision or Fios, but back in the day everything was at AT&T, everything was copper from the central office to your house. Centrex is still exactly like that.

**LEG. CILMI:**

So --

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Verizon and AT&T are my past.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay. So you know this business pretty well.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

I'd like to say so, yes.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Yeah. So my question is why would we spend \$200,000 on a study?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Well --

**LEG. CILMI:**

Because -- I mean if you're dangling a \$2 million carrot in front of the universe of potential bidders for a system, it seems to me that you'd have a line of potential bidders at the door eager to tell us how we should -- you know, how we could improve our telephony system and, you know, save money.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

We do -- we do have -- you know, there are a lot of companies out there that are large enough to handle our work. And, you know, we do have companies that are interested in putting proof of concepts, and you know, maybe take a small department, 50 or a hundred users and actually loan us the equipment, not even buy it and put it in. However, this takes time.

And the other thing is, you know, we've been working closely, I mentioned earlier, with the County Attorney's Office, because, you know, if you take something from somebody and you do it, then everybody can be on line to do that. It could -- potentially to put one of these systems in, would take a few months. And if we had ten people interested, you're looking at, you know, 30 months potentially unless you were doing various systems in various buildings.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I just that -- you know, first of all, I trust your expertise. I trust the expertise of the various folks that you have working in your department. And I think there would be enough information available to us so that we could make an informed decision on how to proceed with this transition if we are, in fact, going to transition, without having to spend \$200,000 for somebody to tell us what we need to do.

Furthermore, if we believe that we don't have the expertise in-house or that it's too cumbersome a task, for our current staff to manage, to come to those conclusions, then it seems to me we can hire somebody for less money than we're, you know -- and pay them whatever, \$60,000 a year or something like that on a consultant basis even. And have them for three years and spend less money and get somebody who's available to us for, you know, to look at the whole -- to look at more than just this. I don't know. It seems like a waste of money is my point.

**MR. VAUGHN:**

Legislator Cilmi, I certainly understand your point but I would just say that three times 60 is 180, and we're talking about a \$200,000 contract.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Yeah, but -- but -- I was making a point. You'd have to talk to somebody at that point for three -- I'm not saying that we should have somebody for three years. I think -- quite frankly, I don't think we need to spend any money. I don't think we need to hire somebody else. I think that our in-house staff is capable of coming to some conclusions with potentially the help of the Legislature. But -- but you know, I don't think we should be spending \$200,000 -- and is this -- would this be a bond?

**MR. VAUGHN:**

Yes.

**LEG. CILMI:**

This would be a bond. I don't think we should be borrowing \$200,000 to pay for a study when we have employees who are here specifically who watch over our telecommunications systems. That's just my opinion. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Okay, Presiding Officer Gregory has a question.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you, Madam Chair. So this is a study to look at -- which is being -- they're interested in how to pronounce it -- the *telephony* system, because our contract is with Verizon? Now did you say the state rate per line is like \$20 and we're getting \$12?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Yes. 1244 per line is what we're currently paying Verizon. And the New York State OGS rate is \$20 for that same line.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

So this is off a State contract?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Well, currently we have a County contract that we pay 1244 per line. And we have maximum number of lines and a minimum number of lines that we have to stay between. If we closed out lines or disconnect lines early, and we drop below the bottom number -- we're not near it at the moment -- but if we were, basically we would have to end the contract. The penalty is you pay for that line until the line terminates, which would be the end of the contract, which would be -- right now would be May 31st, 2015 if we don't take the one-year renewal that's on the table from Verizon.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Right. And I know a few years ago you guys did what we had did when I was in Babylon. I was

Commissioner of General Services. You did an audit because there were lines that were -- that we were still being billed for, I imagine, that weren't in service. And I don't know -- I forget who, because they came by my office and they counted the lines. What type of savings did we realize from that?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

I'm very familiar with the study. It was actually -- Phone Review was the name of the company.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

They were here from 2010 to 2012. They signed a three-year deal with the County. They've been gone for almost two years now. What they actually found on this side of the County, or -- I guess I handle about 80% of the County. I handle about -- I have a responsibility for about 13,000 out of the 15,000 lines. The other 2000 lines are handled by the PD. They have their own staff. And really what they found was on the PD side, they found a lot of savings in the tariffs. The tariffs, AT&T, the Verizon tariffs are very cumbersome and --

**P.O. GREGORY:**

That's the -- you get charged per line, but then you also get charged per minute. Right? Is that what you're talking about?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Well, the way I way our Centrex works, we have 5-digit dialing between every office in the County.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Right.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

We can also call across the street to Home Depot or whatever, if we needed parts for that -- for the same price. Basically that's -- all compasses in the 1244 that we pay. If we make a long distance call or, you know, into another State or if we make one up to Westchester County or something like that, or the boroughs, basically those kind of calls we get billed for. But most long distance billing in the County comes out to about 23 cents a user. It's very small.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Really?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

So every month -- every month we have a long distance bill of about \$2000. And if you divide that by the 15,000 handsets, and I've done this math on this in the past, it comes out to about 23 cents a user. So we're really not making a lot of toll calls.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

So that's really a very small part of our bill.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

So the line charge has the -- the per minute rate included in whatever they're servicing, and we're getting charged for the service.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Correct.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Like I said, the five digit dialing is free. You could call to my desk, I don't think you'd want to talk to me all day long, but if you did, that call would be free.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Yeah, but if you called across the street, a non-government office, there's a charge for that.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Right now, no. It's a local call. And it's encompassed in our -- for every -- for every central office we're in, we have a certain number of paths that -- that's the way the Centrex was built back in 1990. And we're actually in, because of Legislator's Trotta's bill, I now know that we're in 26 different central offices in Suffolk County. Thank you for that. And basically they have two different kinds of equipment. And, you know, we're running into some issues -- or they are. Verizon's running into some issues. But basically in those 26 central offices, they have torque pads built in for the County. And every time we pick one of those torque paths, the call is free. And most of the times -- I would say, all of our desk-to-desk calls are free, no matter at what. And all of our local calls are free as well. Because I get no local bill every month.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

That's good.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

The only thing I get is this toll bill for approximately \$2000 a month. It varies, of course. But it equates to about 23 cents as I said earlier per user.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. So you -- you mention the savings in the PD. What was the savings outside the PD?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

The PD has about 2000 lines. And they actually -- initially I believe -- and I might be wrong on this because I don't handle their billing, but hearsay between Newsday and talking to my peers, I believe that there was a savings over there of about a million-and-a-half. But Verizon is taking, you know, to go through -- sought through what the consultant has given them. And I think the actual savings, at least this is hearsay, and again I don't know that it's totally accurate, it was more like \$500,000 -- after Verizon went through and sorted it all out.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Right. I respect your answer but you're not answering my question. I said what was the savings outside of the PD? Which is your area.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Under 13,000 lines that I handle, they were here for three years.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

U-huh.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

We paid them a couple of thousand dollars a year. And I'm talking like 2000, 3000. The three years I feel very comfortable to say it was actually far less than \$10,000 in savings. And when -- I mentioned earlier -- someone asked me when I came on board. I came on five years ago. And I do have a big, long history in telecommunications. And I interviewed my technicians. And they told me that one of the things they rarely did in the County was place a disconnect. And I was like why? People move, people retire, people do whatever they're doing.

And it became clear to me that there weren't a lot of disconnects going on. And now we get out of payroll, which is probably the most accurate record in the company and thank God -- in the County, and thank God it's in our organization so it's easy and available to me, I get it every month. My project manager is sitting behind me, Mike Johnson. I e-mail it to him every month. And he looks at it. Because I also have responsibility for all wireless, the people who leave everyday with smart phones, Blackberries, just a plain old cell phone or even some beepers. And he goes through that list and e-mails it out to the departments and says *according to our payroll records, you know, Health Department, you lost six people last month. Here's their names.* So Mike sorts through it to figure out what department they're in. And then basically sends it out to every department. And then they look at it and basically -- I can't disconnect lines because Johnny Jones left the payroll. Because a lot of times somebody else will get hired or somebody else will sit in a seat or pick up his --

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Right.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

-- responsibility. Or it's a County directory number, etcetera.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

So if they give us the permission and come back to us and say, yes, you know, these six lines can be disconnected, we disconnect them.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. And the point of my question wasn't to be critical --

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Sure.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

-- or anything. Because I know, like I said, when I was with the Town of Babylon, I went through the same exercise. People leave, the departments don't tell you. Or, you know -- there's a number of reasons why a line can go dormant for an extended period of time. So I'm glad -- I was just happy to see that we were going through the exercise and make sure that we are being billed for what we should properly being billed for. So the VOIP system, so you're not looking to transition from the Centrex system, which is an old copper system but more reliable when you have situations like Sandy, we found that that to be the case to avoid -- you're looking at maybe having a hybrid. Now what are -- are there any type of security issues with VOIP? Because I'm not all that familiar with it. I've heard of it. It's not new technology, per se, but it's, you know, I'm still not all that familiar with it.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

I agree with everything you're saying. As far as security, it's like any other data packet. The voice line, instead of -- like right now you can go to a {demark} or something of -- of Verizon, if you had a butt set, and you could listen to a conversation. If you went into a data closet with a butt set or anything else, you're not going to be able to hear a conversation that's going on on VOIP. It's basically packetized and goes over the wide area network that's in place. Although if we did go with a VOIP system, the wide area network would be impacted as well. We'd have to look at bandwidth in every location. We'd have to look at the switches that are there. Most voiceover IP need POE switches, it's called, power over ethernet. And right now about 30% of the County's switches are POE. About 70% are not.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

What does that mean?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Basically what it means is that you can plug a telephone into a data jack, or the same place you'll plug in your laptop when you come into your office or any other, you know, desk or tower. You can unplug that. You can plug the phone into it. The phone becomes a hub and you can plug the computer into it. So there are -- there are -- going forward, if you wire up a new building and you go with the -- if you go with Voiceover IP, you can actually run one wire to the desktop. It's not recommended, but you could and you could share that for both the person's data computer and their telephone.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

So because of the nature of the VOIP system, you have packets. Those packets can be interrupted, right? I would imagine in some form or fashion. So would you recommend that, say, for PD or any of those types of functions that they not use VOIP and they use the more secure Centrex system? Is that what -- your kind of initial thinking, may be?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Well, to your point -- you know, we went through Sandy. We went through blizzards. We went through -- we had a lot of storms since I've been in office. And I have to say that we have 15,000 lines. On a normal day, I have three technicians that handle from Huntington to Montauk. Most of you are probably very familiar with their faces. You're not so familiar with mine because I'm not coming to the desk and fixing the phone. But they -- on any given day, we have like -- I can count on my hand usually how many lines are out of service. Sometimes Verizon -- like actually last night I had somebody stay with it 'til like 8:00, working in the Dennison Building which feeds the entire Hauppauge Campus. They had a remote central office in the basement of the building. And they had a couple of circuit techs go bad last night. And so there were a lot more phones yesterday that were impacted. I don't know if you've made any calls to anyone in the Hauppauge area. You might not have reached them. You might have gotten a wave off tone or whatever.

But I escalated it with Verizon. I told them that they had -- they were going to leave at 5:00. I told them they couldn't. And basically I -- one of my guys went home and came back and was with them until 8:00 last night. It was fixed. And I think that problem is gone. But on most days, there's five lines or less out of 15,000 that aren't working.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Right.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

So I know on a data side 5/9 reliability is great. On a voice side, we're getting like 9/9s of reliability. It's really been great.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

So what you're saying is the system that we have now, old but reliable, the contract is kind of forcing us to look at options -- other options. And this study will allow us to evaluate those options that are out there.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

That's true. And sometimes, like I said, some departments may actually have needs out there. They do call us from time to time looking for -- you know, telling us what they have. And then we go out and evaluate and try to keep them within the Centrex, but we do have some -- like we put in some call centers over the last five years for DSS, to HEAP and some of the other programs. And Mike actually project-managed all of those locations. And, you know, they went well. But for the most part the Centrex is doing the job for most of the County today. I'm not going to say that there aren't folks that could use something better. There are.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Okay. Thank you. Thank you very much.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Legislator D'Amaro.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Why does someone need something better? Give me one -- just give me an example. Why does someone -- what would someone using a phone need something better? What's better? And give me an example.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

When I worked with AT&T, one of our customers 1-800FLOWERS, and of course, we're nothing near that, but call centers -- when -- with the layoffs that we experienced, you know, two or three years ago, some -- a lot of departments that have a lot of incoming traffic, they have a shortage of, you know, County employees, to answer the phone. And you can put in systems that will stack the calls. And so this way the person gets answered, they get a recording, they know they're on hold. You give them voice -- you know, you give them music or you give them something to let them know that they're still there. And as soon as they hang up, they get the next call. It's much quicker, rather than staying on a line and hanging up and the phone rings again, basically you can stack the calls so people don't just keep dialing all day long and getting busy signals.

Incidents I can say that we -- that we have, it was in the Sheriff's Department, that on Monday morning they get -- they get inundated with calls for who -- if you wanted to go visit an inmate. And they get like 500 calls on Monday morning. The rest of the week, they don't get anywhere near 500 calls. So on Monday morning, you know, they brought this issue to us around five years ago. We put in a small system for them, inexpensive system. And it worked out. It's a lot better. The reason why is they have two people answering the phone.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right. So it's the difference between not getting through right away and getting a busy signal as opposed to "please hold and the next available person will take your call" kind of thing.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

That about sums it up pretty well. Thank you.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So there are features to the voiceover internet systems that cannot be offered by the Verizon system.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

That's a -- yes, I mean what we have with the Verizon, it's like a PBX in the sky. It's -- all of the equipment, all of the brains are in the Verizon central office. There's 26 of them over at Suffolk County. What we have on everybody's desk is either a single line phone, if that's all they need; or if they have a multi-button phone because they have multiple line appearances, or they're answering several people's --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right. But let me just see if we can move along here. The feature-like holding for the next available person, is that available in the current system that we have?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Yes, it is.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

It is. Okay. So that's not a feature, then, that -- if the Sheriff's Department said they needed that, why don't we just install it?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Well, we did.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Oh.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

And as far as I know they're in -- you know, they still only have two people on Monday morning, but they still get a lot --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So we are stacking the calls.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Yes, we are. We are --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

No, but my question was what features will we be gaining by going to this voiceover VOIP system?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Just --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Well -- but are they features that we need is what I'm saying?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Well, in most cases and for most users, I would say no. But all I'm saying is that's part of why we're looking for a consultant to actually take the time that I don't have -- you know, I do have a qualified staff but I don't have people that could go from department to department --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

You mean maybe like conferencing feature, something like that?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Well, conferencing we have.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

We have that now. You know, we're not -- we're not using this as private users or residential customers where there's lots of neat things you can have added on. We're running a business here. And we need telephones. And we have telephones and they work and they're reliable. So I'm trying to figure out what's the advantage to changing what we have?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

There are a hundred -- literally hundreds of features that you could have. And for those that need them, you know, it might be a great thing. For 95, 98% of the County -- probably 95% of the County, I think -- I get calls everyday with people with -- you know, with phone things. And we have -- we have a county-grown ticketing system where you can put in a trouble on your phone. We do get troubles everyday and my staff is busy fixing those.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Yeah, but you're going to get that with any system. You'll get that with any system, though.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Correct, correct.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Let me ask you this: When the power goes out, does the system still work or do we have backup generators? Is that how we keep this working, operating?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Well, on -- in -- as --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

And not even when the power goes out. Like I know, in my home, I have the Cablevision, telephone, you know, because they give you that great package when you start and then they quadruple your price a year later. But, you know, there's a lot of intermittent service with that phone, I have to tell you. It's only as good as the signal coming in. And we all know, you know, the signal coming in is not always reliable. So, you know, I'm trying to understand what advantage is there other than it may be -- you're saying the cost will eventually come down for our phone services because -- if we transition over to this newer system.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Well, that's part of why we would want a consultant to come in and actually see, you know, that there are savings there to be offered.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So we're not sure.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

At this point -- at this point we're not 100% sure. I mean certainly the amount of money that we give Verizon for dial tone will go down dramatically. But right now I have a budget of about \$10,000 to replace -- when your phone breaks, we come -- we put in a remanufactured phone. It looks like it's brand new and it might work for another five, ten years.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

So our budget right now for equipment in my department is very, very low.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Yeah, let me ask you this: Can't we communicate right now using our computers if we wanted to?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Certainly --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

A voice.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

E-mail?

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

No, no, no, I'm sorry. I mean through voice.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Not the way they're situated right now, no.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Really? So if you put a service-like skype on my laptop right here, I couldn't make an outgoing phone call? I mean if the County had had an account with it?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Oh, yes, of course.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

That would be over and above your Centrex. Or if you wanted to go -- and hearing, you know, your earlier questions, I don't think you would want to go, you realize -- or I realize certainly that the Centrex has been very reliable. That's what I said before, it's like 9/9s of reliability.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

And --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Would you be adverse to doing an in-house evaluation of whether or not this would be cost savings and whether or not it's a right fit for the County?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

You know, like I said before, I think --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

It seems to me that you've already pretty much drawn a lot of the conclusions. You know about reliability. You know about whether it's secure. You want to really just identify which phones should go onto this new system. I don't know that it even makes sense to transition and have two different systems in the County. Because then five years later someone comes in and says we need another \$3 million so we can have one kind of system. Because that doesn't make sense because we've heard that argument many times.

So, you know, I think you need to think this through a little more in my opinion. I think you need to answer more answers about the technology. And I think you need to -- and reliability is very important and whether or not we should have one system or two systems or three systems. And I'm not prepared to spend this 200,000 today on a consultant coming in and basically they're going to tell us what you're telling us, that, *yeah, you could change over to this new system, it's a less reliable, here are the glitches, here are the problems with it, but you get a lot of bells and whistles with it if you decide to go forward.* But I'm not sure. I think it's up to you and the County to identify whether or not we even need those extra services.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

We have identified -- in fact, I have a list here today with me of, you know, some of the pros and cons of moving away from Centrex to VOIP.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Why don't you -- why don't you put that into a report that can make the decision whether or not we should go forward with doing this? I mean why the consultant?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Well, there's -- there are departments out there that do call from time to time looking for -- like I'll give you a for instance.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Sure.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Sometimes they'll call up and say *could I have a report on this phone number for the month.*

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

*Because I see an employee on the phone a lot. And I want to know if it's business --*

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

-- *or pleasure.* And our current system cannot provide that. Like I mentioned earlier, you can dial -- you know, if --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

I recall in my legislative office getting an itemized record of every phone call.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

And you have 852, 853 or 854?

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Eight five four.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

The only -- the only calls that you're going to be able to get itemized are long distance calls in most cases. Because you take one of the free pads that are --

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right, it's not the local.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Not the local and it's not the five digit call if you dialed another desk in the County.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

So a newer -- our system does not have the capacity to -- I always thought if you contacted the phone company, they would provide that information for you.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

On your personal line, if you had a Verizon line, they can.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Right.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

They will. On Centrex, that's one of the things that they cannot do for us and are not able to. I've been asked in the last five years probably 20 or 25 times for that, I'd say twice a year, you know, a couple times a year. But basically every time I've given them the line number, the only thing that they could provide was the long distance calls that that phone user made.

**LEG. D'AMARO:**

Yeah, I think -- I stand corrected.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

If he didn't make any long distance, they didn't provide any calling records for that number.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Legislator Trotta.

**LEG. TROTТА:**

Did you send out an RFP for consultants?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Not at this point.

**LEG. TROTТА:**

Well, I mean I think that would be the first thing, you know. I think to put it out there and see how much it costs. How did you come up with \$200,000?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Well, no, the 200,000 was in the budget to cover it. And it was to cover it, as Tom mentioned earlier, over the three years basically. We put \$200,000 in the budget to -- because we didn't know exactly what it would cost so we wanted to make sure that we would have enough. I mean, we're certainly not going to divulge that number to them. And if they come back and say they can do everything that we're looking for 50,000, that's -- you know, that's what we'll pay them. And, you know, obviously, we'll sort through all the RFPs -- responses, see who's qualified and see what their price is. And, you know, that would be part of a committee. Like any other RFP, that wouldn't be my decision.

**LEG. TROTТА:**

So it might not cost 200,000.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Exactly. It might be far less. We put 200,000 in there because what we -- what we're hoping to do is the company that gives us a price, whatever that might be, we'll agree to it, we'll hire him up, we'll tell them that we want the -- all this back in a few months. And then after they do that, then basically they'll help us write an RFP. And if necessary, we would like to be able to retain them if we need help in implementing, but I don't think we would at this point.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Is part of the project that -- the consultant who does this puts out an RFP exactly what we want? Is that included in that?

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

That's basically what we're asking them for, to work with my staff to write a good RFP based upon their recommendation.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Something that you can give to vendors.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Correct.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Okay. So have you contacted the vendors and said, *hey, can you do this for free?* If you went to, you know, the big companies and said, *listen, come in here, look, this is what we got, this is what we want to do, will you come in and give us a price?*

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

Legislator Trotta, they will do that. However, you know, if you call Lucent Alcatel, they're going to come in and give you a Lucent Alcatel solution. And then they'll give you a price for it. But you won't be able to see the others unless you summons one from everybody. And if -- you know, you can't just take -- if they give you a price, you can't surmise that that's the best price. You have to do this with everybody. It's really a time consuming thing. Plus you wouldn't want to just do it on paper. You'd want -- you'd want to be able to kick the tires and maybe get, like I mentioned earlier, a small department up and running so that you could have them evaluate it, and my staff could evaluate it, the users could evaluate it.

And we would need to do this all over the County and small agencies, you know, and -- with maybe -- maybe 50 to a 100 users and put up a small proof of concept. And then at the end of the proof of concept, basically give them back the equipment and they would have to do it for nothing. Some companies will do that for nothing. Others, they want to sell you the product, they want to install it and get paid for it. And, you know, if it works out for you, all well and good. But if it doesn't work out for you so good, then you have, you know, a vendor's equipment and you have 50 or 75 phones in a box. And now you're going to go out and evaluate somebody else's gear. And it may be better; it may be worse.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

I'm just thinking if you had four companies come in, they might give you ideas the consultant didn't give you. If you have four different people coming in and giving you different ideas, you could use their free things as -- you know, *this was a good idea, that was a good idea, let's put it together and do it.* I mean it seems to me that might be a, you know, a way to go.

**MR. CONNOLLY:**

I think that becomes the tail end. That's the RFP not for consulting services, but that's the RFP that

the consultant that we hire helps us write. And then we would bring in -- we would -- basically they would help us write it. We would send it out. We would get numerous responses from vendors -- equipment vendors. And then they would come in with ideas.

I used to work on the vendors' side. And I worked on many RFPs. And when they -- when they come in, you know, they ask for X. We go out there and give them a solution to solve X. But in addition to that, we tell them about, you know, why -- and why we think if you add this and add that, you'd be better off for it. And we try to, you know, put in more equipment or better satisfy their needs. And I think if -- when we get to that point of writings an RFP to an equipment vendor, we're going to get many solutions. And that's where the committee will sort through them if we get that far and make the -- hopefully the correct decision for the County, the most, you know, efficient one, the most cost effective. And also looking at reliability because -- especially on a public safety side, we know that we have a lot reliability today. We don't want to lose that obviously.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

It just seems to me that I would call four companies, get their ideas for free, mush something myself and then do it. All right. Thanks.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

Okay. It sounds like we still have a lot of questions pertaining to this resolution so I'll make a motion to table. Can I get a second?

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Second.

**CHAIRPERSON ANKER:**

All in favor? Opposed? Abstention? Motion carries. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-1. LEG. D'AMARO NOT PRESENT)**

We're now going to adjourn this meeting. Thank you.

**THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 12:18 PM  
{ } DENOTES SPELLED PHONETICALLY**