

**GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, PERSONNEL
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & HOUSING**

OF THE

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Minutes

A meeting of the Government Operations, Personnel, Information Technology & Housing Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Maxine Postal Legislative Auditorium of the Evans K. Griffing Building, 300 Center Drive, Riverhead, New York on May 4, 2016.

Members Present:

Legislator Robert Calarco - Chairperson
Legislator William J. Lindsay III - Vice Chair
Legislator Kara Hahn
Legislator Leslie Kennedy
Legislator Kevin J. McCaffrey

Also In Attendance:

George Nolan - Counsel to the Suffolk County Legislature
Sarah Simpson - Assistant Counsel to the Suffolk County Legislature
Jason Richberg - Clerk/Suffolk County Legislature
Amy Ellis - Chief Deputy Clerk/Suffolk County Legislature
Robert Lipp - Director/Budget Review Office
Bill Shilling - Aide to Legislator Calarco
Ali Nazir - Aide to Legislator Kennedy
John Stype - Aide to Legislator Krupski
Brian Sapp - Aide to Legislator Lindsay
Zach Baum - Aide to Legislator Hahn
DJ Russo - Clerk's Office/Suffolk County Legislature
John Kennedy - Suffolk County Comptroller
Doug Sutherland - Suffolk County Comptroller's Office
Doug Segall - Suffolk County Comptroller's Office
Louis Necroto - Suffolk County Comptroller's Office
Marie Hayle - Suffolk County Comptroller's Office
Vincent Mezzanotte - Commissioner/Information Technology
Scott Mastellon - Deputy Commissioner/Information Technology
Doug Miller - Director Information Management/Information Technology
Lisa Santeramo - Intergovernmental Relations
John Morafino - County Executive Assistant

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Amy Keyes - Deputy Commissioner/Economic Development and Planning
Sondra Cochran - Wyandanch Community Development Corp.
Sarah Kelly - Wyandanch Community Development Corp.
Joe Wagstaff - CGI
Paul Doti - CGI
Peggy Donovan - Town of Babylon
Victoria Marotta - Town of Babylon
Brenda Merjare - Calverton Resident
Robert Merjare - Calverton Resident
Christian Limbach - AME Workers
Kathryn Gutleber
Rick Brand - Newsday
All Other Interested Parties

Meeting Taken By:

Alison Mahoney - Court Stenographer

Minutes Transcribed By:

Kim Castiglione - Legislative Secretary

*(*The meeting was called to order at 10:03 A.M.*)*

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Good morning and welcome to the Government Operations, Personnel, Housing and Information Technology Committee. We're going to get started. If we could all please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator McCaffrey.

Salutation

Okay. Thank you very much, everyone, and welcome to our committee. Welcome to our committee out in Riverhead. This is our first time doing this here and we're glad everybody is able to be here. I know we may even be joined by some friends from the East End who have made a point in coming to our committee since we've made a point to come into their community.

I have no correspondence so we'll go to the Public Portion. I do not have any yellow cards. Are there any speakers in the audience who would like to address the committee this morning? Anyone? Okay, seeing none, we're going to move on to our presentations. We have a presentation this morning from our Comptroller, John Kennedy, who is going to talk to us about the IFMS system and I think his proposal for us to try to upgrade.

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for giving me the opportunity to be here. I'm joined with a number of my executive staff. We have principals from IT, Mr. Mezzanotte and the Deputy Commissioner, Scott Mastellon, as well as a Vice-President and Director of Operations for CGI. CGI is the software vendor that actually is the owner of the IFMS program. For those of you who may not know, IFMS, the acronym is the Integrated Financial Management System. I find it somewhat ironic, Mr. Chairman, that for 30 years as a County employee I succeeded in avoiding anything to do with IFMS, and now lo and behold we own it.

We have a flip chart that we've prepared for you. I believe you have copies that are being distributed to you and, you know, rather than read verbatim from it, what I'm going to suggest is I'd like to talk in general a little bit about this system and some of the observations and, candidly, the impediments that we have determined in how we came to the point where we've worked in conjunction with the County Executive's Office and asked for a \$2.5 million authorization in the 2017 Capital Budget. And this is somewhat atypical, Mr. Chairman, but we wanted the opportunity to be able to speak with the committee and to really give you a full flavor of candidly just how bad this financial management system is.

IFMS was first introduced into the County of Suffolk back in 1994. The predecessor entity, AMS, actually worked with and developed a financial management system. And when I talk about financial management, in essence this is software that actually records every expenditure, every receipt of revenue, every operation associated with our Capital Program and our disbursements. It is a uniform piece of software that transcends all of the departments. The super users are in our area as well as the County Executive's Budget Office.

We have 579 authorized users for the IFMS system. It is complicated. It is not in English. It lacks resiliency. It is prone to delay. It is -- we had to reboot this system 60 times in the last 14 months. What that means when the system has to be rebooted, for anybody who has familiarity with computer systems, is you are at your most vulnerable at that point. Typically it is not uncommon to lose work that's been transacted, whether it's, oh, vouchers that have been input or attempts to generate reports that would allow for proving of bank reconciliations in various different accounts.

Each time that we have to reboot we lose on average at least 30 minutes from the time that the system is inaccessible until the time that the system comes back up and users can get in. If you look at 400 users on average that are on the system in any given business day, you're talking about 200 hours of forfeited time in which we can have information input. So we lose productivity on a daily basis by virtue of the fact that we don't have a resilient system.

In addition, this system resides on servers that are outdated servers and it sits on a Microsoft 2003 platform. The IT guys are here and they can talk about that, but the Microsoft 2003 host software is no longer a supported piece of software. What that means is that any kind of security enhancements, any kind of protections that we would see with a more current version, we don't have there. So we have an outdated financial system sitting on top of an outdated host, residing in servers that are one step away from the scrap heap.

So if you think about that for a second, everything that gets done by this body in conjunction with the Executive to labor and toil to put together a \$2.9 million budget, or a Capital Program that you'll be in very shortly, for 115, 116, 117 million dollars, whatever it's going to come in, operates off of this outdated, unworkable, impediment of a piece of software.

In 22 years, this software has been updated one time. I offer to you this didn't exist 22 years ago. The car that you came to work in today is not 22 years old. Most anything you look around at and see has changed radically in the last three years, and yet we are operating off a piece of software that got upgraded one time in 22 years.

My point to you is, is that we need to do this for a whole variety of reasons. We are not able to experience the current technological improvements that we have, and I'll go to one other particular area, too, electronic funds transfer. Again, I can buy something off this from California and have it drop shipped and show up at my door probably about 48 hours later, but the County of Suffolk had to generate approximately 180,000 hard cut checks last year because their software lacks the ability to be able to properly code for electronic funds transfer.

Your constituents who come to the County and want to either supply us with pencils or work for our fleet or whatever, don't have the ability to go ahead and get paid electronically. Our retirees who receive the Medicare quarterly reimbursement check, and there's 7,000 of them, have to get a hard cut check every 90 days. Twenty-eight thousand hard cut checks, because our system lacks the ability to be able to go ahead and do electronic funds transfer.

The -- I'm going to ask you to take a look at and to review the business case of the flip chart that we've given you. We have very specific information in there about where we are losing personnel hours, where we are at risk from a security perspective, but above all else, I'm going to ask you to look at slide 19. When you look at slide 19, you will see that by coming to the current version and avoiding all of the impediments effectuating the new technology opportunities that we have, we will generate on average \$700,000 in savings per year, meaning that this upgrade will have paid for itself in three and a half years. We will get improved efficiency from our departments, we will achieve the security that we need because, candidly, right now we are vulnerable. We have quite a bit of information that is secure in nature and we are having a difficult time.

So I should probably stop babbling since I brought a lot of people here who are much smarter than I, and if you have questions they're available. Our IT folks in particular can talk with you. I will say that the upgrades for the hardware and the software are embedded in that request for 2017.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Does anybody have questions? Legislator Kennedy. I'm surprised you didn't ask on the way here this morning.

LEG. KENNEDY:

No, we try not to discuss.

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

She said *you're not getting it done*.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Good for you.

*(*Laughter*)*

LEG. KENNEDY:

I really -- I want to ask some questions to the IT people as to why in 22 years we have not done any upgrades.

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

Sure. Let's get Mr. Mastellon and Mr. Mezzanotte up here. Go ahead, folks.

COMMISSIONER MEZZANOTTE:

Good morning. It's difficult for me to address why it hadn't been done for the 21 years prior to me being on board, but I can say that in many cases it comes down to demand. I think what really is necessary is to have a sponsor, a user of the system that demands functional upgrades, and those upgrades normally go hand in hand with the infrastructure and the environment that supports it. So I think in many cases it was just a, to be quite honest, just a lack of support to drive the upgrades of both the technology and the application software.

LEG. KENNEDY:

But I'm reading on this page 19, \$707,645 was the anticipated return, and when you read what that entails -- let me ask this. The upgrades, what would they have cost? Do we have any idea?

COMMISSIONER MEZZANOTTE:

Right now the upgrade -- the cost of the upgrade is approximately \$2.5 million.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay, but if we had done any upgrades it was obviously cheaper earlier.

COMMISSIONER MEZZANOTTE:

Well, the upgrade involves more than just purchasing the newer version of software. It involves reviewing process, because this process changed. There's training, there's functionality that has to be configured within the software, and that involves professional services and support from the vendor to implement. Very small --

LEG. KENNEDY:

I'm not understanding why we, the County of Suffolk, do not have the ability to electronically transfer some of our funds to banks and businesses that would make the whole process go much smoother. And I know from working in the Leg for a lot of years that businesses have been complaining that, you know, we pay in a hard check and that it takes so long. If we had -- I think we've all noticed it for a long time. So I'm not understanding why we didn't do it earlier. I guess that's not your decision.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

I think that's probably a question for prior Legislators and County Executives.

COMMISSIONER MEZZANOTTE:

I know that in the last 14 months one of the first areas that we identified as a significant weakness in terms of applications was IFMS, and we've been working very closely with the Comptroller's Office over the last 14 months to really -- and prior to that, they had already started to really come up with a business case. Because, you know, it's one thing to say we need to upgrade; it's another thing to be able to demonstrate to you the policy decision makers and the people that really are going to help fund this initiative, that there's a strong business case for it. That takes both the participation of IT as well as the business unit, in this case the Comptroller's Office. And that's where we are now. We're at a point now where we recognize that this involves a significant investment, \$2.5 million, is not insignificant, and that it's time to really make the business case for it and to start the process of identifying requirements and moving through the entire project development lifecycle for this system.

LEG. KENNEDY:

I know this question is not for you, but how much do we have in the budget going forward for this 2.5 million? Have we put anything into any of the -- this year's budget, next year's budget? I don't know who can answer that.

MR. LIPP:

I'm going to look it up.

COMMISSIONER MEZZANOTTE:

There's money in the Operating Budget to cover maintenance for the software. That's the annual maintenance costs that we're required to pay for the use of the software. That's just under \$400,000.

LEG. KENNEDY:

There's a lot of things that frighten me. 2003 Microsoft that's not supported? This is insane.

COMMISSIONER MEZZANOTTE:

We agree.

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

Mr. Chairman, if I can just also ask -- we're joined at the table by Mr. Wagstaff, Joe Wagstff. He is our primary contact with CGI, and I believe that he can give us a little bit of what's going on and what has brought us to this point as far as Commissioner Mezzanotte had identified. We went through an exhaustive gap analysis, we've done a wide range of assessment with our business users and folks of all various categories. Joe, do you want to talk a little bit about what's going on to date?

MR. WAGSTAFF:

Sure. Good morning. Thank you for having us here this morning. Just in terms of the past 12 months, or 9 months, we have been working with the County staff to identify the savings based on our experience working with other municipalities in terms of what can be expected by upgrading to the new software. Again, the software we've developed is specifically for public sector entities. We get most of our enhancement requests from our customers, therefore the money that you're spending on the software is for, you know, used for municipalities and organizations, verticals. So we've worked -- we've done this hundreds of times with other customers within the United States, and we've used that information to help guide us through a process identifying savings and efficiencies by using the software.

The savings that you're looking at are the ones that, you know, we've identified based on experience, but there's also additional capability that can barrel our way to more efficiencies that we

haven't even been able to explore because we haven't obviously upgraded and installed it for the County personnel. So we're comfortable based on numbers you're looking at that these can be real savings, you know, these expectations. I think that that can continue to grow and offer, you know, more responsive -- to meet the additional needs of the County moving forward.

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

Mr. Chairman, if I can. I just have one other principal in my unit that I would like to step to the podium and just describe to you in an area that is critical for us, which is the compilation of our Certified Annual Financial Report, which is due by June 30th. Brenda Sloan is our Director of Accounting Services. And while we've talked to you about processes, she has something very specific that has just occurred within the last 72 hours that I believe it is critical for the committee members to hear just so you fully understand the challenges that we have.

MS. SLOAN:

Good morning. As Mr. Kennedy was just saying, we've just started our annual audit. Our auditors just arrived on Wednesday to begin auditing us and they have given us a list of, you know, 56 things that they need from us just to start the audit. And unfortunately, on the day that they arrived our database was down so we weren't able to start running reports for them, which I let them know we were having a little bit of difficulty and that tomorrow I would get all the reports to them. The next day the database was still down and we weren't able to run any of the reports for them and, unfortunately, the system went down on that same day. So now I'm trying to put reports together for them based on reports that I've run a week or so ago and piecemeal things together so that I don't have a team of auditors sitting there not doing anything, and then saying well, we couldn't get the audit done on time because Suffolk County didn't provide us with the information that we needed to do the audit.

And I know that IT has been working on the issue for us and they were able to, you know, direct us to another database so that on the third day we were able to start running some reports and getting the information out to, you know, to our auditors. But, again, this is additional time for my staff to try and put things together and additional staff time for IT to, you know, come up with an alternate for us. So the system is, you know, causing additional staff time in many ways. It's wasting, you know, the County personnel's time.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Thank you. Legislator McCaffrey, you had a question for the Comptroller or one of his team?

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Yes, I did. One of the questions I had, it looks like the biggest savings we're anticipating is with the electronic fund transfers. How does that breakdown?

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

Well, with the EFT, as you see, we process on average about 180,000 checks on an annual basis. It is from a wide range of entities, from vendors who furnish us services to, as I described to you, the Medicare, our retirees, Social Services. We do a number of checks. We process probably seven to 10,000 checks each month. We have contacted OTDA in order to get their requests to actually engage in a pilot, but ironically even if they consented, we still can't do it at this point because the software product lacks the capability to put in the code, the description in the language associated with the EFT.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Is this a software request or is there going to be additional hardware?

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

It's actually a hybrid, if you will, Legislator McCaffrey, in that there is an agreement on the part of CGI to go ahead and to provide us with the current version of the software 3.11. Remember, we are talking about moving forward six versions of the software. Today we are at 3.5. CGI is servicing and supporting anywhere from 3.8 through 3.11. The most current version is 3.11, and actually in 2018 they will be rolling out a new series four version. So there is programmer time that's going to be associated with uploading the new piece of software, there will be training components that we will need for our range of users, and then there will be hardware that we have to secure, roughly about 150,000, I believe, on the software.

COMMISSIONER MEZZANOTTE:

Yeah, the hardware.

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

Yes, on the hardware. And then we will get the accompanying upgrade on the platform as well. One of the other things that you'll see in the flip chart is that items that department's use, such as Adobe software and things like that, again, will be no longer supported off this software by June 30th. Every place we look, every area where we ask our personnel to undertake the most basic and fundamental and rudimentary functions we are hitting a brick wall. It's no different than paving a road or putting a roof on a building. It's infrastructure; you can't see it, but it is as critical, if not more critical, than any of the other things that the Legislature puts a priority on.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

If we were to approve this and move forward with this, what would be the timeframe on the implementation?

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

We have begun to develop a cycle. As Budget Director Lipp indicated, we have 300,000 appropriated in 2016. We will negotiate the contract for the actual delivery of the upgraded software testing and roll out and deployment. We will be very soon looking to bring on a project manager. We're going to go through an RFQ -- a mini-bid. We're going to do a mini-bid working off of OGS approved vendors to have somebody who has the skill, expertise and can marshal and set out implementation of a project. And we should see that coming very shortly. Again, candidly, the approval of this item in the Capital Budget for the 2017 budget will then let us know that we have sufficient funding to develop the timeline and the implementation.

In addition, I will ask the Legislature to consider taking the 500,000 that was put out into subsequent years and moving it into 2018. That represents the cost associated with the vendor self-service. The vendor self-service is the key component that we talked about that not only effectuates electric funds transfer, but also puts the information entry on the vendors, but also allows vendor to status. What Legislator Kennedy talked about, it's not uncommon for vendors to have to wait six, seven, eight, nine months sometimes for payment, not because it's held up on our side, but because it's trapped in multiple levels through departments and it oftentimes requires multiple corrections and resubmissions.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

I thought it was because we didn't have the money.

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

Well.

*(*Laughter*)*

That was yesterday's presentation, not today's. Although --

*(*Laughter*)*

Yeah.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

So it's a multi-year roll out and you would probably anticipate trying to get the portion of it, which would be the EFTs, sooner than later so we can --

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

Absolutely. We will begin to be able to implement. I gave you the example on retirees. I would suspect that that would be something by the first quarter of '17 we will have underway.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Very good.

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

We will be abandoning checks as quickly as possible.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Thank you, Mr. Comptroller.

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Legislator Kennedy had a follow-up question.

LEG. KENNEDY:

With every page I have more and more questions. I just want to know your staff has to come in off hours, and I know that because you've been in Saturdays and other hours. Do they get overtime? Are we paying overtime for your staff to come in when there are less than 549 users on a system?

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

Any employee of the County of Suffolk who's asked to come in outside of normal work hours is entitled to overtime. My staff is extremely dedicated but, yes, as a matter of fact, they would be entitled to, at the very least, compensatory time.

LEG. KENNEDY:

So we use additional on that. I also want to ask, this 549 users, what departments? Comptroller? Treasurer? IT?

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

Everyone.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Who else? Who else uses this system?

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

DPW is a large user, Health. Health Services we probably have about 15 or 20. And understand when we say users, these are County employees that have a specific password and code that allows them to get into the system. It's got nothing to do with English. They know how to speak CGI,

which may be a BC80 or things that the average person has no particular knowledge of, so right there we're limited. If somebody's out on vacation, somebody becomes ill, somebody's out on maternity leave, the amount of time that it takes to get other similarly situated Account Clerks and other processing folks to the level where they're conversing on the system, is extremely, extremely labor and time intensive. One of the multiple benefits with going to 3.11 will be that we will have an English interface and it will be much more of a user friendly process when folks approach the system.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. There's more, but I'm digesting it. Thank you.

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

Mr. Chairman, I genuinely thank you for giving us the opportunity to be here in front of you. As you know, typically the budget hearings associated with the Capital Budget move quite rapidly. We felt that it was important to give you the opportunity to, A, have the information, B, have our folks available and, C, we will make ourselves available during the capital budget process as well if there's subsequent questions. But again, as I've said, my primary asks are, A, that we support the 2.5 going in 2017, and, B, that we advance the 500,000 in SY and bring it into 2018.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Great. Thanks very much for coming. Does anybody else have any questions for the Comptroller? One more, Legislator Kennedy.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Robert, were you able to find out what we have in '16 and what the projected for the budget is for '17?

MR. LIPP:

So what I found so far is that we have 380,000 available for spending as we speak. Three-hundred has already been encumbered and expended as of the beginning of April of that. I'm sorry -- other than that. Sorry. So there's only 380,000 available in total. There was 300,000 additional, but that was unencumbered or expended as of the beginning of April. So they can speak to what they're doing with that money I suppose.

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

I can speak to that. As a matter of fact, that was funding that we actually agreed to transfer over to IT to support some of the security initiatives that are underway at IT. As we are bringing security concerns to you, likewise Commissioner Mezzanotte has identified both resiliency and security concerns as well.

LEG. KENNEDY:

So let me see if I got this correct. We must have had 680?

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

Yes.

LEG. KENNEDY:

And 300 went to IT for support --

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

I believe so.

LEG. KENNEDY:

-- and we still have 380 left for 2016.

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

Yes.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Does anyone know what's in the 2017 County Executive's budget for this?

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

That's the 2.5 million that we're seeking.

LEG. KENNEDY:

The entire amount?

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

Yes, 2.5 is what was included in the recommended 2017 Capital Budget.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. Thank you.

COMPTROLLER KENNEDY:

Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Thank you very much, Mr. Comptroller. I know that it's very important for us to invest in our infrastructure. Whether it's roads and bridges or our digital infrastructure we need to have the tools in place to do the job. So thank you for taking the time to come with us today. And, Commissioner, thank you very much for coming with us as well. I know that you are leaving us at the end of the month, so thank you for your service to the County.

Okay, we are going to move on now. I had a couple of cards come in while we were sitting through the presentation, so we'll recognize a couple of quick speakers and then move into the agenda. I know we're trying to move on. I have a couple of people from the County who have other places to be, so we want to try to get through this. But there are two cards, it shouldn't take too long. Our first speaker is Christian Limbach. Christian, come on up.

MR. LIMBACH:

Good morning. Thanks for giving me the opportunity to speak. I'll make it as quick as possible. I'm here to speak as to the Introductory Resolution 1392, which concerns amending the Suffolk County Classification and Salary Plan in connection with new titles for use in the Department of Economic Development and Planning, in quotes, "Senior, Principal and Chief Community Development and Planning Specialist".

I'm of the belief -- I should be quick to add also that I'm not speaking on behalf of the AME Association and President, I'm speaking in my capacity as the 4th VP. It's my belief and others beliefs that we could be creating -- the County could be creating a top heavy redundancy with these titles. We see no reason why we couldn't promote within as there are Planners and Senior Planners who do much of the duties described in the job description.

(*Legislator Lindsay entered the meeting at 10:37 A.M. *)

I wouldn't say it's identical, but it's eerily similar, what's needed to do the job. We just hope that

you take that into consideration as well as -- well, that's it. My first time speaking, so give me a break.

(*Laughter*)

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

No problem. Thank you very much, Christian. Any there any questions for Mr. Limbach? Thank you for coming in. And I think it's important to note that if we were to approve this resolution I believe these titles are all Civil Service titles and would fall under both the protocols for hiring as well as would be AME members.

MR. LIMBACH:

Certainly, certainly. It's just that I want to call your attention to it.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Thank you very much. Appreciate it.

MR. LIMBACH:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Our next speaker is Catherine Gutleber. I hope I got that close.

MS. GUTLEBER:

Close. Good morning. My name is Catherine Gutleber. I am here on behalf of Habitat for Humanity of Suffolk. I'm speaking on behalf of IR 1341. This is a resolution in support of transferring 165 Mastic Beach Road in Mastic Beach from the County to the Village of Mastic Beach, and in turn to Habitat for Humanity of Suffolk. I'm just here to say that your support of this resolution will help us to continue our efforts to revitalize and provide affordable housing in Mastic Beach Village. So thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Great, thank you very much. Does anybody have any questions? No? Thank you very much for coming today.

MS. GUTLEBER:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Okay. I have no other cards. I'll extend this out one more time just to make sure we got everybody. Is there anybody else in the audience who would like to address us? Anybody else? Okay, we're going to move to the agenda.

Tabled Resolutions

IR 1161 - Amending the Suffolk County Classification and Salary Plan in connection with a new position title in the Department of Social Services (Chief Division Administrator of Social Services)(Co. Exec.).

I understand the Administration wanted us to table this. I'll make a motion to table.

LEG. HAHN:

Second.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Second by Legislator Hahn. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? IR 1161 is tabled **(Vote: 5-0-0-0)**.

HR01 - Requesting the State of New York to enact legislation establishing a Bi-County Commission in the Counties of Nassau and Suffolk to study the feasibility of establishing the State of Long Island (Senate Bill S.2362A and Assembly Bill A.3116A) (Pres. Off.)

LEG. LINDSAY:

I'll make a motion.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

I have a motion by Legislator Lindsay.

LEG. HAHN:

Motion to table.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Second.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Motion to table by Legislator Hahn. Second by Legislator Kennedy. Is there a second to the motion to approve?

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Yeah, I think I want to second.

(*Laughter*)

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

A Second for the motion to approve by Legislator McCaffrey. All those in favor of the tabling motion, which goes first. Tabling motion, all those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Home Rule 1 is tabled three to two. **(Vote: 3-2-0-0 Opposed: Legislators Lindsay and McCaffrey)**.

Introductory Resolutions

IR 1341 - Authorizing the sale of County-owned real property pursuant to Section 72-h of the General Municipal Law to the Incorporated Village of Mastic Beach for affordable housing purpose (SCTM Nos. 0209-011.00-02.00-012.000 f/k/a 0200-974.80-02.00-012.000) (Co. Exec.)

I think this is the resolution Ms. Gutleber was just speaking of. Motion to approve by Legislator Kennedy, second by Legislator Hahn. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? IR 1341 is approved **(Vote: 5-0-0-0)**.

IR 1352 - Appropriating funds in connection with Fiber Cabling Network and WAN Technology Upgrades (CP 1726) (Co. Exec.)

I'll make a motion to approve.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Second.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Second by Legislator Lindsay. On the motion, anyone? No? All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? IR 1352 is approved (**Vote: 5-0-0-0**).

IR 1353 - Amending the 2016 Capital Budget and Program and appropriating funds in connection with Suffolk County Disaster Recovery (CP 1729).

I make a motion to approve.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Second.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Second by Legislator Lindsay.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

On the motion.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

On the motion.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Is somebody here to refresh my memory about this? Is this what we had the presentation on last year?

COMMISSIONER MEZZANOTTE:

I'm not familiar with the presentation that you might be referring to, Legislator. I'm sorry.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

I thought this -- is this related to the project that we were doing that allowed the other municipalities to utilize our backup services? Is that the one?

COMMISSIONER MEZZANOTTE:

Well, there's a shared -- it's a shared service. Well, it indirectly supports that. This is also very familiar to the story we talked about before, that it's important for us to maintain and upgrade the infrastructure for not just end of life equipment, but for security purposes and also to insure reliability and availability.

The equipment that would be purchased for this is in our data centers supporting County functions. However, the capability for towns to connect into our data centers for shared services is delivered through that same infrastructure.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

So it's for data backup and disaster recovery?

COMMISSIONER MEZZANOTTE:

Yeah, but this is just for within the --

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Just for Suffolk County. Very good. Okay, thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Okay. Any other questions? I have a motion and a second. All those in favor? Opposed?

Abstentions? IR 1353 is approved (*Vote: 5-0-0-0*).

IR 1392 - Amending the Suffolk County Classification and Salary Plan in connection with new titles for use in the Department of Economic Development and Planning (Senior, Principal and Chief Community Development and Planning Specialist)(Co. Exec.).

I make a motion to approve.

LEG. HAHN:

I'll second.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Second by Legislator Hahn. On the motion, Legislator McCaffrey.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Motion to table.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Motion to table by Legislator Kennedy.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Second.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Second by Legislator McCaffrey. On the issue, Legislator McCaffrey, did you have something? And I think there's -- does the Administration have somebody here to answer any questions on this issue?

MS. KEYES:

Hi. Amy Keyes.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Hi, Amy. We had an opportunity to speak previously about this and can we share for the general public our discussions and what my concerns were about this, and maybe you could start by telling us the reason why we're proposing new titles.

MS. KEYES:

Sure. So this resolution is coming to you, we're looking to create new titles to create a career ladder for folks with an urban planning background. We've been hiring Urban Planners in the department since Economic Development and Planning was merged in 2012. When the department was created it sort of signified this connection between economic development and well-planned, thoughtfully planned projects. So to that end we've been hiring Urban Planners and have had several on staff that we've sort of shoehorned into existing flexible titles because there really was no -- up until last year, at the end of last year, when you created the entry level title of Community Development and Planning Specialist. There really before that was no existing title in the County that was appropriate for a person with urban planning education or experience. So we have been shoehorning these folks into Neighborhood Aides titles, Program Examiner Trainee titles, but there's no room for growth, there's no room for advancement.

We've had several people with the background experience we need to be doing the work that is -- these titles represent, which is separate than the regular planning work, they've been leaving because there's no room for growth. So we got together with Civil Service, tried to see if there was an existing ladder within the County that was appropriate that we could make work for these people.

They worked with us, advised us, you know, no, there really isn't, that we need to create a new ladder for these people, and that's where this is borne out of. So this is specifically for people with urban planning education and experience.

The job duties -- the expertise that we're looking for with these titles is separate and apart, could run basically concurrent with your existing Planning staff, but it's more long-range planning. Whereas your current Planning staff deals with things from an environmental and regulatory standpoint, these people, what we've had them doing for the last four years and what we're trying to attract new Planners with these, you know, showing them that there is room for growth in the County, is really more looking at things from a bigger context, how does the site or project work within the overall community context.

So they'll work hand in hand and they have in the past, just not in an appropriate title. So this is really just trying to recognize that we want people with this expertise and we want to be able to attract it and, you know, working with Civil Service this is what we came up with. So this isn't new positions, this is just new titles. I want to make that clear, too.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

I understand. We had that discussion about, you know, even though the money may be allocated in the budget, we found out yesterday, which we all kind of knew, that we're running a three-year deficit of \$186 million. So we're at the -- that's on the conservative side. So I think we need to instead of creating new titles, I think we're all down to learn to live within the titles that we have. There may not be a career ladder but, you know, people out there are worried how they're going to find a ladder to pay their taxes and everything else that's going on in Suffolk County. So it's very difficult for us in a time where we're supposed to be finding money to find new ways to spend it. I understand what you're saying, I understand the importance of economic development, but I think this may be one of the times when we need to be able to figure out how to do it with what we have right now.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Legislator Kennedy.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Good morning. We had spoken about this and I really feel that it's important that people know that there's potential to move forward, but in light of what was discussed with our financial debt, I can't vote for this today. If we table it, maybe it can come up again when we're a little bit better fiscally, but right now we can't give hope for what we can't pay.

MS. KEYES:

I mean, we -- I respect what you're saying and that's obviously a discussion for this body. I just -- on this specific resolution we're creating new titles, not new positions. We're committed to working within the Operating Budget and the personnel budget that was approved in 2016 Operating Budget. This is just giving us the flexibility to be able to hire the people with the expertise we need.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Legislator Hahn.

LEG. HAHN:

So there's no fiscal impact of this.

MS. KEYES:

That's right.

LEG. HAHN:

For '16, and then is there an anticipated cost associated in '17?

MS. KEYES:

No, we're -- I mean, without having the 20 -- the department's 2017 Operating Budget in front of you, I can't tell you exactly what the numbers would be, but no. We would --

LEG. HAHN:

Is there a cost to the County to the turnover that occurs when we lose folks?

MS. KEYES:

I'm sure there's a way to calculate lost time on getting people up to date on everything that's happening in the department, absolutely. You lose, there's a gap.

LEG. HAHN:

There's real efficiency costs there --

MS. KEYES:

Absolutely.

LEG. HAHN:

-- and efficiency costs in our economic development work, which is important to the growth and health and hopefully sales tax growth of our County. So -- okay, thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Is there any plans for the department to fill any of these titles in the near future?

MS. KEYES:

Yeah, absolutely, some combination of them. It really depends on -- we don't have any resumes before us right now. This is just really in terms of recruiting the people with that background to be able to show that there is a path. So there's some combination of the positions. You gave us three entry level Community Development and Planning Specialist titles in the 2016 Operating Budget, and we have -- so all told we have 15 vacancies right now in the department. These three titles in some variation of some combination of them we hope to fill, but it really depends on who we get.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

These are Civil Service titles?

MS. KEYES:

Absolutely, and will be competitive.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

You will be hiring from a list?

MS. KEYES:

So the initial appointments would be provisional, but there will be tests and then lists.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

So we totally create the titles, Civil Service isn't going to pursue putting a list out, a test out, correct?

MS. KEYES:

Absolutely, right.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Any other questions? Legislator McCaffrey.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Thank you. Dr. Lipp, my question is we've -- you know, I'm told that or I'm hearing today that this money is in the budget. It's been, I guess we feel it's inappropriate to have them appropriated, but there is an appropriation for it in our budget. If I heard correctly yesterday that the 2016, we're expected to run a deficit in what our projections are in terms of expenditures and income as well. Is that fair to say?

MR. LIPP:

Yes. I mean, if you look at this resolution myopically on its own, they're saying -- their fiscal impact statement says that there is no impact, so that would imply that they're going to fill them not before 2017, but is that actually what's going to happen, I don't know. And, you know, there is a cost to the position obviously. It's going to be given to somebody who is already on a payroll, then that cost would be mitigated just simply by being 3% or so, minimum 3% that AME would require, you know, under their contract.

That being said, in 2017, yeah, there is this deficit myopically if you look at it here. All they're doing is changing the Salary and Classification Plan for giving, you know, a little leverage to do what they want to do, and it's up to you whether or not you want to at this time do some of that. There's no, according to them, no impact this year, but it remains to be seen.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Well, but, I mean, if we want to have a chance of balancing our budget, apparently we've overestimated our revenues, what the projections are, and we've underestimated what our costs were. And if we want to get those to a balance, we're going to have to either increase our revenues, which we have a limited ability to do, or we have to reduce what our expenses are, which means not fill all those positions that were budgeted. Is that correct?

MR. LIPP:

Yeah, it's a policy issue really. If you look at it just for this resolution, even if you say there's going to be a cost to it, the cost is not very large, and really what you need to do is make global decisions that are way beyond.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

And I'm not seeking out Economic Development, I feel that that's important, but I think we need to make a broader policy decision. We made a bold decision, and I stood up there with my fellow Legislators just the other day to support a new police class of 175 police officers, and we're going to fund the money to pay for that. And so the question is do we make priorities and how we're going to do that. We need to start making those difficult decisions, so thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Dr. Lipp, this department currently has vacancies?

MR. LIPP:

They have three vacancies I believe. They're Community Development and Planning Specialist positions and they're entry level. So they're already there. This is not part of the resolution.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

No, I understand that, but they have a certain amount of money that's allocated to this department for the budget that we approve, right?

MR. LIPP:

Uh-huh, yes.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

And under that they have room to hire new positions, correct?

MR. LIPP:

I'd have to check the budget. I'm not sure what the projection is right now for the rest of the year. We didn't do a formal fiscal impact statement on this because we just do comments on Executive's resolutions. If this was one of ours, we would do a more detailed analysis. If you're asking for that we could prepare that. It wouldn't take too long.

MS. KEYES:

In BRO's comments on our 2016 Operating Budget estimated we could afford in total to fill about 67% of the vacancies that we included in some variation. So I don't know if that's helpful, but I wanted to mention it.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

So, Dr. Lipp, there's a certain appropriation they have or a certain amount of money they have for salaries in their budget line in this department. Should we not give them these titles and maybe we do what the gentleman from AME was suggesting, which was just use existing titles. They would still be able to go out and fill titles, correct?

MR. LIPP:

Yes, but, you know, it's a policy issue. They're asking for some flexibility with these new positions as they stated. That's totally up to you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

No, but the question I have, you know, the concern is that we don't have the funding to hire people. The point that I'm making is that the County Executive under the existing budget that we've already approved can go out and hire people, just not people in these particular titles. Is that accurate?

MR. LIPP:

Correct.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

And so whether or not we allow the hiring under these new titles that they feel are important or not, they still have that authority to go hire folks and we really don't have much of a say in that process.

MR. LIPP:

Exactly.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Okay. That's what I was trying to get at. Thank you, Dr. Lipp. So our decision not doing these titles doesn't necessarily prevent this money from being spent.

MR. LIPP:

Correct.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Okay.

DR. LIPP:

It just wouldn't be spent in the way that they're envisioned.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

It just wouldn't be spent on these particular titles, it would be spent on another title which then would be used, as Ms. Keyes has said, they would just use a Planner to do some of this work as opposed to an Urban Planner.

MS. KEYES:

Well, no, we wouldn't use an existing Planner to do this work.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

No, that's not what I said, Ms. Keyes. I said you would hire a Planner to do the work as opposed to whatever the title is you're looking for.

MS. KEYES:

Okay.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Okay. Any other questions? Legislator McCaffrey.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Yeah. Amy, why couldn't we use an exist Planner to do the work?

MS. KEYES:

It's a different area -- it's just a different expertise. It's a different skill set entirely. So the existing Planners at work, which we do have five Planners, a combination of Senior Planner, Principal Planner and entry-level Planner, are doing -- they do an environmental and regulatory review of projects. They're not looking at it from a design perspective, they're not doing -- working from a community outreach perspective. It's just an entirely different line of work. And as I said, we had Urban Planners on staff who have done the work that we're envisioning these titles doing, just not in a title that fits them. That's the feedback we got from Civil Service in terms of why folks were leaving and that's what we're trying to correct.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

So they would be -- they don't have the -- the existing Planners don't have the expertise or they would be working out of title?

MS. KEYES:

They don't have existing expertise. There's nobody -- there's no title that exists right now that speaks to somebody with an urban planning background. If you look at the description for the Planning titles, the Planner, Senior Planner, Principal Planning, Chief Planner, you don't need an urban planning degree or urban planning background. The education and experience backgrounds are different because it's a different set of work. They work hand-in-hand very closely together, it's concurrent work, but it is distinct from one another.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

If we hired an Urban Planner tomorrow, what would he or she do?

MS. KEYES:

They would be working on a day to day basis on the large scale regionally significant projects, whether it's transit-oriented developments or transportation projects of a significant level that the County has a stake in and has an interest and has an active role, looking at it from how it fits in an

overall community perspective -- from an overall community perspective, how all the elements work together, what is the best street layout. They would work with DPW on major road design projects. That's a request we've gotten. That would be the day-to-day basis. They would work closely with the towns as our Urban Planners have in the past, giving technical expertise, technical advice when requested by the towns.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Doesn't it -- this kind of sounds like this stuff, the role of what the towns and villages would be doing as they have control over the zoning when we really don't. I mean, this is something that comes under the purview of the towns and villages primarily, correct?

MS. KEYES:

No, not necessarily. There are projects that involve County roads, projects that are on County roads where we are doing this -- we are hiring Urban Planners and have been since 2012 to do the work. So it, you know, it's work that's happening, it's just not -- the people that are doing it aren't in an appropriate title.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

What I'm saying, though, wouldn't the towns and the villages also have some sort of planners, whether it be a consulting basis, whatever, that they would hire to do that same work if they have a large scale project going on.

MS. KEYES:

I would say just like towns all have their own DPW Department and Parks Department, surely they have their own Planning Departments, but that doesn't mean that we're not doing similar work on projects that the County specifically has a role in here.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Okay, because I have a little trouble -- I could understand maybe if we're a Suffolk County roadway and we need to figure out what improvements need to be made, but I think in the nuts and bolts of it, coming from local government, I know the zoning work and the planning work is done by those towns and villages. It sounds a little bit almost duplicative, you know, in terms of the work that they're going to be doing and the need to, at a time when we can't afford it, it seems like we're putting another layer on there when we can't.

And listen, there may some value. I support these economic development projects. I'm just saying we can't afford to pay for them right now and we can't afford to pay for the cops that we all stood up and said we need to have on the street. I think we get, you know, people are crying out there for more police on the street to fight the heroin epidemic and all these other things that are going on. No one has called my office asking for more Urban Planners, I mean, so we're making difficult decisions. I think it starts today. So, thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Legislator Lindsay.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Good morning, Amy. Currently we vote on different projects. We see that a portion of that is done for planning and I know that a large portion of that is being outsourced to consultants, consultants outside the County. Does any of -- would any of these new positions replace those funds that are being spent on consultants that we would rather them -- we would internally be doing this work inside?

MS. KEYES:

I don't think it would be a fair assessment to say that any of these -- that anybody hired in any of these titles would replace work that's being done by consultants, but you bring up an excellent point, which is that there is work that is done by consultants and that work requires a level of County involvement, County management, County review of the deliverables from those consultants, and that's where we do need this expertise. That's a role that these people have played and we're hoping we can get some more on board. We have an appropriate ladder so they could continue to do that work.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Okay, thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Legislator Kennedy.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Amy, I understand that you feel we need Urban Planners for our transit-oriented hubs, for some of our roadways around transit and our rail. I have said this since 2012, we have done these things prior with our DPW and with our Planners. Which part -- we're putting a hub in Ronkonkoma, let's just use that as an example. That does not make that area urban. So what am I missing about the education of an Urban Planner verse a Planner?

MS. KEYES:

So the urban -- I'm glad you brought that up, because the urban in Urban Planner I think tends to give the wrong impression, and with these titles specifically we are looking for people with urban planning education and experience, but we -- specifically in the job description, the education description. We are requiring folks with experience planning transit-oriented developments or neighborhood centers in a downtown setting in suburban areas. So it's -- it's unfortunate that the degree, the education is titled Urban Planner, but it does not necessarily mean that we're -- and we are not looking for people with city planning background. I think that's important to distinguish. That's the title of the relevant education because it's people with experience designing projects, it's people with a certain architectural experience, but it does not necessarily mean that -- in fact, doesn't, because we made very clear when we designed these titles with Civil Service that we want people who have experience planning these developments in a suburban setting. That's explicitly in there. So it's not -- we're not looking for people to, you know, I think your -- I understand your concern and we tried to mitigate that in the way we designed the titles.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Why would the County be doing design work on something Tritec is working on the -- I'm using the Lake Ronkonkoma Hub, but Tritec is working on that. Why would the County be doing any kind of planning?

MS. KEYES:

Okay, well, Ronkonkoma Hub specifically, or any of these regionally significant projects, we are involved basically doing the community visioning of it, making sure that the project is in line with community goals. That's something that we do now with folks with urban planning backgrounds. We just don't have them in an appropriate title. We do it because it's a role that the County plays. Ronkonkoma is a project specifically that involves sewers, so that's where the County comes to the table, and this is a -- it's an integrated process where we're asked for this expertise. We value the expertise. We think that having people with this background is in the best interest of the County and it helps us best represent the County's best interest, for lack of a better way to describe it.

LEG. KENNEDY:

But we have dealt with sewers before we had --

MS. KEYES:

Sure.

LEG. KENNEDY:

-- Urban Planners. We've dealt with road structure and infrastructure before we had Urban Planners. Are our Planners incapable of doing it now that we're doing transit-oriented projects?

MS. KEYES:

It's not a question of capabilities. The Planning staff we have are tremendously talented. They are tremendous assets to the County and you certainly can't do -- we certainly need them. I don't want -- I'm not going to say that they're incapable of doing it any more than a doctor would be incapable of being a lawyer. It's just a different type of experience, it's a different type of education. They're related but they're not the same.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay, thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Any other questions? Okay. I have a tabling motion. It goes first. All those in favor? Opposed? (*Legislators Lindsay, Hahn and Calarco*). Abstentions? Tabling motion fails.

Approval goes next. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? The resolution is approved three to two. (**Vote: 3-2-0-0 Opposed: Legislators Kennedy and McCaffrey**)

IR 1393 - Approving the appointment of a relative of a Supreme Court Judge in the Suffolk County Parks Department (Noah Ford) (Co. Exec.)

Motion by Legislator Lindsay. I'll second the motion. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? IR 1393 is approved (**Vote: 5-0-0-0**).

IR 1399 - Authorizing a two-year extension for the development of six parcels of land transferred pursuant to the 72-h Affordable Housing Program to the Town of Islip (Co. Exec.)

I make a motion to approve.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Second.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Second by Legislator Kennedy. Any questions on the motion? All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? IR 1399 is approved (**Vote: 5-0-0-0**).

IR 1400 - Authorizing a two-year extension for the development of four parcels of land transferred pursuant to the 72-h Affordable Housing Program to the Town of Babylon (Co. Exec.)

I'll make a motion to approve. Second by Legislator McCaffrey. Any questions on the issue? All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? IR 1400 is approved (**Vote: 5-0-0-0**).

IR 1401 - Amending the 2016 Capital Budget and Program and appropriating funds in connection with Globally Managed Network Protection and Security (CP 1807)(Co. Exec.).

I make a motion to approve. Second by Legislator Hahn. Any questions on the issue? All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? IR 1401 is approved **(Vote: 5-0-0-0)**.

I have no other items on the agenda today. So before we adjourn, as I said before, Commissioner Mezzanotte, I understand that you are leaving us at the end of this month. We just wanted to take the opportunity to thank you for the service to the County. We all appreciated having you here. You brought quite a wealth of knowledge and we will be -- you will be missed.

COMMISSIONER MEZZANOTTE:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Okay. We are adjourned. Thank you, everyone.

(*The meeting was adjourned at 11:07 A.M. *)