

**GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, PERSONNEL, HOUSING
& CONSUMER PROTECTION COMMITTEE**

OF THE

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

MINUTES

A meeting of the Government Operations, Personnel, Housing & Consumer Protection 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 March 22, 2012.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Leg. Robert Calarco, Chairman
Leg. William Spencer, Vice Chair
Leg. Kate M. Browning
Leg. Thomas Cilmi
Leg. Edward P. Romaine

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Leg. DuWayne Gregory, 15th Legislative District
Leg. Kara Hahn, 5th Legislative District
George Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature
Sarah Simpson, Assistant Counsel to the Legislature
Barbara LoMoriello, Chief Deputy Clerk
Jill Moss, Budget Review Office
Laura Halloran, BRO
Joe Muncey, BRO
Samuel Chu, Commissioner/Labor Department
Ben Zwirn, County Executive's Office
Tom Vaughn, County Executive's Office
Richard Meyer, AME
Chris DeLuca, Aide to Leg. Cilmi
Paul Perillie, Aide to Leg. Gregory
Lora Gellerstein, Aide to Leg. Spencer
Amy Keys, Aide to Leg. Calarco
Ali Nazir, Aide to Leg. Kennedy
Maria Themistocleous-Frey, President & Founder/Executive Consultants of New York
Thomas Melito, Performance Management Team
Vincent Falkowski, PFT
Phil Berdolt, PFT
Barry Paul, PFT
Rebecca Sanin, PFT

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Diana Flesher, Court Stenographer

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 1:03 PM

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Good afternoon. We're going to get the Committee started here. If we could all rise for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator Gregory.

SALUTATION

Thank you and welcome everyone today. I do not have any cards for the Public Portion. Is there anybody who would like to speak and address the Committee? Okay, seeing none, we're going to ask Maria Frey to come up and give us a brief presentation regarding her program. Maria, you can have a seat right at the front table here.

MS. THEMISTOCLEOUS-FREY:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

And thank you for coming. I know we had spoke of -- about a month ago, you wowed me with your presentation about your program to get people prepared and back into the workforce and have such a tremendous success rate, that we wanted to have you come and just present to the Committee here and hopefully we can have the County make use of your services.

MS. THEMISTOCLEOUS-FREY:

Thank you so much. This is my first time, so this is definitely very interesting. Thank you, again, for having me. The program that we had discussed was one of our job search boot camps, which the Town of Brookhaven has actually decided to run. We will be starting next month. It is an eight-week boot camp, a total of 24 hours. We have been very successful with that in the past. Last year we were able to help over 300 Brookhaven residents and that was just part-time. That was one-on-one people from my organization.

A little about my company really quickly, we are Executive Consultants of New York. I am the President and Founder. We are a corporate headhunting company. Two years ago I was asked by the Director of my son's school to help a college student because he couldn't find work. And the first thing I said was, we deal with Vice President, CEO's. I don't know that I can help this individual. We sat down and within half an hour I realized that the synergistic techniques that we use as corporate headhunters, as marketing executives and as sales people can be used to create a successful marketing campaign for people to get back to work.

What we do is we teach via networking. Everything we do is via networking. We do not teach them to go on line and just to apply to jobs such as Monster and Career Builder. And to be quite honest with you, five out of every thousand resumes actually end up on the hiring manager's desk. Plus, only 20% of the jobs out there are actually posted, which means everyone's applying to 20% of the jobs and 80% of them are the ones that are within the organization that no one is going after. So, I personally feel that sometimes the numbers are not reflective of that and I think that is very important to understand to be able to search via networking.

I think one of the most important things that we can do is also teach people how to be able to effectively articulate what they have done and the steps that have led them to success. We use a technique in the corporate headhunting world, which is called the star technique. It's a situation task action and result. And I can honestly tell you that's also the reason why a lot of people go on interviews and do not get the job. It's because they cannot successfully or they cannot articulate to the hiring manager how they got to success. So, what we do is we teach people. We talk to them about their successes. We talk to them about what they have done in the past and we show them

how to use these skill sets to attain a new opportunity.

Do you have any questions? Yes, sir?

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Legislator Romaine, sure, go ahead.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Yes. And you're going to be doing this just in the Town of Brookhaven or in other Townships?

MS. THEMISTOCLEOUS-FREY:

Actually, what happened was, it is a Division of Economic Development that has contracted our company to do this boot camp.

LEG. ROMAINE:

The Division of the Town's Department of Economic Development?

MS. THEMISTOCLEOUS-FREY:

Yes.

LEG. ROMAINE:

But no other Towns have contracted with you so far?

MS. THEMISTOCLEOUS-FREY:

Not at this time.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Okay. And you're going to be providing this service exclusively to Brookhaven residents?

MS. THEMISTOCLEOUS-FREY:

Yes, for Economic Development, it is only for the Brookhaven residents.

LEG. ROMAINE:

And what is the cost or expense to the Town of Brookhaven?

MS. THEMISTOCLEOUS-FREY:

It is just over \$3,000.

LEG. ROMAINE:

So relatively small sum for the services that you're going to provide?

MS. THEMISTOCLEOUS-FREY:

That is correct.

LEG. ROMAINE:

And what involvement does the County have in this program?

MS. THEMISTOCLEOUS-FREY:

At this time they do not.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Oh, okay. So, this is a courtesy visit?

MS. THEMISTOCLEOUS-FREY:
(Nodding head in the affirmative)

LEG. ROMAINE:
Well, I appreciate the courtesy and I wish you the best of luck with this program.

MS. THEMISTOCLEOUS-FREY:
Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:
Maria, I think it might be useful if you tell us how many people have come to your program, what kind of success rate you have with placement. Because ultimately, Legislator Romaine, we all know that trying to get people back to work has got to be our priority right now. And this might be a useful tool for our Department of Labor to utilize so that residents throughout the County can take advantage of this program.

LEG. ROMAINE:
Well, maybe this young lady, she's been so kind enough to come and present that even though there's no County funding involved, might come back at the end of her -- or at some interval in her program with Brookhaven to report on the success, or at least the experience of the program, as it's operating in Brookhaven, and it may be something that we may want to consider in the future.

MS. THEMISTOCLEOUS-FREY:
Basically the answer to that question is over 60% of the people that go through our program, our 24-hour boot camp, obtain work.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:
That's terrific. I see Commissioner Chu in the audience here from the Department of Labor. I know that we kind of referred you over to him to see if there were any kind of grant programs through the County, maybe we get State or Federal funding that -- for these types of purposes. Could you maybe come forward and let us know if we have anything that's available out there?

COMMISSIONER CHU:
Yes, Legislator. We have -- nice to see you. Our primary purpose of the Department of Labor is to place people into employment. And I think this would be perhaps an opportunity to leverage multitude of resources that the Department has to offer in finding people work and helping them to find placement. So, I look forward to assisting you in every way the Department can and, again, leveraging our resources. We know that's important.

MS. THEMISTOCLEOUS-FREY:
Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:
Perfect. Thank you. Does anybody else have any questions? Yes, Legislator Browning.

LEG. BROWNING:
Right. You know, the Town of Brookhaven is paying you to help people find jobs. Do any of the companies that -- pay a finder's fee to you? You don't have anything like that?

MS. THEMISTOCLEOUS-FREY:
No, we do not do that. We are corporate headhunters primarily. And what we specialize in is pharmaceutical and medical device regulatory affairs, which you don't really find too many people that are looking for that type of work locally. Most of them are located in New Jersey or in New York City because of where the pharma-hub really is. So, we definitely do not do that.

What we do is, you know, a lot of times people will say to us, well, as a corporate headhunter, you can get me a job. The truth is yes; but through the synergistic techniques that we teach, should you lose your job again, you can recreate a successful search. I think it's more about empowering the individual and teaching them how to take care of themselves in the long term versus just short term.

LEG. BROWNING:

So, example, what kinds of jobs have you been able to help people find?

MS. THEMISTOCLEOUS-FREY:

Well, we work with everything from college students that recently graduated or that are currently in college all the way to senior executives. Just the other day we helped a CMO of a company, a Chief Merchandising Officer for a retail organization, get a job. He was a local Brookhaven resident as well and basically the techniques that we teach work with everyone, every level.

We have a program for veterans as well. And what we do is we teach them through networking to get in touch with Vice Presidents of companies that were veterans to understand the different things that veterans do go through. And it's about building the relationship more than anything else.

LEG. BROWNING:

Okay, thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Would you say that the trick is, is not just to submit resumes and hope somebody sees it, but to actually know how to work it so that your resume gets on someone's desk and is actually seen by the person who does the hiring?

MS. THEMISTOCLEOUS-FREY:

Absolutely. What we teach people to do is not apply online. Build that relationship. And if you do have to apply online, know that someone is waiting for it on the other end.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Great. Thank you very much. Does anybody else have any questions? Thank you, Maria. I appreciate it.

Okay, next up we have Mr. Tom Melito, who -- from the County Executive's Office who's going to be presenting us with the County Executive's Performance Management Team. And, certainly, Tom and anybody else that you need to -- would like to have come up with you, please have them.

Welcome, Tom.

MR. MELITO:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

And thank you for coming here today.

MR. MELITO:

Thank you very much. We're happy to be here and very happy to have this opportunity to introduce yourselves to this Committee. Obviously, we appreciate the support you've given to the County Executive in creating this group. And we look forward to an open and productive working relationship with you as we move forward.

I thought what I would do is introduce myself a little bit and then also introduce very briefly members of the group and then we'll talk a little bit about what we're going to be doing.

Basically I have a Bachelor Degree in Economics and a Master's in Finance from New York University. After about eight years of work on -- between Wall Street and Revlon out of business school, I got involved with local governments kind of by accident. And I became -- was asked to be a Deputy Town Supervisor in the Town of Babylon for Supervisor Arthur Pitts.

As Deputy Supervisor, it was a wonderful opportunity for me to learn about government. All of the things you learn about in business school but never get a chance to really do, it was really right for opportunities to implement good management practices. And quite frankly I fell in love with the mission of government being able to do good things on behalf of others.

While in Babylon, we created what we call the private sector approach to managing government, where we tried to institute a number of private sector approaches to management and introduce strategic planning, goals and objectives, try to professionalize our constituent response capabilities, upgrade our technology systems and just try to infuse a sense of professionalism into the work that we did and infuse a sense of working for customers. Our constituents were our customers.

After about five years in the Town of Babylon, Arthur left. And as you probably know, many of you, he's a Supreme Court Judge. I left to do some consulting work in 1993 and then started my own company in 1996. I performed consulting projects on behalf of municipalities across the region in my own practice for about 11 years. In 2008 I joined forces with another firm, Down Management Systems, who had a much broader base of resources available to them. And, quite frankly, worked with most of the municipalities on the Island, some up in Westchester, some in New Jersey, and probably worked in just about every service area you can find.

I have been working as a consultant for County Executive Steve Bellone for about ten years in the Town of Babylon where we implemented -- where we introduced, quite frankly, and implemented an overall program, a data driven decision making, constituent response and increasing our levels of productivity.

I look forward to working with this group. This is an opportunity for us to put a lot of our lessons together in one package and to make significant improvements for Suffolk County. I'd like to introduce some of our team members. We are -- my understanding is we're not all here yet, but we hope to be soon. And hopefully next time I speak before this group, we'll have our full complement.

To start with, I guess, if you can stand up, Vinny Falkowski, he's the Assistant Deputy County Executive for Performance Management. Vinny has over 20 years of experience in the public and private sector. He's a licensed professional engineer. He's a Project Management Professional and a Certified Construction Manager. And he specialized in engineering, construction, environmental projects and most importantly he's a very competent project manager. We are going to have numbers of projects occurring at any point in time and that is something that is going to be very valuable.

Next we have Phil Berdolt. Phil Berdolt is the ex-Commissioner of Public Works in the Town of Babylon. He was very experienced working on the Performance Measurement Technology Projects associated with DPW in Babylon. He introduced a GPS tracking program and expanded that and has been involved in all aspects of that endeavor including labor relations and economic developments.

Next we have Barry Paul, who is the Commissioner -- is a Deputy Commissioner who is residing in the Department of Health Services. He works there and works with this group. He's got over 28 years of experience in budget and operations management. He's very involved with work process, business improvement practices. He's held various positions relating to project site and

performance management. He's an expert in process reengineering and change management. He's going to be an extremely valuable member of the team and he has participated on teams that have successfully implemented performance management in governments in Nassau County, for example, and in other places in the private sector.

And with us as well is Rebecca Sanin. She's the Director of Constituent Affairs and Performance Based Management. She has extensive experience in strategic analysis, planning, program development. She's focused on performance improvements across many spectrums associated with public and private interactions. She'll be working with our constituent -- the constituent services end of the operation that we're working with and has experience with education, social media, diversity training and stakeholder development and coalition building.

So, that's pretty much the team as we are today. I thought, you know, before we get into any specific questions, I would give you a little sense -- obviously, if I could see you -- obviously we've been here -- most of us have been here three and a half days so -- in fact, Phil started yesterday so he's been here one and a half days. We are in the process of drafting project plans, goals and objectives, our mission statement, etcetera, like any good organization should. And we will be looking to roll out that information as we complete that. I'm not prepared to discuss the details of that today.

But in terms of a mission, just to give some broad sense of how we're looking at what it is we are going to do, we're engaged in helping to make Suffolk County government an accessible, constituent-friendly operation that delivers cost effective, high quality and timely services using transparent, outcome driven measures that compel accountability and maximize efficiency.

We will introduce, develop and implement a series of evidence-based decision making, rethinking and reframing of operating assumptions, evaluating and improving government services to garner high quality performance results and improve financial outcomes. We will certainly use data driven decision making and data driven analysis to reconfigure roles, streamline operations and innovate. Of course, we will be doing this in conjunction with the Legislature, the County Executive's Office and most importantly quite frankly our employees which are our most valuable and expensive resource. This is going to be a joint effort. This is not going to be a matter of top down, silo based operation. This is going to be something that we're going to all work on together.

The ultimate bottom line is to provide the best services we can for Suffolk County residents while at the same time improving the work life experience of the employees that we have. The life blood of any organization is its employees. And I found that the most productive organizations, the most successful private and public organizations, quite frankly, treat their employees as human capital. And as we all know, capital assets are something we invest in and we hope to reap rewards from that later.

And then finally we want to provide organizational, management and training platforms necessary for success, utilizing technology, of course, as a catalyst to promote efficiencies, promote communication and accessibility. So, that's pretty much what we're all about.

In terms of our approach, not unlike the approach we used in Babylon, we are going to have like a two-pronged way of moving about our business. On the firsthand, we want to plan for the long-term big picture. We want to roll out an effective program that will be inclusive of everyone that will be educational. Let people know what it's all about, how to participate. We're going to provide training, give people tools associated with performing effectively within that context. And we're going to move forward on that. And we will have a full project plan associated with that.

More for the near term, as we've been hearing about, obviously we are looking for some short term benefits. We hope to look into the field of Quick Hit. Low hanging fruit, for lack of a better way to

say it, expense reductions, operational improvements to the extent that there are some things that are obvious, we can attack, and looking for opportunities to increase revenues. So, that's who we are.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Thank you, Tom. Legislator Romaine.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Thank you. I'm sure I'll be getting at least an e-mail on who the appointees are to the various departments. I understand there was a new Deputy appointed in Public Works and a new Deputy appointed in Health; soon to be a Deputy in Social Services. I have no idea who those people are. It would be helpful if I knew at least the names. I understand that these people do not have to be confirmed by the Legislature, but it would be helpful.

MR. MELITO:

Absolutely.

LEG. ROMAINE:

And let me ask you this: I listened to your presentation. Very similar to presentations I've heard over the years. What are you going to do when you find that there's insufficient resources for the government to operate, that there are core missions of this government which are lacking in key resources to move forward? Because you seem to be interested -- and obviously in a down cycle, facing some fiscal crisis, we all want to tighten the belts, pull in the reigns, look at all the ways we can save money. All of that is worthwhile. But what happens when you find that there isn't sufficient resources in a core mission to accomplish that mission?

And the reason I bring this up is I sit -- I don't know if anyone else here, I think Kate you're here, DuWayne you're here, on Social Services, on the Human Services Committee, we heard that -- we're not going to be able to meet the Prompt Payment bill. We're not going to be able to pay our bills promptly.

We also heard as far as Medicaid is concerned, we're being sued and we're under consent -- decree which we may not comply with because we have so many vacancies in Social Services. And that's concerning to me. Maybe it needs a management rework, different lines of authority or something like that. But whatever it is, it just appeared to me, and I guess to my colleagues, too, that the job wasn't getting done. And if you have a way to get the job done without personnel, you're worth every penny that the County is paying you.

But right now we're facing real critical crisis right in front of us. So, when you talk about all of these things -- I mean my focus is, well, I hope we can preserve the element of choice in the pressure of circumstance, because that pressure of circumstance is bearing down on us in the Social Service Department, just to name one of many departments in County government, who are core to the mission of County government, that we cannot actually perform the duties that we're entrusted to by law. And we're violating our own laws in terms of prompt payment.

So, those are all concerns that I have, which I will direct you to. I'm all for efficiency, I'm all for saving money, I'm all for restructuring staff. But when you stop performing your key missions, it raises a lot of questions for me. And I would tell you your work is not only needed, but urgent. Thank you.

MR. MELITO:

Okay. Absolutely.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Legislator Cilmi.

LEG. CILMI:

Yeah, thanks, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for being here again, Tom. It was a pleasure meeting you the other day.

I want to challenge you a little bit about some of your specific ideas, not in terms of individual departments or plans relative to those departments, but more in terms of how you're going to go about making our government work better. So, maybe you can talk to us a little bit about in addition to your professional experience, what types of, you know, certifications or education you may have and the variety of systems engineering, you know, programs that are out there. You know, as you know, I have a resolution on the agenda today that asks our Planning Department to look into Lean as a system and determine whether or not it's appropriate to bring those principles to Suffolk County government as have been brought to many other governments in the country. So, could you talk to us a little bit about that Lean, Six Sigma, TQM?

MR. MELITO:

Sure, sure. The bottom line is my approach, quite frankly, as I mentioned I have an MBA in Finance, very interested in management over the years and I've read about Six Sigma, Lean principles, etcetera. The bottom line is my approach is really an accumulation of my experience in conjunction with what's been written about it, what's the literature. And if you look at all of these techniques, they all have certain things in common. And the thing that's in common is what is the mission of the specific application that we're looking at? Is it some organization or is it a department or it's a function within that department? And in order to accomplish that mission, one of the things that we need to do, and let's identify those and let's only focus on doing things that actually improve value, let's look at outcomes associated with the steps in the process, for example.

So, you know, Lean principles, TQM, all of it, it's really about getting to the core of what it is we do relative to accomplishing a mission and how do we do it better, how do we determine if we're doing a good job, how do we develop information out of data, because there's lots of data floating all over the place. And let's use that data, turn it into information and help us make decisions about whether or not we're doing something that is helping us to accomplish our core mission.

LEG. CILMI:

Well, I agree with you. But, if you looked at -- if you read about some of these things, you know that a lot of these management tools are scientifically based. They're not just a theorial, kind of, let's make things work better and let's, you know, let's see what adds value and what doesn't add value, get rid of the things that don't add value. And, you know, there's some science to, you know, making things more efficient.

MR. MELITO:

Absolutely, absolutely. There's science to it. But -- well, let me give you an analogy. You know, I went to NYU. And NYU is a very quantitative -- there are quantitative schools and there are qualitative schools. Harvard is known as being more qualitative. NYU is famous for being very quantitative. And as a finance major, we learned about all these fancy models: Capital asset pricing models, literate programming, regression analysis, simultaneous equation satisfaction, etcetera. And all of these models are generated to help give you answers of what to do in certain situations.

As time goes on, and as I get older, unfortunately, which is becoming very obvious, and my experience has grown, you can have all the models that you want in the world. What you need is people -- but what accomplishes goals is people working with people. You're getting information from the models and working with people to accomplish goals.

So, I think there has to be an approach that obviously is appreciative of the fact that there are scientific ways -- there are general management practices. There are ways of evaluating processes. There are ways of looking at a system and determining whether or not that system is appropriate or not. You know, we can sit down and we can map out -- I've sat and actually timed operations so we get a reasonable expectancy of what can be done and accomplished in a given day based on a series of tasks.

And so we can do those things. The average person is not trained to do that in this organization or in any other organization. So, what my job is and the way I deal with it is to consolidate the thinking on these scientific ways of evaluating data and evaluating experience and helping to communicate that to people in ways that make sense to them within the context of their job.

So, while I agree with what you're saying, I appreciate it 100 percent. I'm not coming in here with one specific method TQM, Lean practices per se, but we're going to use a panoply of different techniques based on the situation that we encounter.

LEG. CILMI:

Can you give us an example of one specific process or aspect of Babylon government that you looked at and that you were able to take and measure, you know, put some metric to how long it may take or whatever it is, before actually addressing it and then after you've addressed it?

MR. MELITO:

Absolutely. One of the areas that is very problematic in most municipalities is the permitting process. And in the Town of Babylon, we at one time had a lot of issues associated with the Building and the Planning Department. And so we said well, what we need to do is we were building a system of data driven decision making and we were building a system of how it is we can follow and track every permit application from its infancy to the time it gets released.

And so we needed to translate those activities into discreet data elements that we could put in a system and then track those pieces. So, what we did was we went down and we said, well, let's take a look just on the residential side of all the various permutations of a permit process that could happen with regard to, you know, whatever it might be. And we came up with literally 3800 permutations of a simple residential permit that might involve -- might involve ZBA, might involve Architecture Review Board, might involve the plumbing, whatever the case might be.

And then what we did is we analyzed those and we tried to see patterns in there. And we actually consolidated that 3800 into 28 discreet types of functions that we then could put on a -- create data elements to track those functions. And what we found was very interesting and we saw areas where we did not have enough people, for example, trained in the proper way to deal with those. We found that constituent response and responding to inquiries from the public was taking up a significant amount of time. And then we find out other areas we were doing a very good job.

So what we did was we reorganized the entire Building Department. We moved where people sit. We moved certain areas out of that and we, for lack of a better way of saying it, we reengineered the processes associated with granting those permits. And from the time we started until the time we finished, the processing was about 30% improved. We weren't complete, but that's where it was.

We actually created a knowledge base of information that we generated by analyzing all of those permutations. And we took information from that analysis. We put it on a knowledge base that was available to people in-house and then we had so much good information there, instead of having phone calls go right to the Building Department, we had a small group in the Supervisor's Office that would answer phone calls that were given to the Building Department and they could

answer about 80% of those calls.

So, we went from a situation where at one point there were maybe eight, ten, twelve people on line in the Building Department waiting to be serviced to the point where lines were almost non-existent. Because we were able to, number one, streamline the process; number two, get information out that alleviated the need for people to call into the Department; and then, three, by creating an environment within which we could work with the constituents, that work got done.

We did similar procedures for -- I don't remember exactly how many, but for the number of service requests, that comprise 80% of everything that comes in from a constituent base; so, we did that through DPW. We did it with potholes. We did it with engineering requests. We did it with debris request, when someone was complaining quality-of-life types of issues and on and on and on. And that's really, you know, what we did.

LEG. CILMI:

What did you find was your biggest challenge in working on that project?

MR. MELITO:

There were a lot of challenges, quite frankly. The initial challenge is really sifting through the volumes of data and turning that data into information. And finding out what data it is we need, where do we find that, in what format, in what forum, what file might that be in and how do we bring that to bear for us in a dashboard way that allows us to make decisions? That was number one.

Number two, a huge challenge and a challenge that I've encountered in every public change management project that I've worked on, is engaging the employees to work towards positive change quite frankly. And what it is, it requires employees to look at what they do in different ways. And, you know, we all hear about -- and I think we may have spoken about it the other day, you know, the solemnization of government and probably -- I'm looking around -- probably nobody here is old enough to remember Tom Peters, *Search of Excellence*. You guys remember him? Back in the '80's when the leverage buyouts were really big. And the Japanese companies were killing us particularly in the car industry and he wrote a series of books that started with *in search of excellence*.

And one of his mantras out of that first book came *stick to your knitting*. And it was at a time when I was working for Revlon at the time, a company like Revlon were doing leverage buyouts and buying companies that provided healthcare services and they were failing at it. And Drexel, Birmingham, Bear was the big company that was doing the leverage buyouts. But the point I wanted to make, he found that successful companies, particularly in Japan, were the companies that figured out what it is they do best, stuck to it and kept doing it.

In government, that analogy is rendered irrelevant because in government we do so many different things. We do so many different things that aren't related to one another. And rather than always sharing resources for the accomplishment of common goals, we often end up competing for resources to do different kinds of things.

We need to -- I'm sorry, you're going to --

LEG. CILMI:

No, go ahead.

MR. MELITO:

What we need to do is change employees' perspectives to get the sense that we all do work for one organization, knock down those silos so that there's cross communication. The one thing we found

in Babylon that we remarkable and very exciting is that towards the end of the process where people were really using the dashboards, we were meeting monthly and we'd go through the reports and how are we performing and what do we need to do better, is that we were having conversations that I've never had with employees in governments before, simply because the information was there, number one; number two, they were looking at their perspective from a whole different point of view; and, number three, it was -- quite frankly, it was empowering for the employees. Because, you know they have -- finally have an opportunity to influence the outcomes associated with their day-to-day life experience at work. And it was very empowering. So, working with the employees is a challenge, getting a harness on the data is a challenge and then keeping on top of it and making sure we stick to our knitting, quite frankly.

LEG. CILMI:

If you had -- if you had -- could choose one word that would characterize the problems that we have, just one word, what would that be?

MR. MELITO:

That we Suffolk County have?

LEG. CILMI:

A-huh, or any government really in the realm -- in the realm of, you know, efficiency, productivity, what would it be?

MR. MELITO:

It's a tough question. I would say, if I had to give you one word, I would say management.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay. I'll yield in a moment, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the deference. As you know, this is a subject that's very important to me. I would suggest to you that our number one problem is capacity. And that's often the case at every level of government. The number one problem is capacity. And how you get something from point A to point B in the straightest of lines, in the shortest of lines, without all these gyrations of where it has to go and where it has to stop and sit and wait -- and, you know, it's a fairly common assertion that much of what we do with the widgets that we make in government is waste. You know, ultimately it make take you five minutes to do something, but it really takes you three months. So, have you read any of Ken Miller's books?

MR. MELITO:

No.

LEG. CILMI:

I would strongly suggest you get your hands on two books. His first book called *We Don't Make Widgets*. And his second book called *Extreme Government Makeover*. They're very short, easy-to-read. And I think you'll find them remarkably interesting and enlightening --

MR. MELITO:

Great.

LEG. CILMI:

-- as to your work going forward. So, I appreciate you being here. I look forward to working with you going forward. And I'm sure we can make government work a lot better.

MR. MELITO:

Absolutely, great. I look forward to it. Thank you.

LEG. CILMI:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Legislator Spencer.

LEG. SPENCER:

Thank you for your presentation. And I had to just make a brief remark. I know one of the members of your team, Rebecca Sanin. She's a real superstar, so I'm glad to see her on board with you and she's able to get things done. So, if the rest of your team is similar to her, then, we know we're heading in the right direction.

One of my biggest concerns, and I went through this as a business owner, and it really, I guess, depends on your mission. Because you you can make government work more efficiently and bring in technology. And the example I'll give is that I'm a physician and I run a medical practice. And I went to an electronic medical record. And with that electronic medical record, I was able to do the job of ten people with two people. And it's because I didn't need anyone to find charts or label them or do different things.

Now, sounds great. And I wonder as you are going about looking at your mission in terms of utilizing technology, but at the same time where I was able to do the job of ten people with two, there's a -- people and individuals and jobs and livelihoods. And they all live here and they have families. And it really -- how do you choose kind of a direction? Because you can make things efficient, but also you have to remember people. So, we're built on people. Our income ultimately comes from people living here and residing and spending money. So, how do you balance efficiency at the same time maintaining jobs? I mean, I guess there's the ability to kind of repurpose and do other things. But do have a particular mission or an objective as you move forward, as you look for ways to make things work better?

MR. MELITO:

Well, it's a good question and it's definitely, you know, a reality that managers struggle with everywhere all the time. Quite frankly, we're not viewing our mission as one where we need to -- we're here to focus on eliminating jobs. We're here to focus on improving our human capital and allowing our workforce to work more effectively and more efficiently at the same time.

You can be -- you know, efficiency is different from effectiveness. I mean, you can be extremely efficient at doing something that maybe we really shouldn't be doing in the first place. Effective, to me, implies that we're also -- we're efficient but we're doing something that's reasonable, meaningful and we're able to do it well, something that we can really do well. And we need to focus on those things.

So, you know, like I -- our staff, you know, the people that work for the County are its biggest resource. And so, you know, it's a balancing act. And what we're hoping to do is help the -- that resource perform more effectively. And that's what we're all about.

LEG. SPENCER:

Thank you.

MR. MELITO:

Sure. You know -- I'm sorry, go ahead.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Legislator Gregory.

LEG. GREGORY:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Excuse me. Although I'm not a member of this Committee, I wanted to come by and hear the presentation by Mr. Melito. Mr. Melito and I, we worked together for a few years back, I guess, 2002, '03 era, seems so long ago. And Phil Berdolt, we had worked together for a little bit as well. I know you guys well, and you're very, very competent at what you do. And it'd be an excellent complement to the County.

I just want from to hear from you a little bit, maybe you said -- I apologize, I was a little distracted, I was in a side conversation, you might have mentioned it. Given the climate that you're coming into with potential layoffs of hundreds of employees, you know, the word *efficiency* often is synonymous to attrition or layoffs. How do you -- how do you expect your approach to be going into these departments where your personnel will be in a kind of -- allaying those fears and really getting the best out of those employees and information and the knowledge that you need to ensure that we are returning more efficiency and effectively?

MR. MELITO:

Absolutely. Well, the first thing -- the first thing is, as I said earlier, our -- I'm not viewing our mission necessarily to reduce staff. You know, our mission is to get us to perform better. And that may involve a million different things. But in terms of working with employees, it's critical to be open; it's critical to be honest. And, quite frankly, I'm looking at the employees -- our group is looking at the employees as resources. And we're going to treat them as such.

You know, as a consultant -- I've been consulting now since 1993. And most of the time when we get called in to do an analysis of a particular department or an operation, it's because things haven't been going well. And so people are already upset. *These guys coming in are here to make us look bad.* And so typically what we do in our projects, is, you know, we develop questionnaires to elicit certain kinds of information from the employees; and then we go through the questionnaires. And to the extent that makes sense, we try to pick out a few of them to have confidential interviews with, to deal with the issues in a little more detail.

And sometimes it's very hard to get people to respond back. You know, you make the call, they don't want to fill out the questionnaires. We had people lose them. We had one project where the questionnaires were in a box. To guaranty that they were confidential, we had them placed in a locked box. Somebody stole the box. So, we understand how, you know, people are very, very worried about that.

But, so what we do is, when we then set up meetings and we usually set aside maybe a half hour for each meeting. And if I told you how many times over the course of my experience from 1993 we were sitting, and it was always two of us, with each interview, we were sitting with the people for an hour-and-a-half, two hours, two-and-a-half hours, because once you give people an opportunity and you let them know that you're there to work with them, we've had people say who have been in an organization 20 years, *this is the first time anyone has asked me about my work life experience. This is the first time anybody has asked my opinion on how we might make improvements. This is the first time anybody's taken the time to talk to us whatsoever.*

And when you do that, it's empowering. And two of the most important things for any large scale change management thing, and, Tom, I think we spoke about that a little bit the other day, is senior level commitment. There has to be a commitment from the top down so employees know that the administration is serious. And it obviously includes the Legislature and the County Executive's Office. But also you have to have employee buy in. And when you give employees -- when you create an environment where employees realize that they have the opportunity to influence the outcome of a project that's going to change what it is they do or how they work, it's very empowering and people work with you.

How many of us -- you know, we always hear, you know, about Civil Service mentality, about employees in the public sector, and they're not motivated, etcetera. Quite frankly, I found more creative, motivated employees in the public sector than I have anywhere else. And when you give people the opportunity to participate in that process, it opens that door and, you know -- I studied music for many years. I mean, I wanted to be a professional musician. And I don't put it on my resume, but I really got tired of washing dishes until 2:00 in the morning. I wanted to get married. I wanted to have a life. So -- but I wanted to be a classical flute player. And I was studying with professional musicians and I also was studying Jazz. And I went to work at Revlon and then Payne Weber. And the way I describe it is working in the private sector is like playing classical music. There's a sheet of music. And we all have a leader and we all play to that music.

In the public sector those structures haven't been set up in the same way. So, it's more like Jazz. It's more like improvisation. And that is where the creativity comes in. And when you give people that opportunity to be creative and work with you, it's -- I had a music teacher who was a professional musician from Germany who always said, "you guys as students have no idea how talented you are because you haven't gotten to the point where you can recognize what your talent is." It's the same thing -- it's same thing in any significant endeavor that we engage in.

So, that's our approach. And there are going to be hard decisions. I'm not saying that there aren't going to be. And, you know, we're going to have to refocus. And as Legislator Romaine and Cilmi both brought up, you know, we have exigent circumstances right now. Maybe there are things we can do right away to make things work, maybe we can't. Maybe there are things we're doing that we shouldn't be doing. Maybe there are things that are not mandated or, you know, we think are mandated. These are all -- everything's going to be on the table.

I mean, we're in a situation where we want to make this thing work. And the bottom line is government, in my opinion, is about doing things for people that they couldn't do for themselves and improving their lives. And if there's a service that we provide that we can't do well with the resources that we have, then maybe someone else should be doing it. These are things we're going to look at. I don't have any preconceived ideas of what those are, but that's way it has to work. Sorry.

LEG. GREGORY:

No. Just to comment, I agree with your approach on getting employees buy in, you know, having come from a military background and, you know, you're in charge of young people's lives and, you know, often without any real, you know, compensation, you have to get their buy in and just working in government, that's just a process we go through.

MR. MELITO:

Absolutely.

LEG. GREGORY:

In my experience, when you ask people what do you think, just a simple phrase that many people have never been asked that --

MR. MELITO:

Absolutely.

LEG. GREGORY:

How would you do it, you know, if this were your decision, how would you approach it? First after the shock and amazement, there's an appreciation and then there's the buy in because they're part of the process now.

MR. MELITO:

Absolutely.

LEG. GREGORY:

It's not a top down type of formulation. It's more of a bottom up, you know, working with the management, it becomes a common solution and hopefully better results.

MR. MELITO:

Absolutely.

LEG. GREGORY:

So, I agree with that. So, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Legislator Cilmi.

LEG. CILMI:

Yeah, I appreciate it. Just one or two more questions. I wanted to ask you, Tom, specifically about Lean, you're experience with Lean, if you have any education on Lean, specifically, be it private sector, public sector, whatever, if you've seen any of the other governments in the country that utilize Lean principles in their operations, and whether or not you envision using Lean principles in your job as it relates to the County?

MR. MELITO:

Yeah. As I said, I've read about Lean. No, I haven't used it specifically. I haven't worked with a municipality that's used that specific methodology. I'm completely open to it. I understand basically it's about getting to what adds value, which is what we're all about and I, you know, have no problem with looking at it more fully and applying it to situations that I feel are appropriate.

LEG. CILMI:

So, you would agree that looking at it as a potential method of making our government work better is a good idea?

MR. MELITO:

Sure, absolutely. Everything is on the table. Everything is open.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Well, Mr. Melito, I think you presented quite a good picture there, what your goals are. And I have to say I commend you and I think that the number one challenge is going to be quantifying everything that we're doing, quantifying how much it's costing us to do it and finding the solutions to make us a little bit more efficient. And those answers are usually going to come from the workers on the ground, people out there doing these different jobs. You find the right people out there, they're going to tell you what we can be doing differently and we can be doing it better. So, we appreciate it.

Do we have any other questions? Thank you very much.

MR. MELITO:

Thank you, guys. Nice to see you. Appreciate it.

TABLED RESOLUTIONS

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Okay, so, we're going to move onto the agenda. First up is **IR 1015, a Adopting Local Law No. -2012, a Local Law to Sunset Living Wage Subsidies. (Cilmi)**

LEG. CILMI:

Motion to approve.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Second.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Motion to approve and a second by Legislator Romaine.

LEG. BROWNING:

Motion to table.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Motion to table by Legislator Browning. I'll second the tabling motion. Any comments? Tabling goes first. All those in favor? Opposed?

LEG. CILMI:

Opposed.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Opposed.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Two opposed. Abstentions? Motion is table. **(VOTE: 3-2-0-0)**

IR 1019, Directing the Planning Department to conduct a feasibility study on incorporating LEAN Government Principles in Suffolk County. (Cilmi)

LEG. CILMI:

Mr. Chairman, based on Mr. Melito's comments here today, specifically in that he's going to explore Lean as a possibility to make government more efficient here in Suffolk County, I'll offer a motion to table this bill and look forward to working with Mr. Melito in that task.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Okay. And I will second that motion. And I think this Committee looks forward to working with Mr. Melito on a number of tasks over the next coming months. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Resolution tabled. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

IR 1055, Adopting Local Law No. -2012, a Local Law to increase licensing fees for motor fuel facilities operating in Suffolk County. (Kennedy) I understand this has to go back to a public hearing so I'll make a motion to table.

LEG. CILMI:

Second.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Second by Legislator Romaine. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion tabled. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

IR 1105, Adopting Local Law No -2012, A Local Law amending Resolution No. 1130-2011 to expand the "Contractors Wall of Shame" to include all professions licensed by Suffolk County (Spencer)

LEG. SPENCER:

Motion to approve.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Motion to approve by Legislator Spencer.

LEG. CILMI:

Second.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Seconded by Legislator Cilmi. All those in favor?

LEG. ROMAINE:

I assume, I assume that this is the reverse for Angie's List? (Laughter)

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Well put. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion's carried **(VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

IR 1248, Accepting and appropriating additional funds for a 100% State funded grant for a Displaced Homemaker Program. (Co. Exec.) I'll make a motion to approve and place on the Consent Calendar.

LEG. SPENCER:

Second.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Second by Legislator Spencer. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **(VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

IR 1279, I apologize, Mr. Meguin. We have a resolution **Confirming appointment of County Commissioner of Consumer Affairs Robert R. Meguin (Co. Exec.)** Mr. Meguin, if you could just please come up and maybe give the Committee a few words about yourself and if you have sat down and talked to anybody over at Consumer Affairs yet? I think, maybe, this might be one of the toughest departments. You guys have quite a bit of work to do and not a whole lot of staff to do it with.

MR. MEGUIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is Bob Meguin. I'm a 20-year resident of the Town of Southold. Let me give you a bit of my educational background. I am currently an attorney. I graduated Boston University with a Business Degree with honors. I have a graduate -- graduated from the Law School at St. John's University. I've been a lifelong resident of Suffolk County.

My professional experience, frankly, took me in a number of different directions. I've been in the private sector and I have been in the government sector more than once. Initially I practiced law. I had an opportunity in the mid-'70's where I served as a Director of Finance for a Supervisor in the Town of Babylon for a period of two years. And what motivated me at the time, if you recall 1975, was pretty much similar to what's happening now in terms of government crisis and municipal finance and whatnot. That's what initially attracted me to that opportunity.

After that I went back into the private practice of law. I practiced law for a period of time. The

bulk of my professional experience has really been as a -- I like to use the word legal adviser to various Judges. I served as -- the term is a Principal Law Clerk to three different County Court Judges and Acting Supreme Court Judges. Primarily my experience was in major felonies, homicides, that sort of thing. A Principal Law Clerk, what does he or she do? I write legal decisions, I speak with the Judge about legal issues that come up during a trial. I did that for approximately twenty odd years.

There came a point in time when I was somewhat frustrated. I quit that job and went back into the private practice of law, which is frankly the hardest thing I've ever done in terms of the exposure to experiencing whatnot. I did that for roughly about six years. And then the last two years I kind of slowed myself down a little only because I have a daughter that just started college. That was one of my motivations. And also I wanted a different sort of direction. The opportunity obviously came up with -- in January I submitted my resume, so to speak. And I hope -- I believe I tried to fax copies of my resume to the members of this Committee beforehand and made some phone calls in trying to at least introduce myself.

So, that essentially is kind of my background. And, yes, I have for the last three days spoken with the current Acting Commissioner. And frankly he's a very valuable resource. It became very apparent to me the first day he and I spoke -- we met from 9 o'clock Tuesday morning until roughly 4:30 literally just talking about the myriad of issues. His department, this particular individual, who I'm sure you're aware of -- well aware of, he has over roughly forty odd years experience and he has extraordinary experience in particular, a specialty called Weights and Measures, which, you know, kind of seems like -- what's the big deal about that? Very complicated area.

We've spoken about the other areas and how the current Department is structured. It's not a very big department. Roughly has 30 employees. There are some vacancies now. And it's a bare bones kind of operation. They do licensing of occupational licenses. And I see we have this resolution by way of the Contractor's Wall of Shame. That's an important role of the Consumer Affairs. And the biggest primary mission I see from having been there for three days is, we need to devote efforts in personnel to enforcement for use of a, I guess, much maligned word, boots on the ground, so to speak. We need more inspectors. We do need more investigators. And they do bring in substantial revenue to the County.

Now, I'm not suggesting that that's what's it is, a cash cow trying to generate additional or more revenues. Because there is also another component. When you do have boots on the ground, so to speak, what's happening is, it sets a tone out there that the Consumer can be confident that somebody is looking at the grocery stores, looking at the drugstores, looking at, you know, the fuel oil trucks that deliver oil, looking at the various gas stations, which I'm sure your offices in the last week or two have been flooded with various questions, complaints and whatnot, those sorts of things. So, there is a very deterrent, preventive effect, when at least we're out there. It may not realize itself in terms of money and eventually, you know, it'll be measurable in that respect. But in my mind, that's a very, very important function in terms of what the role of the Department of Consumer Affairs should be all about.

Some of the things I've spoken about and we would like to see done would be that there should be a, perhaps, a refinement of what the occupational license is involved with. What happens now, is we have a generic license. Home improvement license, you have gotten that; however, the guy that is specialized in terms of fixing your chimney, very dangerous kind of occupation to the consumer, or the landscaper that is putting up retaining walls and whatnot, he or she, guess what, they could put the same dormer on your home. So, Cliff -- and they're covered. The consumer probably sees *are you licensed?* They call. Yes, that person is licensed, but really that -- there are some very important specialties in order to adequately protect the interest of the consumer. That's one area, I think, needs to be done.

There are certain code provisions I've looked at, I've read. This is not, believe it or not, all of the Suffolk County code provisions that impact upon the Consumer Affairs. There's another little booklet that I neglected and had left in my car. The jurisdiction obviously is very expansive. And its primary mission, again, is enforcement. Things I've encountered in the last couple of days, the fleet is -- dates from the mid-1980's. I was -- this morning the current Acting Commissioner and myself, Cliff and I, we were inspecting these vehicles. They are ancient. They date from 1984, '86. There's vehicles date to the year 2000 upwards of 135, 150,000 miles. He has placed a Capital Program in there. In my mind it's relatively nominal in terms of the investment that needs to be made in this particular department.

There is another area -- and there are areas we've neglected in areas of Weights and Measures, unfortunately. And it's been a function of personnel and time. But naturally the past administrators have had to pick and choose as to where to put their resources.

Another area which, I think, perhaps shouldn't cost a lot of money would be a speakers program, where we'd try to -- there's an educational component that this Legislature has charged as a mission for the Department. And, again, that's been neglected, particularly I see a speakers program with senior citizens. They, frankly, are very vulnerable. They may not understand really the scope of what the Consumer Affairs Bureau does in terms of that. And I've gone through a couple of cases with Cliff where I'm listening to him explain his rationale and I'm thinking about would I do in that instance? And, frankly, I was very pleased that at least -- he and I kind think of quite a bit alike.

Another major, major area is obviously technology, trying to cut down the paper flow, scanning documents, trying to integrate field equipment, which is a problem with some of our inspectors in terms of they're on sight, they make an inspection, they're walking around with laptops, they walk into a grocery store, for example, and do an investigation, got to run out to their car, work with things. We have to produce papers by way of that. That becomes a problem.

So, there is a number of things that we're looking -- looking to do. But some other areas, I guess, basically what -- the way I see it is there's a great potential for increased revenue within the Department itself, but unfortunately -- and at the price of trying to enhance public confidence. And not just the public. I think there are an awful lot of vendors out there that want to play fair, that work hard at that. They are resentful of the fact that they know who the bad guys are, so to speak, but yet nobody's going after these people. There comes a point in time in hard economic times, *well, maybe I should cut corners, become a little slipshod.* I need to do that to be able to compete.

So, we're not only looking out for the consumer, although it's a Consumer Affairs Bureau -- Department, rather, but in my mind it also helps the legitimate reputable vendors out there that, you know, want to do the right thing. There is an immediate problem. We need a person literally at the front desk. There are 8500 applications that come in each year that need to be renewed. Most of them come in by mail, come in by check. We're concerned about having that check physically deposited on a timely basis. So, we're certainly going to need an individual for that purpose and also some sort of key look at investigative -- additional investigative personnel and inspectors.

There are a number of other things I could speak about. I'm learning it literally as I sit here today. And if either of you -- of the Legislators have specific questions, I'd gladly address it. If I don't have the answer, I would frankly make the commitment to get back to you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:
Legislator Cilmi.

LEG. CILMI:
Yes, thanks, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for being here.

MR. MEGUIN:

Thank you, sir.

LEG. CILMI:

You called my office yesterday.

MR. MEGUIN:

Yes.

LEG. CILMI:

And I appreciate that. I apologize, I didn't have a chance to get back to you yet. But I did want to talk to you about, one of the things when I first was elected, one of the first departments I actually went to see was Consumer Affairs. And I was shocked, frankly, at how much money the County brought in through our Consumer Affairs Department. So, what I'd like you to do is, is to address the role of Consumer Affairs within this context; that on one hand we have a County government that's starved for money. And on the other hand we have business people, for the most part, that are also starved for money, who are trying to make a living, make ends meet with scarcer and scarcer resources. And, you know, when I hear on one hand, you know, that there's opportunities to raise more money for the County, I can't help but see on the other hand business people saying "you can't come at us again." So, can you respond to that?

MR. MEGUIN:

Yeah, Mr. Legislator, I'm not suggesting raise fees, occupational fees for, say, you know, that. When I say there are opportunities for increased revenue, it has to come on the enforcement aspect.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay.

MR. MEGUIN:

That's really what I mean, because we're -- I shouldn't say we're neglecting, but we don't have the resources to go out there to do the visible accountability that is out there. There are people out there. There's a range of people. There's those who are malicious, devious, predatory. And there are those that are just oversight, like you say, they may lack personnel to be able to accomplish something. The scale may be off. They're not venal in that respect, but there are violations. And, frankly, I'll give you an example. We were talking about, there's a gas station -- we were talking about where the owner was very appreciative, because we had a meeting this morning amongst the inspectors, very appreciative that a representative from Consumer Affairs was there. Why? Because his own employees were ripping him off. Okay? His meter was operating, but they had a clever way of being able to put the money in their pocket as opposed to, you know, giving it to, you know, their boss, so to speak. It was a pretty ingenious way, but those are sorts of -- you know, that's the flip side of what you're talking about.

I'm not suggesting that, you know, that the Department should be skewed towards the -- solely in the interest of the consumer. Although what I do as a lawyer, I read this, I mean that's what they're charging me -- they being the Legislature -- as a mission. I don't see that. But when I say there is an ability to generate fees -- because we're obligated to go out there and do certain things. In the past they used to go to grocery stores with this item pricing and wavers of items pricing. In the past they used to do it four times a year. They're down to one, one time a year. That sort of thing. There are scales out there that haven't been tested in quite sometime. There are other -- in this sort of economy we're dealing with, we're faced with the precious metals and coins and -- it's called Collateral Broker Program that the Legislature has dealt with, you know, the old term, I guess, it's the pawnbroker, whatever. So, there are a number of areas that -- I guess the right word is neglected only because -- not because the management knew that it existed, but was unable to address it in an adequate way and had to pick and choose how to deploy their

resources.

LEG. CILMI:

I appreciate that answer very much. And I'm just -- I'm always concerned that government is going to look to business people as another source of income.

MR. MEGUIN:

Right.

LEG. CILMI:

And while I agree with you completely that we need to enforce the laws that we currently have on the books and make sure that people are operating, you know, in a correct, lawful way, and not taking advantage of consumers, I also want to make sure that we're not, you know, trying to balance our budget on the backs of businesses, which is ultimately going to hurt us in the long run, in my opinion.

How do you see technology -- information technology working in terms of being able to do more of this work that you have to do with less? And I ask that in the context of having recently learned of the resignation of our Director of Information & Technology.

MR. MEGUIN:

Yeah, I'm no computer wiz. I'm from the, you know, new generation where they invented computers, where -- when I went to College, we literally started with the the punch cards, okay? Okay? And somehow it seems cultural in my mind. So, not that I want to be resistant about it, it's just something -- it's difficult for me to grasp. I like books. I like reading things. I want the piece of paper.

That being said, right now the field inspectors, they have their laptop. They have a Dell laptop, kind of heavy, kind of bulky. They're walking -- walking in, you know, doing certain things. They can't print out receipts, that sort of thing. There's difficulty -- the vehicle has to be on, the interface is between the vehicle and charging, keeping these -- the laptops so to speak charged and what not, the idea being tablets, much more -- and the idea being tied back into the home base, so to speak.

So you have real time access to a myriad of information that they may not be able to get literally out in the field, that might be able to assist them and help them and likewise being able to cut down -- for example, we could fax them a report, literally instantaneously from that; whereas instead of the inspector being, you know, ham tied, you know, being in the grocery store, so to speak, dealing with that situation, that's saves him or her a lot of time. Time means the ability to get to do other tasks that are out there. Frankly, the tasks seem endless, it kind of got daunting, when I thought of -- and I kept asking Cliff, so to speak, about this problem, this thing, what do we do about this, what about this area? And his frustration was obvious; very dedicated employee. If we had ten Cliffs here, I don't know that --

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Bob, it sounds like you got your hands full.

MR. MEGUIN:

My hands are full.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Okay.

MR. MEGUIN:

But it's a daunting task. Your hands are full. Your hands are full because we can make

presentations, we can say *this is what we see, this is how it should be*, but ultimately --

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Okay.

MR. MEGUIN:

-- you have a bigger picture than I in the realm of things and have to pick and choose, you know, where it's at. All we can do is identify the problem, bring it to your attention, suggest a solution and hope we're persuasive enough.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Thank you. Legislator Cilmi, we're running a little bit over our Committee here. If you have any questions, maybe after --

LEG. CILMI:

I would just ask through the Chair that you continue to invite Mr. Meguin and Mr. Melito back to our Committee on a regular basis --

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

I certainly will.

LEG. CILMI:

-- to give us updates.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Both important Departments. We'll certainly be doing that. Thank you very much. If we don't have any other questions, I'll make a motion to approve.

LEG. BROWNING:

Second.

LEG. CILMI:

Second.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Seconded by Legislator Browning. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries.
(VOTE: 5-0-0-0)

Thank you, Bob. I don't think we'll need you back on Tuesday. Thank you very much.

MR. MEGUIN:

Thank you all for your time.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

IR 1290. Establishing County policy to utilize employees separated from County Services (Spencer). Legislator Spencer.

LEG. SPENCER:

I'm going to make a motion -- this is my legislation. And the legislative intent here was initially -- converts to a lot of difficult decisions that need to be made on all levels of the County where we have valued County employees, there may be separation from employment; and then another area of the County where we're doing that same service and we're going outside. And I felt that working with Legislator Browning, that at any time there was an opportunity to utilize County employees to fulfil these jobs, and I have gotten input from Legislator Romaine also, that we

should try to do that. And that was the Legislative intent.

But I also understand that there's sensitive negotiations that are taking place between the Executive and a lot of the employee unions at this time. And I don't want to interfere with those negotiations. So, I'm going to ask that we table this for one cycle and I'm going to take also some other comments that I may add to the legislation. So, motion to table.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Okay. Seconded by Legislator Browning. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Tabled, motion. **VOTE: (5-0-0-0)**

I apologize to our members from the Health Committee and the people from the public here for Health services for running late. We had a lot of talk today about efficiencies and it looks like I have to get my Committee running a little more efficient as well. So, thank you very much. And motion to adjourn.

**THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 2:16 PM
{ } DENOTES SPELLED PHONETICALLY**