

**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. Carcacappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York on February 26, 2014.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**Leg. Robert Calarco, Chairman**

*Leg. William J. Lindsay, III, Vice-Chair*

Leg. Jay Schneiderman, Deputy Presiding Officer

Leg. Kara Hahn

Leg. Kevin J. McCaffrey

**MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:**

Leg. Thomas Cilmi - Excused

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

*Presiding Officer DuWayne Gregory, 15th Legislative District*

*Legislator Kate Browning, 3rd Legislative District*

George M. Nolan, Counsel to the Suffolk County Legislature

Sarah Simpson, Assistant Counsel to Suffolk County Legislature

Terry Pearsall, Chief of Staff/Presiding Officer Gregory

Renee Ortiz, Chief Deputy Clerk/Suffolk County Legislature

Tom Vaughn, County Executive Assistant

John Marafino, County Executive's Office

Alicia Howard, Clerk's Office

Robert Lipp, Director/Budget Review Office

Benny Pernice, Budget Review Office

Robert Doering, Budget Review Office

Connie Corso, Budget Director/County Executive's Budget Office

Brian Sapp, Aide to Legislator Lindsay

Michael Pitcher, Aide to Presiding Officer Gregory

Eva Greguski, Aide to Majority Leader Calarco

Deborah Tinnirello, Aide to Legislator Hahn

Chris DeLuca, Aide to Legislator Cilmi

Sean Rogen, Aide to Legislator McCaffrey

Jason Hann, Aide to Legislator Schneiderman

Charlie Gardner, Director of Government Affairs/National Electrical Contractors Association

Edward Bryson, Charles H. Bryson, Inc.

John Cowie, Detective Sergeant/Suffolk County Police Department

James Roddin, Detective Sergeant/Suffolk County Police Department

James Gruenfelder, Lieutenant/Suffolk County Police Department

Timothy Morris, Sergeant, Superior Officers Association

Jennifer McNamara, Acting Director/Labor Relation

James Hughes, Detective/Suffolk County Police Department

Christine Larkin, Suffolk County Probation Department

Russell Calemmo, Chairman/Suffolk County Electrical Licensing Board  
Gene Surdi, Suffolk Bureau of Electrical Inspectors  
Kevin McEvaddy, AME/Legislative Liaison  
Jerry Flaherty, Suffolk County Licensing Board  
Bill Biondi, Mayor/Mastic Beach Village  
Tim Brojer, Village of Mastic Beach  
Nick Busa, Trustee/Village of Mastic Beach  
Joseph Mikulas, Suffolk County Electrical Contractors Association  
Thomas Palk, Suffolk County Electrical Contractors Association  
Kevin Schrage, LI Chapter NECA  
Michael Benincasa, Chief Building Inspector/Town of Southampton  
Frank Fugarino  
Glenn Svoboda  
Jane Powers  
Laura Hughes  
Mary Aleffi  
Sal Ferrara  
Jeanette Tringali  
Rick Brand, Newsday  
And all other interested parties

**MINUTES TAKEN BY:**

Alison Mahoney, Court Reporter

**MINUTES TRANSCRIBED BY:**

Denise Weaver, Legislative Aide

***(THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 10:03 AM)***

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Okay. Good morning and welcome to the Government Operations, Personnel, Housing and Consumer Protection Committee. If we could all rise for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator McCaffrey.

***Salutation***

Good morning. Okay, we have a number of cards this morning, but first I'd like to say we do have excused absence by Legislator Cilmi, he's not going to be with us today. But we'll get right into the -- into the public portion. The first card I have here is Russell Calemmo -- Calemmo.

***Public Portion***

**MR. CALEMMO:**

That's correct. Close enough.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Close enough, all right.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Okay, thank you. My name is Russ Calemmo and I'm here this morning in regards to HR1.

However, first of all, I would sincerely like to congratulate Legislature (sic) Bill Lindsay the III to our County government and wish him the best of luck in his own shoes, so to speak. Most of us here today knew Bill Lindsay, your Dad, and for one, I knew him over 20 years. He was basically a good

man in the electrical industry. He supported our ideas in our board. He was a man of common sense. Like I said, he sat on our board for more than 20 years and helped make a difference in the betterment of us all. He was my captain, but, however, he wore a white shirt and a tie, came to work every day, we saw him. However, under that white shirt and tie, he wore a blue collar and he was very proud of it.

I'm Chairman of the Suffolk County Electrical Licensing Board. I have been appointed a member since 1985. Consumer Affairs was established in the early 70's to protect Suffolk County consumers from unscrupulous business practices. It has many facets to include, but not limited to, electrical, of which, I might add, has the most lethal potential and we take our responsibility very seriously. Since its inception, our licensing board has recommended many changes based on technology and trend safety needs in our laws that have been implemented solely to protect the consumer and the integrity of licensed electricians.

In addition, our board appraises all applicants to pre-qualify perspective master electricians for a thorough and comprehensive written and practical examination with the highest regard to present code and base knowledge of electricity and function. We democratically continue that responsibility and report all matters of concern to the County.

As you know, that master electrician and our towns and villages within the County are subject to our laws, and at present we have 2,600 master licensed electricians, not including mechanics and helpers. May I add, the revenue that is generated from our licensing laws within Consumer Affairs, that includes all licensing, is approximately \$5 million with a \$3 million net.

Briefly, Nassau County and villages have approximately 27 electrical licenses that each control its own laws and revenue that I believe that don't have a central administration nor a Consumers Affairs. Basically, it's a free-for-all with the electricians and the consumer paying the price for a privileged government to regulate whatever they deemed. From \$250 to \$50 per year and rising with additional fees for no-fault liability are their insurance, which carries approximately \$100; that's a middle avenue there, so to speak. As you can see, the cost of doing business as an electrician in that area costs thousands of dollars, and not to mention the loss of either paperwork or renewal.

Fortunately, in Suffolk County, we have one electrical license and consumer protection program for 1.5 million people on 912 square miles, that includes ten towns, 32 villages that a licensed electrician can work free, unlicensed, without additional licensing and fee requirements. With the exception of two government agencies, all electricians champion our licensing program.

Since its inception, Consumers Affairs has performed effectively and financially beneficial to our County. Consumer Affairs is dedicating to resolving complaints, enforcing Suffolk County Code and obtaining restitution for Suffolk County consumers. I dare you to find those words anywhere, I respectfully suggest. Our Consumer Affairs, I've been told --

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Mr. Calembo, your time is up. If you could just wrap up for us, please.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Oh, boy.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

How about we do this? Legislator Lindsay --

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Can I give you my card?

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Legislator Lindsay has a question for you.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I do, too.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Oh, certainly.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Mr. Calemмо, thanks for coming in this morning. Can you -- you went through the issue of certificates of insurance that you have to provide each one of these townships with that you're getting licensed and how they need to be named as an additional insured on those insurance policies. Can you just explain that process and how each one of these townships or villages or municipalities, what that ultimate cost is to the -- to the electrical contractor that has to do this?

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Certainly. Other than the licensing fee or permit to work in that town, they require on their application that you name that town as part of your insurance. To do that, you have to go to your insurance provider and they charge you a fee as low as \$50, depending on the size of your company, up to \$500. So, therefore, it would not only cost you a \$100 for that fee of that license or permit, but an additional fee for the insurance. So, therefore, if you figured based on the fact of one particular town, if there's -- we'll say 500 electricians at \$100, that's \$50,000 the town's going to get, but, however, it's going to cost that electrical contractor \$200,000, if you want to put it in that perspective.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

And what's the -- the time element that it takes in order to get licensed through these municipalities? I know some of them have different structures and requirements on how you actually do the licensing. On average, how long does it take you to get licensed by each municipality?

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Based on hearsay, I would assume -- some of these places do have their own review boards, so I would say anywhere from two to three weeks, up to a month, maybe, before you're allowed to work in that town. Most of the people have to apply prior to a particular project that they're -- they are involved with.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

My last question, is there ever times where you could be in the middle of a project or about to begin a project but you get delayed because of licensing issues where you have to wait to get licensed by that particular municipality?

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Are we talking about the County or these local municipalities?

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

I'm talking about the local municipalities.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

I could not answer that question at this time, Legislature Lindsay.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Okay, Legislator Schneiderman.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Thank you for coming out, Russ. A couple of quick questions.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Certainly.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Right now, Russ, it's just one, right, one township that has their own electrical registration; right, that's the Town of Southampton?

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Well, actually there's another town, Mastic Beach.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

The village, right; the village of --

**MR. CALEMMO:**

The village who implements basically the same rhetoric, respectfully.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Right. And I don't know whether they have their own licensing board, but Southampton does, they have their own review board.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

According to their application, they do have a review board. It doesn't say anything about licensing but it says review board.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Right, and they do the enforcement. I mean, I looked to see what kind of fees they're bringing in, not from the penalties but from the actual -- they don't call it a license, they call it a registration there, and it's in like the \$40,000 range.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Only the words change.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Right, it's about \$42,000.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Well, actually they do have 500 electricians at \$100 each. Right now Southampton has 493 since 2014 --

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Right.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

-- licensed master electricians registered.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Right, right. And I think they changed the fee, it's like \$200 for a two-year license, so it's \$100 a year.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Correct.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Right.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

That's correct.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

But they also say that they do quite a bit of enforcement. And, you know, so one of the concerns here, if it -- if there becomes one license, which seems to make sense Countywide, the Consumer Affairs is short staffed and it's a big County geographically. You know, the towns have the ability, you know, the building inspectors, they're in -- they're there, they're going into these construction projects all the time. Do we have the ability to do this as a County to enforce? And we don't have an East End division for Consumer Affairs, maybe we should, the County seat's still out in Riverhead. But Consumer Affairs is here in Hauppauge. You know, I'm a little bit concerned about the consumer themselves and making sure that the work being done is, you know, up to code and up to -- you know, up to all the regulations. Can you respond to that? That's my first question; I have a couple of others.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Well, actually, to be quite frank in regards to that question, the answer is yes. We take all complaints in Consumers Affairs, we analyze them and we act upon them. One of the issues of what you just said has to do with addressing those complaints. We have not, that I've seen on my desk in the last several years any complaints from Southampton Town. If we did get a complaint, certainly we would address it immediately. One of the issues is is that Southampton actually doesn't have a Consumers Affairs. So if there is an issue relevant to a construction or anything ambiguity relative to that, they send those people to our County for negotiation and restitution. So, therefore, the County is paying for something that we feel is like, *well, you guys are not participating in our County laws, why are you sending them here for us to address?*

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

You know, Russ, what about like Southold or East Hampton, Shelter Island, are you seeing a lot of complaints to Consumer Affairs from those areas? They don't have their, you know, electrical licensing requirement.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

That's correct.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Are you seeing complaints out of those areas? Are we enforcing it out in those areas?

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Well, we usually get a list at the end of the year. And based on the complaints, believe it or not, we get very little complaints addressed to the electrical industry. I would say it's probably, in my opinion, less than 2%. However, most of the complaints that we do get are home improvement contractors.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Right. You know, because it seems to make sense, if you're the contractor -- the electrical contractor, you know, it's crazy to have to get a permit from each town. And right now there's only one town that's doing this, but you could end up with every town and every village having their own requirements.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

It will happen, rest assured.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

And I understand that. Yet we as a County may need to work with some of these towns and villages to enforce these things, you know. And maybe that's something that needs to happen as part of the conversation, is how we can work together since we don't have the staff to do it. And I know it's not a lot of revenue that we bring in through these licensing, but maybe we need to talk about, you know, a more cooperative approach to this. So, yes, the contractor should only get one permit, but we should be working with the municipalities on enforcement.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Well, the revenue, respectfully, as I stated, is almost \$5 million with a \$3 million net to the County. I think that's a considerable amount of money based on just licensing and other avenues such as --

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

That's not just all -- that's not all the electrical, that's everything.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Yeah.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

That's all the home improvement licenses.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Correct. I said licensing, all licensing.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

All right. And that brings me, really, to the next question. You know, this -- what this Albany bill and this Home Rule has to do with the electrical licenses. The plumbers, we have their own plumbing -- I don't know that any towns are doing their own plumbing license; I suppose that could happen. But the town's do have home improvement contractor licenses, as do we. So if you're, let's say, you know, a home builder, some towns are, you know, requiring you to have the County, some towns don't care if you have the County, they have their own requirement. I mean, is that next on the list, Russ? Are we going to continue? And what might be the revenue impact to doing this to some of these towns and villages? Because they are, you know, seeing considerable revenues from the home improvement contractor licenses.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Well, to be quite frank, it's next. And the reason is, with all respects, it all boils down to revenue, and that's the key word. A lot of these towns, you know as well as I do, they are struggling and they're looking for ways to, in fact, try to raise money utilizing the expense of a lot of professionals. And personally, I don't think that's fair and there's a lot of people out there who are in the industry don't think it's fair. If I have to work in Southampton, and we'll use those people for an example, respectfully, I first have to get a permit to work there, pay them the \$100, then I've got to go to my insurance man, give him a \$100, okay, and then I go to my customer and replace a switch. How much do you think that's going to cost that customer? I'm not going to absorb those costs. And it just keeps going on and on and on.

Now, if every town -- and I said to you before, there's ten towns and we have 32 villages -- if they decide to take this issue and start their own programs in licensing and revenue and laws, it's a free-for-all. I said before we have one license, we have one place that we keep all the records and everything. Our investigators do their work very diligently because they have everything in one place, one government, one law, and it works.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

How many licenses do you need in Nassau County to be an electrician?

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Twenty-seven.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Twenty-seven.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Guess what that costs?

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Yeah.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

And plus the insurance.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Right. So, I mean, I agree that doesn't make sense. And I am historically, and I'm just guessing, a lot of the -- probably the small towns try to enact these licensing boards to make sure that the local contractors, you know, would all be qualified and maybe keep out some of the other -- you know, but if you're living on the East End now, and I drove here this morning, the line of contractors heading out there from other areas, it was, you know, the trade parade. Clearly, if it was done to keep people out, it hasn't worked. But it has created this framework that is, I agree, cumbersome and probably makes it expensive for the consumer.

You know, my biggest concern is that we make sure we're enforcing the law. So -- to make sure that we have adequate personnel at Consumer Affairs. If they're going to take over the East End in terms of doing these functions, historically you really don't see them out there. So I want to make sure if we're -- Southampton does a good job right now in terms of their electrical certifications, and if you take that away, is somebody else going to do it?

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Well, there's more to it than that, Legislator Schneiderman; however, it's not my privy to address those issues. However, in private, if you'd like to talk about this, I may.

But the most important thing is is, you know, electricians, plumbers, candlestick makers, no matter who they are, they have the right to work. But now we are burdened with additional cost and it just goes on and on and on. And, with respects, if you think some of these towns are going to go out there and try to enforce licensing, I don't think that's going to come about. They're going to utilize, *"Well, you need a home improvement license first to"* -- then you have to get an electrician's license, and it just keeps piling up. So where does it end? Where does it stop?

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

One comment, again.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Sure.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

And this comes from sort of a -- somewhat of an East End perspective, and I know you're one of my constituents out in East Hampton.

You know, some of these County licenses require a certain number of hours, paperwork, often you have to come up to Hauppauge to do this. I see this all the time with, you know, the fire departments and EMT's. You know, if we're going to do kind of a one-stop shop, again, we ought to

have maybe an East End office for Consumer Affairs, maybe out at, you know, in that Riverhead complex. And maybe if they're going to offer courses, they've got to be available so that the contractors from Montauk don't have to drive to Hauppauge, you know, for their yearly requirement of, whatever, five hours of class work. It's a caution that I'm sure you can understand being from out there, it's a long trip. And, you know, it is one County and if we're going to make these requirements, I think we have to be fair to all the residents.

**MR. CALEMMO:**

Well, if I may address that issue. Under the leadership of Mary Fallon, you recall, she was Commissioner of our Consumers Affairs and, in fact, she did have an office in Riverhead who addressed those exact issues you just brought up.

Thank you very much, gentlemen. May I strongly suggest that you support this bill for the benefit not only to the electrical industry, but all those people in labor. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you. Okay. I notice that we have an elected official in the audience here with us, Mayor Bill Biondi from the Village of Mastic Beach. Mayor Biondi, if you'd like to come forward, you could come up and speak next. I know you filled out a card.

**MAYOR BIONDI:**

Thank you. And good morning, everyone. I'm just basically here to support Resolution 1038. I'm sure through today you'll hear many different views on this piece of property. My main concern is being in the fire rescue service for 44 years, and the picture's here to prove it. This house is a tremendous threat, not only for the fire service, but anybody who goes into this house. This house needs to be taken down. What happens into the future, I believe we're going to probably put it into affordable housing, if it goes that far. I know there's a lot of people that are against affordable housing. I, myself, in 1971 came out of the military and that's how I started my career with affordable housing, and I'm doing very good today, thank God.

There's pros and cons. There's a few houses on this block that are in dire need and they do belong to the County. I'm just asking the board at this time, whatever we have to do, we just have to take them down and worry about what goes on with them in the future. Right now you can't do anything with this one piece of property because it's a 40 foot wide piece of property. We have to wait for the house next door to it to become vacant, and then at that time it'll be a bigger piece of property where we can do something. Affordable housing today is not a 20,000, \$30,000 house. They're up there about 60, 70, \$80,000.

So I have some pictures here, if you'd like to see them. Just the pictures themselves would definitely show you that this house definitely needs to come down. This house actually was -- some of the pictures in here are 19 -- they're before we became a village. So this wasn't a problem the village just came upon, this was there when the Town of Brookhaven was also there. So if I can bring them up?

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Sure, we'll have somebody circulate them around. Thank you, Mayor Biondi. And the intention is you're going to take this property, marry it with another lot next door once that becomes available for us to -- to give to you and create one affordable housing on that -- on that new lot that meets current standards.

**MAYOR BIONDI:**

Correct. Right now 62, you can't do nothing with it, it's not big enough. We just want to take it down, make it safe and just make the area look, you know, presentable.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Very good. Thank you, Mayor Biondi.

**MAYOR BIONI:**

Okay.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Oh, Legislator Browning has a question for you, Mayor.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Not so much of a question. Did you pass over the -- you have the photographs of the home.

**MAYOR BIONDI:**

Yes.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay, you're passing them around.

**MAYOR BIONDI:**

Yes.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay.

**MAYOR BIONDI:**

Okay? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you. Okay, our next speaker is Glenn Svoboda.

**MR. SVOBODA:**

Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen. My name is Glen Svoboda. I'm the resident next to the subject house. I've been a member of the Quality of Life Committee for both -- well, actually the whole tri-hamlet community, long before our Mayor has been, to be quite honest with you. I hope those aren't my pictures that are up there. I've given Mr. {Muse}, the other trustee, photographs from 2005 to 2007, which all the community including Maryann Johnson went down to speak about this house.

Now, today I want to speak about, so we understand this resolution, is 1038-2014. Today I finally received the modified copy for the first time, which nobody has given it to me. Now, I want to thank Bill Lindsay's Office and Jason Zove for having the courtesy, because I work in Sayville, thank God for their employment, that gave me the modified resolution back -- let's see when this came in, 1/30/14 was the first time that I was given this. Nobody, asking either Kate Browning's Office or the village, would have the courtesy to give me this. So if you'd like to see a copy of that.

Now, I did receive a letter from Kate Browning's Office about the inundation of red light camera tickets. Nothing inside here with that resolution that came -- and I've been speaking to Kate with all of the civic groups on this house, including giving her a map, since at least 2005.

So now, with that said and done, I want to let you know, first off, that we still haven't recouped from Hurricane Sandy in the community. Sir? Thank you. I hope we could have a little -- your office, Eva, by the way, is very effective, by the way, Sir.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you, Glenn.

**MR. SVOBODA:**

By the way, I just wanted to let you know, when I spoke to Eva on the 5th during the snowstorm, she said that her understanding was that property was supposed to be left vacant cause their concern was the septic system and the contamination of the bay. Now, we also had spoke in the village, prior to hurricane Sandy, which I was on the Quality Task Force, we were talking about land swaps. This is a 40-by-100 piece of property.

Now, we spoke to Peter Scully from the DEC, he said this property's not buildable. It's right on the wetlands. I spoke to the original lawyer and Paul Breschard, the former Mayor, that this property also has to be elevated to nine foot in order to qualify because it's in the flood zone, which all the houses around are in flood. In fact, I spoke to the Mayor, if somebody wants to give me the fax or their cell phone, I'll show you 1,500-foot-wide water in Lynbrook Drive right in front of that house all the way to the end, what's taken place with that house.

Now, Gail and Bob, the Trustees of the Village, have said on their campaign election that this is going to be their 11th house that they've knocked down in Mastic Beach. All of them went to Habitat for Humanity. How many is enough? I already have them on my block. And these houses, on some of the other lots we've looked at, 1,800 square foot on very large pieces of property, they don't conform. I would like to see them go to someone else. I myself would like to get this property, cause it cost me thousands to fight the corruption that went on in Brookhaven. And by the way, that show was blacked out on Channel 18 when the whole civic group went down there, and that was also in three pages of Sunday Newsday, that house.

Now, these people would have to get flood insurance on this house. And I hope you's understand that even if your house is elevated, you have to worry about the roof and the automobiles --

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Mr. Svoboda, your time is up. If you could please wrap up for us.

**MR. SVOBODA:**

Yes. Well, I would like to see that -- that property go to the neighbors first. Like I said before, it was never offered to me.

And the original owner prior to it got that property for \$11,500. So nowhere has this Village or Kate Browning's Office offered it to me next door, and I wanted to give half of that property to the neighbor next door. So I'd like to see this property left alone, Sir.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Okay. Thank you very much.

**MR. SVOBODA:**

Thank you very much.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Our next speaker is Jane Powers.

**MS. POWERS:**

Good morning. I, too, am here to speak about 1038. My concern about this resolution is that -- oh, thank you -- is that these two parcels have been identified by Peter Scully as in the wetlands and in the flood zone. It was my understanding that Suffolk County's policy was to move people out of the flood zone areas. And with placing a Habitat for Humanity house in the flood zone area, what we're actually doing is placing a financially disadvantaged family in this area. They

would have to pay taxes on two parcels. They would have to pay -- pay flood insurance on two parcels. As we know from our past experience with hurricane Sandy, insurance does not cover a hundred percent of your damages. So this family would have to bear the costs of damages to the home in future storms. And I'm afraid this is just going to become another blighted home after the next storm.

The other issue is right now I have a friend in the Village who is taking advantage of the buyout program. So, in fact, what we're doing really doesn't make much sense. We're moving one person out of the flood zone to replace it with another person. I just -- I just don't see the sense in that. I think transferring the property is fabulous. I would ask, though, that you transfer it with no development rights to protect any -- any people from any future storms at this point, and it would be in more in keeping with the policies of Suffolk County and New York Rising regarding the flood zones. Thank you very much.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you, Ms. Powers. Our next speaker is Charles Gardner.

**MR. GARDNER:**

Good morning, Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee. My name is Charlie Gardner, Director of Government Affairs, National Electrical Contractors Association. The chapter strongly supports Home Rule Message 1-2014 and the passage of State legislation's S.5132 and A.7298, which would have Suffolk County be the sole licensing authority for electricians working in Suffolk County. The requirements of several of the municipalities that have already been mentioned, forcing electricians already licensed by Suffolk County to be registered or licensed separately by those jurisdictions are perfect examples of unnecessary governmental duplication for the sole purpose of raising revenue. Instead of using the Suffolk County law as a complement to their code and enforcement policies, at no cost to the town or village, by the way, they have chosen to add a redundant layer of compliance on the backs of all contractors.

We have no dispute with the town or village building codes or enforcement of those codes. Our concerns are the extra fees for the registration of contractors, the burden of extra administrative costs for licenses for contractors, additional insureds, etcetera. It is about the illusion of more protection for consumers and the illusion that somehow these jurisdictions are better able to keep untrustworthy, incompetent contractors from working within their boundaries. With or without the extra license, the enforcement policies of the town or village and the available sanctions against incompetent contractors are exactly the same. Licenses or registrations are only issued to contractors who already possess a County license. Why require these redundant licenses, especially when there is the implication that there will be more consumer protection or somehow better licensed contractors when, in fact, there will be neither.

We need to prevent the nightmare of regulations that currently exists in Suffolk County from spreading to -- that currently exists in Nassau County, excuse me, from spreading to Suffolk, where an electrician, as has been mentioned, needs more than two dozen or so licenses to work within the bounds of Nassau County.

Thank you. That's my formal statement. I'd just like to address a couple of quick things that were brought up.

Complaints. Complaints against electricians for doing faulty electrical work or working without a license are very, very minimal. In the entire County, we don't even average one a week. The complaints that you get are against home improvement people or totally unlicensed people holding themselves out to be or performing electrical work. It's not against the electricians, the professionals in the trade.

As far as cost to the town, we have to remember that towns can work with the County, the County has always been ready and willing and able to work with the towns. You must remember that any violation of any town code or regulation, any town code, the County doesn't write the codes. The codes are and the policies are whatever the towns come up with. Any violation of those are violations of the Suffolk County Licensing Law and action can be taken at the County level at the instigation of the town.

And as far as statements made about no enforcement out on the East End, I have had several meetings in the Town of Southampton in the past few years, and in my prior life as Commissioner of Consumer Affairs. I have asked to see documentation. Talk is cheap. Let me see the number of times that a town has gone to the County reporting unlicensed work, shoddy work, work done -- not done according to code, let me see them, those complaints where there was no response in the County. To date the answer is zero.

The questions about delaying work. You have to remember, if you don't have a -- you can't even give an estimate in those towns, legally. You can't even -- not only begin the work, you can't even give an estimate if you're not licensed. All we're asking for is to let's not get into the same bailiwick as in Nassau. And remember, Nassau County, there is no Countywide electrical license. We have it in Suffolk County. We've had it since 1972. We don't want to take a step backwards. The plumbing, you know, you have Huntington, Islip, Babylon, the Village of Lindenhurst, those boards were established prior to the establishment of the Suffolk County law in 1972 and they chose to remain active and in existence. Not so electrical, let's -- let's not go backwards. Thank you very much.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you, Charlie. Legislator Lindsay has a question for you.

**MR. GARDNER:**

Yes, sir.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Mr. Gardner, given the post-Sandy issue with the homes on the water where before they were able to be rehooked up to electrical grids, they -- they had to have a licensed electrician go in and inspect the homes. Could you foresee if we -- if Suffolk County begins to mirror what's happened in Nassau County with all these municipalities issuing their own licenses, and then in a post-Sandy event or an event similar to that, could you see that preventing electricians from getting in and being able to certify that the home is ready to be hooked up to electric -- to do the inspection and ready to be rehooked and then, thus delaying the fact that people will be unable to get back into their homes?

**MR. GARDNER:**

Absolutely. We, in our office, receive scores of calls from consumers trying to get work done and we -- and to try to explain to them the labyrinth of rules and regulations and where you live, and, you know, some electricians can work in Mineola but they can't work in Williston Park. I'll give you a perfect, Legislator. Village of Freeport, which has their own licensing, they suspended it for a month. They basically said, *"Anybody that has any license from anywhere, you can come in and work,"* and they actually suspended their rule. Because they realized that, *"Jesus, if we, you know, have a strong stance on only those electricians that are licensed by us coming in here, we're never going to get the work done."* So, yes, that is definitely a potential hindrance.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Okay. Thank you very much, Charlie. Our next speaker is Christine Larkin.

**MS. LARKIN:**

Good morning. I'm Christine Larkin, I'm the Vice-President of the Suffolk County Probation Officers Association. The Probation Officers Association is looking for your support of the performance of duty legislation currently pending in Albany and ask that Home Rule Message be passed again, as it was in September of 2013.

Currently, our line of duty benefit is an ordinary disability benefit, similar to what we would receive if we were injured off-duty or came down with a health related illness that was not work related. We would be entitled to one-third of our final annual salary and it would be taxed. This, unfortunately, would not be enough to live on Long Island or many other places, for that matter. If the legislation is passed, we would be entitled to half of our final salary, untaxed, if we were injured on the job while performing our duties as a Probation Officer.

Our jobs are not easy ones and are far from desk jobs. As peace officers, we have dangerous duties and are at risk of serious physical injury. This involves regular, unannounced visits to the homes of convicted criminals, drug and weapon searches and warrant executions on misdemeanors and felony offenders in the community. We supervise many violent offenders and routinely work with Police Officers who are afforded -- who are afforded the protection of a three-quarter disability pension. As you know, we carry a firearm, an ASP baton and OC spray. The necessity of these weapons remind us of the dangerous situations that we go into daily.

Please support our Probation Officers and give them peace of mind to know that if they are permanently disabled while serving the citizens of Suffolk County, they will be able to afford to support their families and remain in Suffolk County. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you, Christine.

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

Rob?

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Yup, sure, Legislator McCaffrey has a question.

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

Thank you. Christine, I just want to ask, have there been instances where Probation Officers have been hurt in the line of duty, where they were disabled in the line of duty and got the lesser disability payments?

**MS. LARKIN:**

That's correct. We currently had one not too long ago, he fell while on the job and he was given the -- the one-third of his salary, taxed, and he's having many struggles to remain in Suffolk County because of it.

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

So you're looking to get the same type of disability benefits that a Police Officer would receive doing the same -- similar type of work; correct?

**MS. LARKIN:**

It would be similar to what they would receive, that's correct.

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you very much, Christine,

**MS. LARKIN:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Our next speaker is Laura Hughes.

**MS. HUGHES:**

Hi, good morning. My name is Laura Hughes, I live in Medford. I've been advocating for protection of our pets for a while now, so I'm here to speak to you about IR 1040.

Good morning. Thank you for letting me speak. And thank you, Mr. Calarco, for presenting this resolution. I would like to present my reasons for why this resolution needs to be passed.

You may or may not agree that a pet is a family member, but in today's society, most do consider their pets part of their family. Presently, any person may open a grooming business without any formal training. The industry is not required to prove a skill or knowledge in order to enter into this field of pet grooming. The pet grooming industry has operated since its beginning with no requirements or standards involved. As the pet grooming industry struggles to establish standards and define their practices in the unregulated and unlicensed occupation of professional pet grooming, it is imperative to begin to pass laws that will help protect our pets from this industry that is lacking enforcement of skills and training.

This rating system can prevent such deficiencies. It can wean out the groomers that may not possess the necessary skills or training, which has led to innocent pets becoming injured or killed while in their service. If a groomer wants to keep this type of career and be prosperous, then keeping an excellent rating not only will help protect the pet, but will also give the pet owners a sense of quality service, which, in turn, will give the higher rated groomers a more positive result. This overall positive effect will increase their business for the groomer and potentially build a customer confidence and trust. The better the service, the better the rating, which entices each groomer to want to maintain their quality of their pet grooming.

With this proposed resolution, the pet owner will have some guidance to help them manage what is the best care for their pet. There will be a system check in place for the consumer. I believe this type of resolution is the stepping stone that will help make pet lives safer when at the groomers.

Animal welfare means to me that all walks of life should be protected.  
Thank you for your time, and please pass this resolution.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you, Laura. And just for my colleagues, for their information. When you approached me about this issue, it wasn't because of something you saw on the Internet or anything along those lines, it was an incident that you experienced yourself with your own dog; correct?

**MS. HUGHES:**

Yes, I have. I had a personal situation with a mobile groomer, that she used a product that sickened my two dogs. One dog actually had almost passed away, and when I approached her to help, you know, to see what products she used, what happened, you know, why did my dogs have this type of reaction, she was kind of -- you know, kind of vague and didn't really stand behind her service. And honestly, there was really nothing for me to do other than either be annoying to her. I asked for insurance, I asked for a license; I came to learn that there's really nothing like that out there. And the only thing I really could do was speak to some agencies. I spoke to Consumer

Affairs, but she was incorporated, so it kind of -- they kind of brushed me off because it's really not their jurisdiction. So I went to the State and I said, "Well, she's incorporated, so that's a State level," and they said, "Yes, but we don't have anything that's" -- you know, she's incorporated, that's it. So I said, "Did you ask her for, like, business insurance or liability insurance," and they said, "No, we don't deal with that." So I kind of -- you know, I just was happy that my dog became better, and she's still with us.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

That's a good thing. Thank you, Laura. We appreciate you coming down.

**MS. HUGHES:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Our next speaker is Joseph Mikulas.

**MR. MIKULAS:**

Again, like Mr. Calemmo, close enough. It's Joe Mikulas is my name. I have been -- sure. I have been a licensed master electrician here in Suffolk County for over 35 years.

With regards to the eloquence of both Mr. Gardner and Mr. Calemmo, there is not too much to add. But I ask you to look also from the perspective of a consumer. We carry the license. I have done so for, as I said, over 35 years. It is a situation where if we, as many of us have, wish to become better and maintain our skills and our knowledge, we do participate in continuing education. It's offered through the Suffolk County Electrical Contractors Association, of which I've been a member for just about that number of years, at times have served as secretary, present -- president, and currently board member of SCECA. We promote safety. We endorse safety. Our members go in that direction.

But to further go back to what I said with regard to consumers. You have folks constantly looking for, quote/unquote, a better price. Any person who's in business and wishes to stay in business needs, in some way, shape, or form, to pass the expenses along to his customers. If you don't do that, either you're going to go out of business or you're going to be cutting corners. Now take into account the fly-by-nights, the folks that are not licensed, or maybe they have another license which doesn't include master electrician. They can -- on paper, if you will -- afford to fly under the radar. I want to avoid that scenario. And the more expenses that are burdened upon us -- and by the way, whether it's an independent or organized labor, as you know, we're all in favor of these bills.

So I think it's a -- well, we call it a no-brainer, I hope you see it that way as well. Thank you for hearing me.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you very much. Our next speaker is Thomas Palk.

**MR. PALK:**

Good morning. My name's Tom Palk from Palk Electric. I'm also the Secretary of the Suffolk County Electrical Contractors Association. I'm here today to -- and I'd like to see S.5132 and HR01-2014 approved.

All the licensed electricians, and there's over 2,000 of us in Suffolk County, and it's an awful big expense for them to have all these added permits, licenses or whatever else the municipalities want to call them. Plus, the time spent trying to administer the certificates of insurance for Workman's Comp, liability and everything else that the towns want, some of them, you know, want -- like in Nassau where you've got to list every one of your vehicles, give them registrations, copies. Some

of the towns, the files go out this thick in Nassau County with an application to renew your license, not to mention the cost of the -- the license, but just the time trying to put it together, making the copies and everything else.

You know, since '72, we've had one license in Suffolk. We had gotten rid of the other ones and everything went fine, and now to have all these municipalities starting to have their own licensing, or permits or whatever else they want to call them, is a burden on every contractor which becomes a burden on every consumer.

You know, I can't say much more than what Charlie Gardner, Russ Calemme and Joe Mikulas have said. But I just want to tell you, last night I got a call from a Nassau contractor who happened to have forgotten to file for one of his licenses. He went to start a job and found out, well, now he's no longer licensed. Now, he's been licensed there for over 20 years and he forgot to fill the paperwork out, so now he doesn't have a license. The job needs a licensed electrician on it. So now he's calling around trying to find a licensed electrician to do his job for him to take care of his customer. It's very easy to happen. You know, you have 26 in Nassau, or more than 26 in Nassau, and you have I don't know how many we're going to end up here. And it's a lot of paperwork. Easily to mess up, miss a date, a filing date for them, because some of them say, *"Well, it's up to you to know when your license is due."* And that was fine when we had one license. But if you turn around and you have 26 there and you get who knows how many in Suffolk, it becomes a lot of work. And a small one-man shop, that's a lot of time for him to have to spend if he has no secretary to do it for him. So it becomes a major expense, you know, that shouldn't be borne for that -- he already has the one license.

Some people say, *"Well, if you're a small shop"* --

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Mr. Palk, your time is up. If you could please wrap up for us.

**MR. PALK:**

Okay. Well, just say if it's a small shop, the man still has to keep a license for all of Suffolk, even if he's working on the West End, because his customer may have a mother or a summerhouse on the East End and you would have to have your license there. So it's just a burden for somebody, it's not doing work all over. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Okay, thank you very much. Our next speaker is Kevin Schrage.

**MR. SCHRAGE:**

Good morning. My name is Kevin Schrage. I'm here to express my support and hope you support that Home Rule Message for the Electrical Licensing Board. I got my electrical license, a masters license in Suffolk County in 1985. I've been an electrician ever since. And before that I also have five of the Nassau licenses and I have a license in the state of Connecticut.

Suffolk County got it right the first time; ten towns, all the villages, one license. This nonsense that Southampton is doing is just that, it's nonsense. It's nothing more than me buying the right to work. I send them a copy of my electrical license with a check for 75 bucks and I could work in Southampton. Prior to 2005, it was -- I could do it anyway.

I'm a one-man shop. So now I'm running around to notaries and all this other stuff trying to get all these papers approved, and when does it end? You know, like -- as the fellas before me said, ten towns, you know, this, that, the other thing, I'll be -- you know, I'll be spending more time trying to get these registrations; I mean, they're not even licensed or anything.

And as a matter of fact, while you mention that, Southampton Town, on their certificates that the inspectors issue, they mention it as a license number, which, I believe, leads my customers to think that I'm licensed by the Town of Southampton, which I am not. I just bought the right to work from them and that's all.

It's important. Mr. Schneiderman mentioned a few things about inspection and enforcement. One is the other, but the enforcement of the license law, I believe that the electrical inspectors, you know, if they're municipal inspectors, are empowered to write summonses underneath the Suffolk County license law and have them return to the town court.

The other thing is if, as far as being concerned for unlicensed people filing for work; well, if you file something with Southampton Town or with a private inspection agency, there's a list of licensed electricians available to them. So there's no need to maintain a separate list. It's just a duplication and, you know, it's just -- it's another burden.

The Town of Southampton recently extended the term of the registration to two years to -- it was all of their licenses; the license -- home improvement, plumbing and electrical, to eliminate the burden of the contractors from having to apply for them every year. Well, they just said it themselves, it's a burden and it's an unnecessary burden.

That's pretty much it. Thank you for your time, everybody. Have a great day.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you. Our next speaker is Michael Benincasa.

**MR. BENINCASA:**

Good morning. My name is Michael Benincasa, I'm the Chief Building Inspector for the Town of Southampton. My department administers the Home Improvement Contractor License Program as well as the registration of licensed electricians and licensed plumbers.

I'm here to speak about Home Rule, HR01. I'll give you a little history on how Southampton got into the business of registering already licensed home -- already licensed electrical contractors as well as plumbing contractors.

In 2005, when things were really busy, I received a rash of complaints from residents of the town against plumbers and electricians. And when I say a rash, it was probably six or seven, and that is a rash because things are pretty well under control out in Southampton. We have some quality contractors all the way around from all the trades. And I said, *"Well, licensed electricians and plumbers, you have to go to the County."* *"Well, we've done that and there's -- we haven't got any response."* So I said, *"Well, let me intercede and maybe I could help a little bit."* So I called Suffolk County and I explained the situation to -- and I forget the fella's name, but it'll come to me. He said, *"Mike, we don't have the staff to follow up on every complaint we get."* So I said, *"Well, what do I do? I don't have the authority. They're licensed under you."* I said, *"How about we license them in Southampton also and a prerequisite will be yours."* He goes, *"No, no, you can't do because we already license them. You could register them."* Now, this is the County telling Southampton, so I won't even take credit for what we're doing out there that's really working.

The County gave me the idea, planted the seed, register them and then you could enforce -- you know, oversee their -- the complaints from homeowners, and I oversee complaints from contractors. So we did that. I proposed it to the town board and we had the blessing of the County, and I believe it was under Mr. Gardner's regime that it happened. It was 2006 the law -- our law was created. We had the County's blessing because they couldn't enforce their own rules. Did I need the work? Absolutely not. But I took it on because it's my job to service the folks out in Southampton Town. So that's how we got to register.

Now, as far as complaints. Mr. Gardner said, *"We don't get complaints, because I handle them. I get complaints from homeowners, the first thing I do is I call a contractor, whether it's a home improvement, plumber, electrician. "You need to do me a favor. I got this complaint. Talk to the people, work it out, because if you don't, they're going to file a complaint with our Licensing Review Board,"* which we have and a lot of municipalities don't. And then the paperwork starts for me, for you, attorneys, boards. Do me a favor; help yourself and work it out. If you need me to intercede, because we've got some tough homeowners out there, without a doubt, I will help. I've gotten contractors paid, \$30,000 one guy, he wasn't going to get paid. I called the homeowner and said, *"Hey, he did his job. It's not his fault that you screwed up. Pay the man"*. He paid him. I'm there as a mediator. The County couldn't do it, I did it. I don't need the work.

They say it's about fees; it's not about the fees, it's about --

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Mr. Benincasa, your time is up. I have a couple of questions for you. Oh, Legislator Schneiderman. We have a couple of people that have questions for you, so.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I wanted to hear the rest.

**MR. BENINCASA:**

I just want to -- one last statement?

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Sure.

**MR. BENINCASA:**

It's not about the fees. If the County gives me the authority to enforce their laws, I won't charge them a fee. It's about helping and serving the people and contractor to Southampton Town. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you. Legislator Browning had a question.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

I'm not on the Committee, but this is an issue that I've had to deal with in my district quite a few times. And contractors who come in, do shabby work, and now the resident is left -- you know, sometimes the contractor has disappeared, sometimes they may still be around somewhere in Suffolk County. But I've had to work with the County as far -- with the restitution fund, where if a contractor does not do a good job and now we have to go to the restitution fund to help the -- the customer. So being that you -- you have your own licensing or registration, do you have a -- do you have a restitution fund in Southampton if one of your contractors who is licensed or registered with you fails to do a good job? Do you have a restitution fund for your constituents?

**MR. BENINCASA:**

No, we don't.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

So then you come to Suffolk County for the restitution.

**MR. BENINCASA:**

Not I.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Not you, but the customer.

**MR. BENINCASA:**

I guess if -- if the resident and the contractors licensed, I guess they can go -- come to you.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay. Because I'm just asking why you wouldn't, being that you require licensing.

**MR. BENINCASA:**

Well, because where does the restitution money come from? I'm sure it comes from the fees. Last year, in 2013, we received \$42,000 from licensed electricians, and I think the plumbers were -- we register them, they're licensed in the County. The plumbers were something like, I think \$12,000. Well, \$52,000, you know, there's not a lot of money there. Now, if we raise the fees to build up a nest egg, I'm sure that would work. But it's not about the fees. It's about getting people in, giving them one of our stickers. Because I have 11 inspectors, they're on the jobs every day. They're instructed, when you pull up onto a job, just look in the backs of the trucks; if you don't see a registration or a license for the home improvement, you need to ask, and we police it that way.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

No, I'm just trying to -- I guess, I got my answer, that you do not have a restitution fund; however, you do charge fees. Okay. Thank you.

**MR. BENINCASA:**

We do have somebody that works really hard to resolve the problems.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Okay. Thank you. Legislator Schneiderman, did you have a question?

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Sure. Well, I wanted to hear what Mr. Benincasa had to say because his testimony was being cut short. But the main thing, Mike, and I think your point is well taken, that what the towns are doing in your case is helpful to the County. I mean, you have -- you have the eyes and ears. You are on the job constantly. You have people out there with every job, and it's a good thing. It's not about the fee, it's about the County working with the towns to better protect the consumer. And I think that can be done even with this law, even with the town not having the ability to register these electricians, you can do that. And I think that we have to get that dialogue going for the sake of the consumer. And not just in Southampton, you know, throughout the County and particularly on the East End, which is so far from where the County offices are for Consumer Affairs. You know, it was mentioned by, I think, Russ earlier about Mary Fallon, who's, you know, a former East Hampton Supervisor who was the Head of Consumer Affairs, there was a Riverhead office, and those days were different than today. You know, we are on the East End, the five East End towns comprise about a third of the real property assessment of the County. There's a lot of building activity out there, probably more than anywhere in the County, and, you know, it might make sense. And I think we have the room out at the County Center in Riverhead.

So it's -- I hope that my words are being heard and that's something that the County takes seriously about having a presence there and working much more cooperatively with the towns, again, to better protect the consumer.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Benincasa.

**MR. BENINCASA:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Our next speaker is Jenny Flaherty? Jerry; excuse me, Jerry Flaherty.

**MR. FLAHERTY:**

Hi. My name is Jerry Flaherty, I'm the Chief Electrical Inspector for Electrical Inspection Service in Patchogue. I'm also a member of the Suffolk County Licensing Board. And I -- as an inspector, I'm more concerned with safety. And for about eight years I inspected in Nassau County, and with all of these licenses, I kind of see what can happen if Suffolk County goes the way with multiple licences.

What really happens is, I kind of put it in three different categories. The first one is you have the contractor who is conscientious, does his job, gets his license, gets whatever license he wants, works in everything along those lines, and we do inspections for them and we really find that, you know, their work is good. Usually, you know, all the work is pretty compliant.

The next level below that is where the contractor, he's too expensive, so instead they let the GC do the job or moonlighter or something along those lines and a few years down the road, you know, they're not really conscientious, shall we say. They don't care about the laws, they don't care about what's required. So a few years down the road, no building permit is -- was taken out, so now they're going to sell their house and they want to get a permit, and we go in and we find out those houses are the ones that have a number of violations on them, a number of safety issues. And, you know, I'm a human being, you talk back and forth to the homeowner and we find -- and you find out who actually did the wiring, we find out it's not a licensed electrician. And you'll ask, "*Well, why not a licensed electrician?*" They're too expensive. And the reason why they're too expensive is because I have all this overhead, these licensing charges, the insurance, everything else that I was speaking about.

So consequently, you know, the consumer really has to pay one or two ways. Either he has to pay up front, more money for the contractor to do -- the electrical contractor to do the work, or down the road maybe safety could be an issue or surely somebody has to come back and correct the work, so there's no winner here.

It's true, the municipalities, there's -- I don't know how many of them there are. You know, we talk about anywhere from 27 to 34 different licenses or permits in Nassau County and there isn't any policing whatsoever in Nassau County; I mean, none whatsoever. You can call up about someone when you find someone who's not licensed and they say, "*Well, you know, we're not going do anything about it, can't do anything about it.*" So it's only really revenue for the municipality, but there's no benefit besides the added cost to the consumer. So, you know, who's winning? The municipality might be winning, but everybody else is losing. The contractor's losing, he's paying more money. In addition to that, the consumer's losing because either he has to pay more money or, you know, get a shabby job or a pay-on down the road.

So, you know, it's really a scary thing when you have all of this layers on top of it. That's my story, so.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you very much. Legislator McCaffrey has a question for you.

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

Mr. Flaherty, I had a question. Have you seen any instances where someone may be licensed in one place in Nassau County, in a village or a town, and they don't -- they are not able to get licensed

in another village or town?

**MR. FLAHERTY:**

Well, I wouldn't know if they're not allowed to get licensed, but it is another aspect. It's farming out your license. We do see a lot of that, an awful lot of that. What happens is -- you know, particularly small contractors, they can't afford all this. I mean, you know, all kinds of numbers out there, it could cost them three and \$4,000 a year for all of this.

So, you know, if you're a small contractor, you might have to use another person's license and, you know, it goes back and forth. And what ends up happening, of course, now, if you're a homeowner, you have one contractor who actually did the work, you paid -- you paid the bill to and you have another contractor who you've never seen who's -- more or less his name is on the certificate.

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

No, but my question more was to the point of are the standards any difference in being able to be licensed in one versus the other? Is there any difference between them? Meaning that if you're qualified to be licensed in one place, you're generally qualified to be licensed in the others.

**MR. FLAHERTY:**

It's pretty much all over the place. Some places, it's just a matter of coming in, paying your money, some towns require tests. So, you know, it's all over the place in Nassau County.

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

Thank you.

**MR. FLAHERTY:**

It's a good example of the Wild West being they're west of us here.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Okay. Thank you. The Presiding Officer had a question.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Thank you. Hello?

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Mr. Flaherty, we had a few more questions for you. The Presiding Officer has a question.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Hi. How are you? Excuse me, I entered the room after, I guess, some of the speakers, at least some of the speakers have spoken, so I'm not up-to-date as to what's been discussed so far.

But I can see from the town and village perspective their concern because this is something that they've had direct oversight over, but I do believe that we should have a Countywide system in place where there isn't this hodgepodge network of different licensing fees and licenses. Is there a way where I, as an electrician, say I live in the Town of Babylon, I get my license in the Town of Babylon, I pay a certain fee where I'm licensed in the town but simultaneously licensed with Suffolk County. I would imagine, I guess there would be some way that the towns and the villages would have to have some type of at least a computer network to kind of keep those systems up-to-date. I don't know if that's possible, I don't know if it's being done anywhere else.

**MR. FLAHERTY:**

I wouldn't know. I wouldn't know.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

No?

**MR. FLAHERTY:**

I mean, I know that a few of the towns in Nassau County there is some communications. Most them just don't have a clue. I mean, it depends upon the size. I mean, if you're a Town of Babylon, you know, maybe.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Right.

**MR. FLAHERTY:**

But if you're a small municipality, you know, you might not be able to do anything with it.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Well, then again, you know, I do take your point. Your point is very valid where the different towns and themselves, their standards are different, whether some require tests --

**MR. FLAHERTY:**

Right.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

So there would be a way of standardizing the requirements so everyone meets those requirements, so I do see the benefit in that as well. But, Okay.

**MR. FLAHERTY:**

Yeah, but that's what's on the -- at the County level now, Yeah.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Right, that's what I'm saying, yeah, yeah. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Okay. Stay there; Legislator Schneiderman has a question.

**MR. FLAHERTY:**

Okay.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Sorry. You know, this Albany bill is an effort to keep Suffolk County from ending up like Nassau County.

**MR. FLAHERTY:**

Exactly.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I'm just curious whether there's a similar bill to look at Nassau County and try to get rid of what the Presiding Officer called the hodgepodge of, you know, various registrations and licenses.

**MR. FLAHERTY:**

I mean, there has been some attempts. I think that they should really go for it somehow, yeah, yeah. Get away from all of this.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Charlie, you have information on that? Mr. Gardner, has, I think, some information.

**MR. GARDNER:**

Yes, Sir. The big difference in that is that there is no current County mechanism for licensing electricians in Nassau County. So we gave up a couple of years ago. We had very, very many meetings with the Nassau County Village Officials Association. The problem is with those 64 villages, their requirements are, as Jerry said, they're all over the lot. But until -- in other words, let's just say, for instance, in an ideal world, as of next Monday all of the Nassau villages, the three towns, the two cities and all of the villages said, *"Okay, we're out of the licensing business. We won't do it anymore."* Who's going to license them? The County has to take that step first, Mr. Schneiderman.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Is there an effort to do that? Because I think in Nassau they --

**MR. GARDNER:**

Yes.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Well, Legislator Schneiderman, we're still in the public portion.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Sure.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Mr. Flaherty is the speaker. I'd like to get through the cards and then when we debate the bill, if -- if Mr. Gardner wants to come up and provide additional information, we'll do that at that time.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

That's fair enough.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Okay.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

I had one more question for you, Mr. Flaherty, and it's from Legislator Lindsay.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Mr. Flaherty, in terms of right now in Suffolk County, if you were to go in and do an inspection after the work is completed in Southampton as opposed to anywhere else in the County, is the standards any lower outside of --

**MR. FLAHERTY:**

Well, Suffolk County does their own inspection, so we don't go into Suffolk County to do any inspections.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

But is the same standards applied?

**MR. FLAHERTY:**

They're supposed to go by the same New York State Building Code as what we do, yes.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

So in your opinion, if you were -- because there's licensing in any of these municipalities, say, in Southampton, for example, because that's one of ones that are licensed here in Suffolk County; is it any safer, the construction, after it's completed in Southampton as opposed to anywhere else in the County?

**MR. FLAHERTY:**

If the inspection is done correctly, no. No.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Thank you.

**MR. FLAHERTY:**

There's no advantage.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Okay, thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Okay. Thank you very much. We appreciate the testimony.

Our next speaker is Mary Aleffi.

**MS. ALEFFI:**

Good morning. I'm a little tall so I have to point it here. Thank you for the opportunity and the privilege to speak before you. My name is Mary Aleffi and I reside in Nassau County, I'm a hard working professional and my career is helping Sandy victims. When there is a wrong, I believe in speaking and taking action for what is right.

I owned and loved a beautiful Pomeranian named Rocky, which I show you now. Okay? When taking him to get groomed, I trust a groomer over the years because my dog is very important to me. On November 21st, I took him to get groomed and it would be a day like no other. Upon picking Rocky up, the sight of him was horrific. His eyes were bulging, his legs flailing, and it was a sight that will burn in my memory forever and still haunts me.

When I asked the groomer what had happened, he said he's just thirsty and took the time to place this bandana around his neck. I ran my dog to the vet and his temperature was 109 degrees, he was blind, brain injured and they tried to stabilize him and they could not, only a little bit. I then transported him to the vet ER by pet ambulance and they couldn't save him. When I asked the groomer what had happened, he denied any responsibility and has been silent ever since. He left me with insurmountable vet bills and no answers to what happened to my precious Rocky. Okay? I don't want this to happen to another dog and I don't want anybody to bring another dog home in an urn like mine. Okay?

I understand that animals can have an expected episode at the groomer. Groomers need to be educated and have a plan for an emergency measure should this arise. This would educate and protect them within the grooming industry. Groomers need to take more responsibility, not more dogs.

I stand before you to be that strength and the voice for the animals that cannot speak. It is my goal to be heard today and accomplish a positive change that has been overlooked for way too long. I plan to dedicate myself and assist the system in improving the grooming industry on a positive level. I'm currently working with Nassau County to accomplish this and I thank you for your time and consideration of my statement. And the legislation hopefully will pass, this bill, and it will

endure. I want to make this world a better place and end the Wild West of grooming. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you, Ms. Aleffi. And our sympathies are with you for the loss of your dog. And we appreciate you coming down and speaking today.

**MS. ALEFFI:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Our next speaker is Sal Ferrara.

**MR. FERRARA:**

How you doing, everybody? Thank you for giving me an opportunity.

Just a little background about myself so you know who I am. I am an electrical code expert.

I'm the one that teaches for the electrical license. I'm the one that also teaches for Department of State for your -- your building officials, your Fire Marshals, and I am also a master electrician. And I do other things in the industry, I represent the whole electrical industry and I also owned a school, Electrical Training Center, and I am for one license in Suffolk County.

Now, going back to Nassau County, so you get a little facts. I was very involved with Nassau County four or five years ago, and I just want to give you some facts that I have here to prove the Wild, Wild West that shouldn't be happening here. There are 68 towns in Nassau County. There are 900 licensed electricians in Hempstead; Oyster Bay, 850; and 650 in North Hempstead. There's 21 towns and villages require licenses, 20 towns and villages require renewal cost -- this is in Nassau County -- 14 towns and villages require permit fees. It costs an electrical contractor, an electrical contractor, one-man shop, a 50-man shop, it doesn't matter, \$975 for permits. So who is that going to go to? The consumer, the homeowner. How can I do a job? If I put a switch -- I'll give you an example -- in the town of Smithtown, one little switch, I have to charge just to walk into that customer's home, \$150 because I have to pay \$75, \$100 permit fee. Because if I don't, I'm a licensed electrical contractor, I get fined.

It's not fair that us, business people, in the electrical industry has to pay for these fees. The electrical code's the electrical code. There's only one code in New York State. It doesn't matter if you work in Nassau County, Westchester County, Suffolk County; there's only one electrical code. I could do work in Westchester County, it's still the same code. You still have to follow an NFPA 70. The National Electrical Code, it ain't going to change. There's no MLRS *{sic}*, More Restrictive Local Codes. There used to be years ago, we got rid of it. The code is the code. A master electrician has to do at least seven years to be qualified to work in your house because of the safety of the consumer. That's how come we're licensed, we're masters. We're not just Joe Schmo. Education's the top portion of our trade. Education. And we pay dearly just to send our employees for training and education. That's a burden alone, to keep up-to-date with the codes and everything.

And just a little bit more facts about Nassau County. It costs an electrical contractor 1,700 to renew their license in Nassau County; 1,700. The total cost, if I start tomorrow, I get all my licenses in Nassau County, the Town of Hempstead, the Town North Hempstead, the Town of Oyster Bay, the Village of Hempstead; \$2,600 to open up my door just to pay for licenses. How are you going to survive? And we want to keep jobs on Long Island? As an electrical contractor, I want to keep jobs? How can I afford this for employees and everything? That's all I have.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you very much, Mr. Ferrara.

**MR. FERRARA:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Our next speaker is Jeanette Tringali.

**MS. TRINGALI:**

Good morning, Committee Members. My name is Jeanette Tringali and I'm here to support the bill 1040, the ratings of pet groomers. This bill is very near and dear to my heart. I lost both my dogs to a mobile groomer over a year ago.

Since this unfortunate incident, I've become aware that being a groomer, you don't need a license, you don't need to be regulated by the State of New York. You don't need any kind of training. I find that to be very alarming, because in this State we have over a billion dollars invested in our pets, between vets, groomers, taking your dogs, you know, to the dog parks. They're not just your animals, they become your family members.

So this system can help protect our innocent pets from becoming harmed or killed while being serviced by a groomer. With the system, the groomer will want to keep an excellent rating and will give better service and be more cautious when grooming our pets. Not only will this protect our pets and give the owners more trust, it will also help the groomer's business as well.

So when making your decision about this matter, I hope that you keep in mind that our pets do not have a voice and they're depending on this Committee to be their voice. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you very much. And we -- our sympathies are with you as well.

**MS. TRINGALI:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Our last speaker I have a card for is Frank Fugarino. Frank?

**MR. FUGARINO:**

Thank you. Legislators, I'm here to speak on the 1038-2014. I am Frank Fugarino, I'm the President of a civic association called Pattersquash Creek Civic Association. Ourselves and the Village Exploratory Committee are the founders that worked very hard to form the village. We formed the village because of our recognition that we need control over our local issues. I came also to acknowledge the work of County Legislator Kate Browning, in support, as well as the Mayor Biondi, Trustee Busa and a village official, Building Inspector Tim Brojer who are here also today. Because these issues are very important to us, I wanted to give you some background.

We have nearly 35 to 40% of our current homes are rental properties. So for the County to work in support of what we attempted to do in forming a village, it is very important to understand that we want to have -- build economic development as a result of whatever decisions are made. In this case, 62 Lynbrook is a long neglected eyesore in our community. There is a tree, a 35-foot tree growing through a roof. That house was in the -- in the Newsday article some years ago, yet it took all of this time and now we're -- we're really pleased, really, with the hard work of so many I mentioned -- you know, Kate Browning and Mayor Bill Biondi -- to get us to this point of taking this house down. This house has to come down.

What I'm asking the other Legislators to recognize is some of our other issues, and that is that we need more open space. We need the opportunity for sewer credits. We need the opportunity for homeowners who can't afford to buy into the properties next to them, because our lots are typically five lots or five units at, what, 100 by 100? Many places have larger lots.

So what we're asking -- also, at 62 Lynbrook there is a house next door that's in arrears. The County has it on their books. Shortly, within the year, that 64 Lynbrook will also become available. That makes a larger property to begin dealing with and that is an 80 by, in the case of the original, it was a 40 by -- by 200, this would be an 80 by, you know, some kind of, what is it, dogleg or whatever they call that.

So my point in being here is to educate, somewhat, the issues of our community. Our community needs larger lots, needs less subsidized housing, needs the opportunity for economic development as a result of taking properties and perhaps either offering them to neighboring homeowners or for the purpose of sewer credits. I am totally in support of taking down this house or any house that is a derelict -- in derelict condition or that detracts from the quality and the esthetics of our community, even at the expense of our village.

So when you -- when you construct legislation, is what I'm saying, keep in mind, though, that we -- as they say, at this point, have in our housing stock, 35 to 40% of our homes are subsidized, are receiving subsidized housing. We are in dire straits in Mastic Beach. We formed a village for the purpose of becoming a better community for the benefit of all the residents. So I think, though, and as I say, the third time, I appreciate the work of Kate Browning, Mayor Biondi, Trustee Busa and the Building Inspector, Tim Brojer, but I also want you to see the bigger picture here. The bigger picture is to benefit our community, the lots have to be larger. I see the wave. Thank you for the opportunity.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you very much, Mr. Fugarino, for coming down today.

I have no other cards. Is there anybody else in the audience who would like to address the Committee? Seeing none, we're going to move right on into the agenda.

I do have the Director of Labor Relations, Jen McNamara, and the President of the SOA, Superior Officers here. What I want to do, John, is we're going to -- we have a pretty short agenda, we'll call you up just as we get to the resolution and -- and we appreciate your patience here this morning. We had quite a few speakers.

The first resolution we're going to get -- go right into the agenda.

**Tabled Resolutions**

**IR 1038 - Authorizing the sale of County-owned real property pursuant to Section 72-H of the General Municipal Law to the Village of Mastic Beach for Affordable Housing Purposes (SCTM No. 0209-032.00-05.00-029.000). (Browning)** I'll make a motion to approve.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Second by Legislator Schneiderman. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **IR 1038 is approved. (VOTE: 5-0-0-2 - Not Present: Legislator Hahn and Legislator Cilmi - P.O. Gregory included in the vote)**

**Introductory Resolutions**

Going on into Introductory Resolutions, **IR 1040 - Amending Resolution No. 894-2011 to expand the "Puppy and Dog Protection Rating Program". (Calarco)** I'll make a motion to approve.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Second by Legislator Schneiderman. I see no comments. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? IR 1040 is approved, and I thank my colleagues for that support. **Approved (VOTE: 5-0-0-2 - Not Present: Legislator Hahn and Legislator Cilmi - P.O. Gregory included in the vote)**

**IR 1047 - Adopting Local Law No. -2014, A Local Law to regulate pet dealers and pet stores in the County of Suffolk. (Schneiderman)** This needs to be tabled for a public hearing. Legislator Schneiderman makes the motion to table. I'll second that. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **IR 1047 is tabled. (VOTE: 5-0-0-2 - Not Present: Legislator Hahn and Legislator Cilmi - P.O. Gregory included in the vote)**

**IR 1148 - Amending the hourly rate for certain titles in the Suffolk County Temporary Classification and Salary Plan. (Co. Exec.)** I'll make a motion to approve.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Second by Legislator Lindsay. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **IR 1148 is approved. (VOTE: 6-0-0-1 - Not Present: Legislator Cilmi - P.O. Gregory included in the vote)**

And now we are on 11 -- **IR 1162 - Authorizing the County Executive to execute an agreement with the Suffolk County Superior Officers Association covering the terms and conditions of employment for the period January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2018. (Co. Exec.)** I'll make a motion to approve.

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Second by Legislator Lindsay. Now, if we can, Jen, if you could come up, and Mr. Morris, and give us a brief overview of what this -- what the contract entails.

**MS. McNAMARA:**

Good morning. Thank you, Legislator Calarco and Members of the Committee.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

You've got to really speak right into it.

**MS. McNAMARA:**

Is that better? Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Legislator Calarco and Members of the Committee, for inviting me here today to discuss this contract. I also would like to thank SOA President, Tim Morris, for working cooperatively with the County to come to the terms of this contract.

I'm just going to give you some highlights and then we'll open it up for questions. The contract term, as mentioned, is an eight-year contract, running from 2011 through 2018. It's, as others have been, a negotiated contract which is not subject to arbitration. It fits squarely within the recently negotiated and approved PBA and SDA contracts.

This contract provides savings and the implementation of a new salary scale, which includes steps for SOA members, which was not ever had before. It also provides savings and the implementation of a three-tier system similar to that contained, as I said, in the previous approved PBA and SDA contracts. It includes no retro payments for 2013 which provides for a significant savings, and as well as the SDA contract, it provides for a senior status for SOA members at 20 years.

So those are the highlights and I'll be happy to respond to your questions.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you, Ms. McNamara. Mr. Morris, perhaps you -- could you let us know, has the union already ratified this? Has this gone to your membership yet?

**MR. MORRIS:**

Yes, this has -- first, thank you very much, Mr. Calarco, for having us here today. But, yes, the vote was counted on Monday and the vote was 340 in favor and 24 against. This is a -- a good contract. It's the first negotiated contract in over -- over 20 years and it is a -- we believe a good contract for our members, for the County, and for the people of Suffolk County.

As Jen said, it provides, for the first time in the history of the SOA, a step system, which we've never had, and a -- it's a -- it's eight steps, there will be eight steps for new Sergeants. And then for Sergeants that are in the -- the new step system of the PBA, when they become Sergeant it is a ten-step system. Some it does provide significant savings.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Okay. Thank you very much. And what I'd like to do as well, and then I'll open it up to questions, is go to our Budget Review Director. I know, Mr. Lipp, you were working on getting a report done, as your usual practice with contracts that come before us. And if you could just give us a brief overview of what the numbers are as you see it through the contract.

**MR. LIPP:**

Okay, here we go. Okay. So in our report, which we just released as the meeting was about to start, we estimated the total cost to be 55.4 million. Unfortunately, we didn't have sufficient time to vet it out with the Executive's Budget Office. Our numbers turned out to be higher. After the meeting started we -- we did have conversation, so I have a better idea what was happening there. So perhaps a middle ground is what the actual cost will be. It is a projection going out to 2018, so it's hard to tell, number one. Number two, there are deferrals, so there are some costs that will be incurred such as a separation for some of the deferrals after the contract is over. So we only went out to 2018, it would be very difficult to determine what would happen past that.

So what we did is in costing out the contract -- sorry about that. As you can see on the table there, we looked at the various categories; wages, Benefit Fund contributions, the deferrals, which were reducing the cost of the contract, increase in longevity pay and retirement costs add up to the 55.4 million. And you could see the 55.4 million is the bottom line number at the bottom right-hand corner of the table.

Okay. So some of the more specifics of it, I'll try to go through this quickly. As you could see here --

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Dr. Lipp, just for clarifications, I think I heard you differently than what your report says. Your numbers actually are a little bit --

**MR. LIPP:**

Lower.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

-- lower than the County Executive's Budget Office.

**MR. LIPP:**

Yes, that's correct. So our number that we included in our report was 55.4 million. The Executive's fiscal impact was 72.3 million, almost 17 million more. As I said, we didn't have time to vet out because of the -- getting the memo out at the last minute, what the differences were with the Executive's Budget Office, so I apologize for that.

That being said, if you look over here, you could see what the increases are by year. So the last contract ended in 2010, so the first three years are zeros -- in other words, no retro pay -- so that is not needed. And in return for some of the zeros, there are one, two, three, four, five, six increases, if you will, in 2014 to increase the base in lieu of getting retro pay. You can see what those different increases were at -- in different parts of the agreement. And, oh, yeah, by the way, in the memo we attach the actual agreement itself as well as the resolution that's in front of you and the Executive's fiscal impact statement.

So the increases in pay received --

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Mr. Lipp, I don't think we received the memo yet.

**MR. LIPP:**

Okay. I believe they were placed in your mailbox, number one, And they're in the process of being sent electronically, as we speak. Perhaps they haven't come through yet; I apologize for that.

So anyhow, the pay increases, you could see for each year, are in the second column to last, and the actual increase in the base for the next year is in the last column. So as a simple example, the reason why it's higher the last column is let's say you had a 12% increase December 1st, for that year you will receive the salary that's 1% higher cause it's only for one month. By the next year your base would have gone up by 12%. And that's a table in the chart, I mean, in the memo. Okay.

Next, as was previously stated, the -- for new SOA members -- Sergeants, Lieutenants, Captains -- there will be a new salary chart. Instead of automatically getting one, you know, you're at the top amount automatically, there's either an eight-step or a ten-step schedule, depending upon when you were hired as a PBA member. So if you were hired in PBA before September 16th of 2012, that is when the PBA contract occurred, then you'd be on an eight-step schedule; here are the increases. However, if you were hired after September, 2012, you would be on a 10-step schedule. And the savings associated with new Sergeants, we estimate it to be \$83,000 over the ten-steps -- over the eight-steps, or 110,000 over the ten-steps. So for new people we would -- new SOA members we would save.

Lastly, we thought we would include in the memo a listing of the -- the numbers that we had in all three memos for all three Police bargaining units. So this is the third and final Police bargaining unit and these are the numbers associated with what the costs are for each of the PBA, Detectives

Association and Superior Officers. The total comes to 372 million, almost. The increases associated with each year represent increases from 2014, which are significant and will create a challenge fiscally in future years. That's it.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you very much, Dr. Lipp. Are there any questions from the Committee?

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

I have a question.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

I had Legislator Schneiderman, and then Legislator McCaffrey.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Thank you, Dr. Lipp. And that figure, going with your numbers, \$55.4 million, that is over the course of the contract; right? That's a -- what, a five-year contract?

**MR. LIPP:**

Actually, it's an eight-year contract if you include the fact that they had three zeros in '11, '12 and '13.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. And is that 55.4 million compared to a continuation of the current contract or a zero, a freezing of the -- where they are now? So in other words --

**MR. LIPP:**

Basically, I believe, that would be the same thing. So the current contract would be you freezing their salaries. They have -- they're not -- they weren't getting increases, they haven't gotten yet.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

So there would be no, like, cost of living? There's no automatic adjustment that goes on when a contract isn't negotiated?

**MR. LIPP:**

Correct.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay.

**MR. LIPP:**

Yeah, we took into account what they would normally get under the current contract and what they would get under this new contract and this is the increase -- estimate.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

So that -- that period you know where that 55.4 million over those years, what it amounts to as a percentage, an average?

**MR. LIPP:**

I believe it was 27%, the gross number.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

But as a yearly percent increase. Is the budget -- would the budget be growing by 2%, 4%?

**MR. LIPP:**

It would be 3.375 if you do it over the eight years.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Three point --

**MR. LIPP:**

If you do it over eight years since 2011.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Three point --

**MR. LIPP:**

Three point three seven five percent. If you're doing it over the five years of 2014 through '18, then it would be 5.4%. So let me repeat one more time. If you do it over the full eight years, starting in 2011, approximate 27% increase would equate to 3.375 per year -- not compounding, simple -- and if you did it over the period where they're getting the increases, the five years of 2014 to '18, that would total an average of 5.4% per year.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Now, is that -- the 3%, three point --

**MR. LIPP:**

Three seven five.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Is that keeping pace with inflation, beating inflation, outpacing inflation?

**MR. LIPP:**

That would be beating inflation. So, I believe, last year inflation was approximately 2% even.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Right. So it would constitute an expansion in terms of the overall cost?

**MR. LIPP:**

Inflation adjusted dollars, yes.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Inflation adjusted dollars.

**MR. LIPP:**

Correct, yeah.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

That's it? Legislator McCaffrey.

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

Dr. Lipp, you mentioned a discrepancy between your numbers of about \$17 million between that and the County Executive's Budget Office. Can you fill us in on what that -- it seems sizeable. What is the big difference?

**MR. LIPP:**

Yeah. So, part of the problem is I didn't have time to reconcile with the Budget Office, so we -- there were some differences. So, I guess, the two main different -- the two main differences

that account for the bulk of the dollars, the rest of it would be small in comparison, are we use a lower percentage for other salaries; in other words, salaries other than permanent salaries, such as overtime and SCAT pay and night differential, that kind of stuff. And I believe, that probably our number was a little on the low side, in hindsight, on there. So their number is a little better on that end. However, they used retirement costs based upon the salaries for the current year. So if you got a dollar increase this year, we -- they -- and the retirement bill was 20% of salary, they would have put in another 20 cents. We lagged it a year because the way the retirement system works is they bill us on salaries from the previous year. So probably we were more accurate on that. So, I'll -- you know, if we had to fully reconcile, I'll say, probably the real number is somewhere between theirs and ours.

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

Okay. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Legislator Schneiderman has another question.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

You know, this basically mirrors the Police contract and the Detectives contract in many ways. In some of those other contracts, though, we saw long-term savings. So, at least that hopes that down the road, as the new hires would come in at lower salaries, etcetera. Are you seeing any pluses with this negotiated contract in subsequent years?

**MR. LIPP:**

Well, clearly there would be a bigger savings the further you go out simply because with the new step system, instead of you just -- you're at the top as a Sergeant once you're promoted from PBA, and as was stated both by the union rep as well as myself, you have two new schedules, either an eight or a ten-step. So obviously those savings would be more significant, the more we have new members of SOA as opposed to the existing. So right now, you know, there aren't any new members, so you're not going to get the savings on new recruits until this contract is passed and then they would just be added in, you know, at first only a few and then, you know, many years down the road it would be a bigger issue.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. Many years down the road it's a bigger issue to the -- to our benefit.

**MR. LIPP:**

Correct, that's what I meant.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Okay. Thank you very much.

I just had one other quick question, and it's probably more appropriate to -- to either Ms. McNamara or Mr. Morris. Robert had kind of spelled out that we're looking at basically around a little over a 3% raise every year over the life of this contract. Do you have any numbers to know what going -- contracts have been that have gone to arbitration in the recent years? I know when we -- we did the PBA contract a year or so ago it was -- you know, we heard numbers of four and 5% that comparable municipalities were seeing coming out of arbitration awards. Do you happen to know any of those that are relevant?

**MR. MORRIS:**

Well, you know, it's difficult to compare, but there are -- there are some recent ones that I'm aware of that were in the area of 3 1/2, 4% depend -- you know, depending on what years they were. But there are some villages in Nassau County and there are some out here. There was a recent

contract for the MTA Police that had raises in that particular area, four, 4 1/2%. I don't have that particular contract, but that's what I've heard they are.

**MS. McNAMARA:**

The -- I can say that the Correction Officers arbitration award in 2012 was an average increase of 3.3% per year.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Okay. And what kind of givebacks did we get during that arbitration with the Correction Officers?

**MS. McNAMARA:**

Nothing.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Any added steps or anything along those lines? No? And I just want to get a clarification on the -- the new step process for Sergeants. And Sergeants right now, you make rank, you get salary, whatever the salary is that we've negotiated. Now there's going to be a step process, and through that step process, that salary's actually tied as a percentage above what that officer would have been making as a Police Officer at their -- their step salary there; is that correct? Is that accurate?

**MR. MORRIS:**

Yes. Right now there is a set percentage between Police Officer and Sergeant. The way it will work from now on, immediately, if a Sergeant -- after this contract, if a -- when somebody is promoted to Sergeant, they will go into that new step system, so you'll see immediate savings. You will -- rather than going right to what a current Sergeant is making, they will go 2.25% above Police Officer pay.

Now, for the people that are -- were hired after that date that was mentioned, they will go into a ten-step system which is one 1.8%, but they will also stay in their -- it's a little bit confusing. They will stay in their PBA steps. So if they're not at the top of the PBA steps, they'll continue to go through those steps and get increases based on what PBA step they would have been in. So there's significant savings on both of those steps.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

So what happens is those officers, say an officer after -- after ten years makes rank of Sergeant, his increase to the Sergeant pay is going to be based on his -- his seven years in as a Police Officer, not based on the top pay of a Police Officer.

**MR. MORRIS:**

Exactly. He will -- he will get a -- he or she will get a -- an increase, the 1.8% based on the step that they are in as a Police Officer. If they happen to be at the top step, they will get -- which is 12 years, they will get 1.8% above that. But if they're at seven, step seven, like you said, they will get 1.8% above the step seven -- the year seven Police Officer, yes.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

So this really builds in not only by having a step process some savings for the County, but building those steps off of the existing PBA step process, additional savings for the County, long-term.

**MR. MORRIS:**

Exactly, yes.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Okay. Thank you very much, I appreciate it.

Do we have any other questions from the Committee? Presiding Officer Gregory has a question.

**P.O. GREGORY:**

Just really a statement, really. And I want to thank the parties for -- for negotiating a contract. As I think Mr. Morris mentioned, this is the first time in 20 years, you know. You know, we have a terrific Police force, they do a wonderful job and, you know, we should respect what they do. You know, I know we see articles and things like that and everyone kind of winces a little bit when we see the numbers, but I strongly believe that we have to pay for quality service and we have quality Police Officers and we should be doing that.

The fear has always been, you know, going through the binding arbitration process, you never know what the outcome's going to be.

So I prefer to have a negotiated contract, and I know it wasn't an easy process. Tim and I conversed a little bit off-line and that tells me that we're right -- we have about the right mix. You know, if both parties are, you know, not feeling too happy, that must mean there's a little give and take.

So I thank you for your efforts. Congratulations and continue the great work.

**MR. MORRIS:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Great, thank you very much. So we do have a motion and a second. I think we have all of our Committee members here now, so I will call the vote. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**IR 1162 is approved. (VOTE: 6-0-0-1 - Not Present: Legislator Cilmi - P.O. Gregory included in the vote)** Congratulations, and this will be before us on Tuesday.

**MR. MORRIS:**

Thank you very much.

**MS. McNAMARA:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Thank you. We appreciate your -- your making yourself available for the information.

Okay. That is all we have for introductory resolutions. Moving onto Home Rule messages.

**Home Rule Messages**

**Home Rule No. 01 - Requesting the State of New York to enact legislation authorizing the County of Suffolk to establish a County-wide Master Electrician Licensing Program (Senate Bill No. S.5132 and Assembly Bill No. A.7298). (Cilmi)**

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

I'll make that motion.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Motion by Legislator McCaffrey. I'll second the motion. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**LEG. LINDSAY:**

Abstain.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

We have one abstention. And Home Rule -- and that is approved. **APPROVED (VOTE: 5-0-1-1 - Abstention: Legislator Lindsay - Not Present: Legislator Cilmi - P.O. Gregory included in the vote)**

**Home Rule No. 02 - Requesting the State of New York to amend the Retirement and Social Security Law, in relation to performance of duty disability retirement of Suffolk County Probation Officers (Senate Bill No. S.5153 and Assembly Bill No. A.8160). (Pres. Off.)**  
I'll make the motion to approve.

**LEG. McCAFFREY:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN CALARCO:**

Second by Legislator McCaffrey. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Home Rule 02 is approved. **APPROVED (VOTE: 6-0-0-1 - Not Present: Legislator Cilmi - P.O. Gregory included in the vote)**

I have no other items on my agenda. Seeing none from the Committee Members, we will adjourn. Thank you very much, everyone.

**THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 11:49 AM**

**{ } DENOTES SPELLED PHONETICALLY**