

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

OF THE

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

MINUTES

A meeting of the Government Operations, Personnel, Housing & Consumer Protection Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York on March 12, 2014.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Presiding Officer DuWayne Gregory
Leg. Robert Calarco, Chairman
Leg. William J. Lindsay, III, Vice Chair
Leg. Jay Schneiderman, Deputy Presiding Officer
Leg. Thomas Cilmi
Leg. Kara Hahn
Leg. Kevin J. McCaffrey

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

George M. Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature
Sarah Simpson, Assistant Counsel to the Legislature
Renee Ortiz, Chief Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
Robert Lipp, Director/Budget Review Office
Benny Pernice, Budget Review Office
Tom Melito, Deputy County Executive for Performance Management
Connie Corso, County Executive Budget Office
Lisa Santeramo, County Executive's Office
Tom Vaughn, County Executive's Office
Amy Keyes, Aide to County Executive
Charles Gardiner
Rick Brand, Newsday
Chris DeLuca, Aide to Leg. Cilmi
Ali Nazir, Aide to Leg. Kennedy
Catherine Stark, Aide to Leg. Krupski
Vincent DeMarco, Sheriff/Suffolk County
Angie Carpenter, Suffolk County Treasurer
Christina Cooke, Treasurer's Office
Todd VanScoy, Treasurer's Office
William Shilling, Aide to Legislator Calarco
Michael Pitcher, Aide to PO
Jason Hann, Aide to Leg. Schneiderman
Lou Tutone, Suffolk PBA
Gail Metz, Brookhaven Kennel Club

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Diana Flesher, Court Stenographer

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 10:10 AM

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

We are going to get started with the Government Operations Committee at this time, if I can have everyone at the horseshoe. I think I have everybody here, if we could all stand for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator McCaffrey.

SALUTATION

Okay. Thank you and good morning. Welcome to the Government Operations, Personnel, Housing and Consumer Protection Committee. We do have quite a full agenda today so we're going to get right into things.

PUBLIC PORTION

I have one card, Gail Metz. Please come forward to the podium and you'll be given three minutes to speak.

MS. METZ:

Good morning. I'm here representing the Brookhaven Kennel Club. And I'm also a very small time hobby breeder of Weimaraner dogs. And as I read the proposal in regards to the pet dealings, I believe it limits the scope to small breeds and does little to address the larger breeds. I've been showing and breeding purebred Weimaraner dogs for the last ten years and have only bred two litters during that time. And I've only had six in each litter. But it is not uncommon for this breed and others like it to have more than nine puppies in a litter, which would affect us as the hobby breeder like most of us in Suffolk County.

To hold a puppy for 14 weeks or longer would profoundly affect the socialization and a lifetime of wellbeing of these animals. The optimum time for a puppy to create attachment to a new family is 8 or 9 weeks of age; to say nothing of the housebreaking that is typical that would happen at this time. A puppy kept in an environment where it is forced to defecate in the same area where it is fed and sleeps, as in the case of pet stores, will undoubtedly never learn how to do it in a home, where going outside is the expected norm. This leads to many behavioral issues that the new dog owner will have difficulty addressing, causing more animals to wind up in rescue and shelters.

It cannot be stressed more that early socialization to humans and the bonds it establishes are important. Dogs are pack animals and need to know that the humans are their leader, not the other dogs that it has shared an enclosure for many weeks. This Legislature does little to curtail puppy mills and will only hold the puppies longer in deplorable conditions and will charge more to the public for the poorly bred animals.

It is still not clear what age a puppy to be sterilized is to be safe. Legislating an age as -- before transfer of ownership is premature and possibly harmful to the animal. This -- this decision should be made by a licensed veterinarian. We need sensible legislation that will curtail mass production in sale of puppies, but allows for the reputable breeders to supply the public with healthy animals. Several aspects of this legislation need to be looked at. Please do not support the resolution 1047 as it is written. Thank you.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Questions.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Thank you, Miss Metz. If you could stay at the podium, Legislator Schneiderman has a question for you.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Thanks for coming out. First, so you're aware, the legislation was recessed in Public Hearing. That's because of the changes that will be made.

This bill is really the first attempt for the County to step in and put in place some common sense regulations on pet stores. We never had that authority before. One of the biggest concerns has -- I think the public's concern has to do with puppy mills and how those animals are treated at those puppy mills and whether or not they should be sold here in Suffolk County. And, you know, personally I'm of the opinion that we probably should not be selling those dogs. And I haven't been able to figure out a way to say they should be prohibited.

I think that the 14 weeks was actually -- came out of an effort to kind of prohibit the puppy mill dogs from being sold. And if maybe Counsel can help me here, if there's a way to more clearly say that -- because I -- you know, nobody wants to cause more socialization issues for these animals. This is a -- this is a bill that is supposed to protect consumers and protect the animals.

And I appreciate the comments. Nothing here was supposed to make it more difficult for local breeders. Sounds like what you're doing, you know, is very respectful to the animal. So, you know, this is a work in progress. It may be weeks before we're in a final form, before I'm asking the Legislature to vote on this bill as the principal sponsor. So I appreciate your comments. But basically what I'm hearing is you'd like to see the 14 weeks changed to 7 weeks or 8 weeks?

MS. METZ:

Eight weeks typically is what we would sell or transfer ownership of a dog; up to ten weeks is within the realm.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

And any other specific changes in the bill?

MS. METZ:

Well --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

In terms of definitions?

MS. METZ:

Sterilization -- sterilization also has to be addressed because there is all kinds of veterinarian research that's changing every day -- (inaudible)

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So right now the bill does not require sterilization.

MS. METZ:

Well, it said it in the outline that I saw.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

You must offer the service, right.

MS. METZ:

The service. But that would require -- okay, offering the service would mean what? As a breeder I have six puppies. Am I required then to have them sterilized prior to them leaving or -- (inaudible)

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

No. Right now the way the bill is written, somebody would be able to say, you know, I want to take the pet and take it from you neutered. So you would then go to the vet and you would pass that cost along before you sold the animal.

MS. METZ:

But that's what I'm saying -- (inaudible)

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

But you'd have to have an arrangement with the vet. But you would not be required to sterilize the animal.

MS. METZ:

Right, but you're saying that you would pass it on to the owner, that you would make that service available to them as a reputable breeder.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Well, you have a choice: Would you like it -- the animal neutered or not?

MS. METZ:

Well, people do that anyway. I mean typically the way that we would do it as small breeder/hobby breeders, we don't want these people taking our animals --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Right.

MS. METZ:

-- and breeding them. So in a contact that we sell, we are -- (inaudible)

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

You're requiring them to go in a certain period of time.

MS. METZ:

(Inaudible) When it's safe.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I understand that. So this wouldn't affect you. That provision --

MS. METZ:

That would not affect us.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

-- in its current form would not affect you at all?

MS. METZ:

No.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Because you can just -- you're already doing that.

MS. METZ:

Right, we are already doing that.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So you would just basically -- a pet store would be giving a choice to the consumer, *would you like it neutered or not?*

MS. METZ:

Right. And again I guess from a breeders' standpoint, I would prefer any animal leaving a pet store environment not to be bred.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Right. And that's --

MS. METZ:

-- because I don't think the --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

That's one of the choices that I'm looking at, whether there should be a requirement that these animals be neutered. You know, at 7 weeks it's too early. And I know that it's -- things are changing and there are early neuter procedures, but -- you know, there's a learning process for me, too, on all this so --

MS. METZ:

I guess what I would also like to know is how is it going to affect those of us that have, say, 9 puppies in a litter in one year? We would fall under these guidelines along with the puppy mills. And I think that --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Well, are you doing it at your residence?

MS. METZ:

Excuse me?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Are you doing it at a facility or at home?

MS. METZ:

No, I've had them in my home.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

George, if you're doing it at home, it's what, the number's 25, isn't it?

MR. NOLAN:

Correct.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So you wouldn't be affected by this law at all, as long as you're not doing more than 25 animals a year.

MS. METZ:

Well, I thought that fell under the breeding -- or having the animals in your home, 25 animals in your home, which I certainly don't have anywhere near that. I'm saying where the puppies are supposed to be, it said nine. Wasn't that the threshold?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

George?

MS. METZ:

That's what I saw.

MR. NOLAN:

The definition of pet dealers has an exclusion for persons who sell directly to consumers fewer than 25 animals per year that are born and raised on the breeder's residential premises --

MS. METZ:

Okay.

MR. NOLAN:

-- shall not be considered a pet dealer.

MS. METZ:

Okay. So the nine threshold, then, was what? I remember seeing the nine somewhere along that definition. And maybe I was given the wrong information.

MR. NOLAN:

Well, there is -- the nine is correct. It says any person who engages in the sale or offering for sale of more than nine animals per year for profit to the public is a pet dealer, but then the definition excludes persons who breed --

MS. METZ:

So if I had a litter of 10, say, that I would not be affected by that.

MR. NOLAN:

Right, if you were doing it at your home.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Once a year you're saying?

MS. METZ:

Yeah.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Yeah, this bill would not affect you at all.

MS. METZ:

Okay, most of the hobby breeders in Suffolk County fall into this category. So that's why I'm saying the smaller dog is going to have less -- (inaudible)

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Right. And that's why -- the attempt was to exclude those hobby breeders. I know a lot of the e-mails we're getting are from hobby breeders that actually aren't affected at all by this law but I guess we have to do more clarification and communication.

MS. METZ:

Yeah, that's probably what they need.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

It would really just be the pet shops that were required to hold the animal a little bit longer, but there might be another way to get at the puppy mill issue so I have to explore that with legal counsels.

MS. METZ:

Okay.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay.

MS. METZ:

Very good. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Okay, thank you, Miss Metz. The next speaker is Lou Tutone.

MR. TUTONE:

Good morning, Legislators, Chairman Calarco, the rest the Government Operations Committee. I'm here today to speak on HR 4 and just to let you know that the PBA is in support of the merger with the Park Police. I'm glad to have almost half of the Park Police Department here with us also supporting the bill.

Just some real quick points to go over. I know there were some issues with the training, how the Police Officers were going to be trained when they came over. I spoke to the Department. They will go through our field training process, which for prior time officers is up to four weeks so they will ride with one of our experienced officers for field training. There will be a refresher course to refresh them -- now they go through the same Police Academy as we do. They learn domestic use of force, all of those things, but grant it maybe they don't use them in the same volume as we do. So there'll be a refresher course on all of that also.

For cost savings, they're going to be coming into the new scale, the 12 scales to top pay. There'll be no additional manpower hours used to investigate them during the application process because they've already gone through our application process, the same one that the Suffolk County Police Department utilizes. And instead of waiting for up to 10 months, Academy, field training for new officers to take the street, you're going to have these police officers hitting the street within two months. So you're going to be able to hopefully have them on the street by the Summer and cut your overtime cost significantly. So, again, just here to show our support for the merger.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Thank you. Does anybody have any questions? Legislator Schneiderman?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Let's start with the number of officers. There's about 32 Park Police; is that right?

MR. TUTONE:

Thirty-two or 33 at this time.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

And I thought we were going to do a class of more than that. Maybe my recollection is wrong. So do we still need to do a class or is this going to replace the class?

MR. TUTONE:

No. Well, again, I think, the County's to do a presentation afterwards. I believe that there is -- I thought that there will be additional Police Officers at the end of the year, but you can ask the County for that.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So let me switch. And I don't know if, Lou, you'd be able to answer this question. My District has a lot of County Parks; significant amount, a lot of acreage, you know, big parks like Sears Bellows, Montauk County Park, lots of acreage. And I'm just kind of curious if we're going to take the Park Police out and we're going to replace them with, I think, Park Rangers, will the PDs in my area then -- maybe they have been -- they have been in the past, but if there's an incident in a park, will we use the local PDs to respond to that if it's a police type of issue?

MR. TUTONE:

Well, I can only speak to within the Police District. And the plan is, yes, the bill does -- the State -- the Assembly and Senate bill says that they will hire seasonal part-timers or security guards to be in the parks, but we will respond to all 911 calls. So, again, you'll have to ask the County what the plan is outside -- (inaudible)

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So all these Park Police will be uniformed officers within the Police District?

MR. TUTONE:

Totally absorbed into the Suffolk County Police Department. They will no longer be Park Police. They will be assigned to precincts. And the parks that are in the Police District, the current sector cars will respond to all 911 calls.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. All right. I just need to find -- maybe the County can clarify who will respond.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Mr. Schneiderman, when we get to the bill, I did ask that the County Executive have the appropriate staff here today to make sure they can answer any questions on the resolution. So when we get to it in the agenda, we'll be able to get into it a little more deeply. Okay. Thank you very much, Lou.

MR. TUTONE:

Thank you for the time.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

We appreciate you coming down. And to all the Officers from the Park Police, thank you for coming to the Committee today.

I have no other cards. Is there anybody else in the audience who would like to address the Committee? Seeing none, we do have a couple of our elected officials here with us. And we'll start with our Treasurer, Angie Carpenter. It was asked that the Treasurer come to speak to us a little bit about the interfund borrowing process. We passed a CN at the last legislative meeting to give her authority to do some interfund borrowing. And there were some questions that came up by some of our Legislators. And I thought it be appropriate for her to come and give us a little background on how it occurs, what we have to do as part of the process and why we have to do it. And also why, if possible, if you have the answer, why we had to do it as a CN.

MS. CARPENTER:

Well, why you had to do it as a CN, we'll start with that. I really am not -- you asked why it had to

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be done as a CN. I'm not quite sure why it had to be a CN because we requested a resolution back on December 13th. We had sent an e-mail over, as we always do, requesting that that resolution be put on the agenda.

We had discussions over the past years about perhaps including that in the Organizational Meeting so that we wouldn't have situations as has occurred in the past where we run into a situation where we need to borrow sooner than was anticipated and we don't have the authorization in place to do so.

So with the impending need to move money the beginning of March, and, you know, I'll go into that a little bit more, and let me introduce Christina Cooke who heads up our Cash Management, and Todd VanScoy who heads up Accounting on the revenue side, we would not want to move money without the permissions in place. Because then you would create a situation where the State Comptroller, for example, would come in and audit the County's books and say money was moved without the requisite permissions in place. And that would be in contradiction to Local Law Finance Law. And certainly we wouldn't do it. As everybody knows, in order for us to be able to move money within funds, we need to have the authorization in place prior. We need to notify the appropriate parties. And that's the Legislature, the County Executive, the Budget Offices; both the County Executive's and the Legislative Budget Office. And that that money must be paid back before the end of the year at the very, you know, latest. And it needs to be paid back to the appropriate fund with interest.

So moving money from fund to fund is not something we want to do unless we absolutely have to. Because when we pay it back, and pay it back with interest, that interest then is money that comes out from the General Fund and goes into, you know, a fund where it's restricted. So it isn't an optimum way to do things. And it is troubling. It's very troubling that we have to do this kind of borrowing, but the revenue just isn't there. When we're working with X amount of dollars from a budget that's been adopted, proposed by the County Executive, with the understanding that the necessary revenues are going to be there to carry us through over the year, and it's not, it leaves us with that dilemma. Because we're the ones charged with the responsibility of paying the County's bills. And, yes, that includes the payroll. And last week's borrowing, part of what had to be paid for with that borrowing, was the payroll.

So -- and, you know, you do your best to project what the needs might be. And, in fact, what borrowings might be. But no one has a crystal ball and it is tough to do, although one -- one really glaring example of where we almost missed it, we had a meeting back in 2010 towards the last quarter. And the County Comptroller had their cash projections for the coming year and felt that come Spring we might have to borrow \$22 million. And I remember at the time Christina and I kind of looked at one another. And Christina said, "gee, you know, our calculations show that, if anything, we might have to borrow 222 million, not 22." And they were quite certain that their numbers were right. Well, as it turned out, we wound up borrowing 259 million that Spring.

So it's very very important when you talk about cash, and when you talk about borrowing, that you're talking about what real numbers are. And we have the real numbers as far as the cash because we are the custodians of the cash. And it's not something that is done, you know, lightly. You know, we don't fly by the seat of our pants. There is science -- as much a science as there can be in this. I mean, every Monday, and I'm going to ask Christina to speak to it, every Monday there's a total analysis and projection done of what the needs are going to be for the check on that coming week. And we do have that statement of cash that is distributed every day. It goes to the appropriate parties including the Legislature. And you can see at a glance on that page what our cash to date is, what our projected needs are going to be, what monies have been restricted for the appropriate funds for the borrowings that were done that have to be repaid, what dates they're going to have to be repaid back. Again, what funds have been restricted.

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March 27th we have 177 million -- 117 -- 117 million that has to be paid back on the RAN. And we have restricted some of the money. Again, we've restricted only what we -- in the calculations showing us we have to restrict. Because we don't want to tie up any cash unnecessarily. Because obviously once that money is restricted, it's not available for us to use to pay vendors, pay payroll, etcetera.

Christina, I'd like you to talk a little bit about the Monday scenario that happens. Do you have copies?

(Legislator Hahn entered the auditorium)

MS. COOKE:

As you know, we monitor all of the bank balances on a daily basis in the Treasurer's Office. We have online access to all of the County's bank accounts. We keep track of the balances and all the transactions and keep a very close watch on that on a daily basis.

On Monday mornings typically we know what our cash requirements will be for the week. We know what our vendor disbursements are, what the payroll obligations are, Social Service disbursements, debt service obligations. We know usually on Monday what the week's cash requirements are.

And simply put, we see what is the cash available in the bank and what are the cash requirements that the County needs to disburse that week. And if the cash is enough to cover it, that's great. If it isn't, that's when we need to possibly borrow from a reserve fund so that we can meet these obligations that the County has committed to.

It happened to be for last week. We needed about \$55 million in the General Fund to meet all of our obligations. And we started with about 13. So it left a deficit of about 42, 43 million dollars short in the General Fund to meet the week's cash obligations. That's the reason last week that we needed to borrow from a reserve fund, \$43 million so that we could make it through last week and not have a problem, not be overdrawn, not have banks calling, not have vendors complaining. Simply put, that's the weekly procedure that we do.

MS. CARPENTER:

Thank you. I don't know if I touched each of the points that you had mentioned initially, I think I did, but if not we're here if there are any questions.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

I think you did, and I'm sure there's going to be some questions, but I'll guess I'll start. The first question I have is just a little clarification, especially for those Legislators who are new to the body. How many years or for how long have you been given authority -- or the Treasurer's Office been given authority to do this kind of interfund borrowing? This isn't something we're doing brand new this year, right?

MS. CARPENTER:

No, this is not brand new this year. In fact, when I was a member of this body, I can remember voting on that resolution to allow the Treasurer to do the borrowing and having some, you know, reservations about it, that we were needing to borrow. But at that time I remember distinctly I think it was in September or October, we were having that discussion about borrowing to meet needs. It seems that in the past number of years, especially the past couple of years, that need to borrow is going up earlier and earlier and earlier in the year. And it's just another indication of where we are financially as a County. Because for years, 20-plus years, we never did a RAN borrowing. You know, in the last two years we did a RAN borrowing. And I understand yesterday the Comptroller was here going through discussion about what they might be borrowing -- the next

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RAN borrowing. So now RAN borrowings have become pro forma for the County. Borrowing, you know, to meet expenses from funds is becoming pro forma. And it is troubling. And it's something that, I think, long-term -- and I think, you know, Budget Review probably can speak to it better than any of us in his ability to plan ahead, but it is something that needs to be addressed.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

But this -- specifically this interfund borrowing is not a a new mechanism.

MS. CARPENTER:

No, absolutely not.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

The County's been doing it for years and years and years. And it's just a -- a cash flow management system, in essence, for us to be able to make sure we're paying our bills in a timely fashion. And doing the interfund borrowing is the most cost-effective way of doing it because at least that money is coming from within County coffers. And even interest we're paying is being paid back to the County in essence.

MS. CARPENTER:

Well, I don't know that it would be the most cost-efficient way of doing things. The most cost-efficient way of doing things --

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Well, it's certainly more cost-efficient than --

MS. CARPENTER:

-- is to have revenue --

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

-- going to markets, right?

MS. CARPENTER:

Pardon me?

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

It's certainly more cost-efficient than going to the markets and borrowing money from the --

MS. CARPENTER:

No, but the most --

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

-- bonds and a RAN.

MS. CARPENTER:

-- cost-efficient -- the most cost-efficient thing to do is to plan for the appropriate amount of revenue to take --

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

But you have stated yourself for at least the last 20 years, the County's been doing this interfund borrowing process. And that's something you had voted on as a Legislator yourself.

MS. CARPENTER:

No, I don't know that it's gone back 20 years. I would say the last recollection I have is probably --

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Of not doing one of these?

MS. CARPENTER:

Pardon me?

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Of not having to do the interfund borrowing?

MS. CARPENTER:

Right. Maybe in the early 2000s? We'll go back and check and back to you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Okay, I'd appreciate that, but it's not new to us.

MS. COOKE:

I know typically this resolution has been passed even in years when we did not need to borrow. It was just always kind of a standard resolution available.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Sure. It's given -- it's given the Treasurer the ability to manage our money. And that's why -- that's why she's there, you know, to take care of those important matters for us.

Okay, Legislator Cilmi has a question.

LEG. CILMI:

Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Angie, thank you for being here and thanks to your staff for being here as well. Here's what I see: For the past few years, we've been borrowing to pay for pension costs, in fact, to the tune of -- close to -- since 2012 close to \$200 million. And now we're borrowing in the last two years using an instrument that we've never used before, this RAN, to pay for existing payroll costs. So we're borrowing to pay for expenses associated with retired employees. We're now borrowing to pay for payroll for existing employees. I guess my next question would be are we borrowing to pay for the interest associated with the borrowing that we've already done?

MS. CARPENTER:

Well, I would say that looking at some revenue charts we are -- because of the fact that we've had to pay -- let me see if I can put my hand on that. Todd, do you know what I'm referring to?

LEG. CILMI:

While you're looking for that, do we have --

MS. CARPENTER:

I have it.

LEG. CILMI:

-- do we have a Budget Director in this County at this point? I know Fred Pollert resigned or retired. Has he been replaced, do we know?

MS. CARPENTER:

As far as I know Connie Corso is --

LEG. CILMI:

Connie Corso is the --

MS. CARPENTER:

U-huh.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay. She just doesn't have his title, whatever that title was? Okay. Thank you.

MS. CARPENTER:

The interest earnings in the General Fund, for example, in 2011 were \$47,000. And this is just the General Fund interest. In '12 we had a loss of 42,000 because of the fact that we had to pay back for the monies that we borrowed from the General Fund. So we had \$42,000 less in the General Fund because of the borrowing.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay, but that -- but that's --

MS. CARPENTER:

But it's to your question of --

LEG. CILMI:

My point is -- my question is really rhetorical. It seems like if we don't do it already, it's only a matter of time before we're borrowing to pay for the debt service on the money that we've already borrowed.

MS. CARPENTER:

Well, right? Do you want -- do you want to explain as far as the TANs and the DTANs and what we're doing there because we are.

MS. COOKE:

You are exactly right. Because later this month we will probably borrow so we can pay off the RAN that's due the end of this month. Yes, so we will borrow to pay off a borrowing, unfortunately, yes.

LEG. CILMI:

And I know that historically we've used interfund borrowing. And I agree with the Chairman that that can make sense from a -- if you have to borrow, why not borrow and pay yourself back as opposed to interest to the banks? Completely make sense to me. But when we're continually looking for new mechanisms from which to -- from which to get cash to pay for our existing expenses, that is indicative of a serious financial problem. And so, you know, we've been amortizing pensions. We've been using TANS historically. Now we're using RANS in the past couple of years.

MS. CARPENTER:

And BANs.

LEG. CILMI:

And what?

MS. CARPENTER:

Bond Anticipation Notes.

LEG. CILMI:

BANs, okay. I wonder how many -- how many other versions of anticipation notes --

MS. CARPENTER:

I guess until you run out what is in the alphabet (laughter).

LEG. CILMI:

And we're selling buildings to get cash. And then paying off, you know, basically reverse mortgaging buildings.

MS. CARPENTER:

You then just have to hope that no one calls that loan. Because the \$68 million that we got was for a building that was worth 23 million. So that's a scary thought. Talk about being underwater.

LEG. CILMI:

I mean, look, there's no doubt that the budgetary problems that we are facing are the result of a lot of different things. And my point is unless we -- unless we address those issues, unless we confront those issues head on, acknowledging the severity of the financial problems that we're facing, we're going to borrow ourselves into oblivion. And I mean I can see that happening. I'm not sure that you agree or not.

MS. CARPENTER:

Well, I totally agree. And not only borrowing ourselves into oblivion, but I think we're going to be borrowing ourselves into bankruptcy. And, you know, more and more municipalities across the country are going bankrupt. And we are providing the recipe for that kind of thing if we don't change course.

LEG. CILMI:

Is that an option for our County?

MS. CARPENTER:

Pardon me?

LEG. CILMI:

Do you know legally is bankruptcy an option for a County in New York State?

MS. CARPENTER:

I do believe it would be. Counties have gone bankrupt.

LEG. CILMI:

Counsel, is that a --

MS. CARPENTER:

Not one I'm proposing or entertaining or hoping for, that's for sure.

LEG. CILMI:

None of us would.

MS. CARPENTER:

No.

LEG. CILMI:

And certainly all of us hope that, you know, things get better and we can climb out of this but --

MS. CARPENTER:

Well, you know, Legislator Cilmi, if I could, to your point about, you know, we don't want this to

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happen and we need to do something, I think the key word is "we." And last November, I guess, it was or December, the County Executive's, one of his Deputies said on the record that the County Executive was going to be reaching out to myself, the Comptroller, the Countywide officials, the leadership of the Legislature and the Legislators to work together to, you know, find some real cost savings and things that we could do going forward to address some of our concerns with the finances.

And I was really looking forward to that. And I never did hear. In fact, I sent a letter to the County Executive and I sent a subsequent letter to the County Executive saying, you know, I was ready to roll up my sleeves and sit there and work together. I think I CC'd the Legislature on that. And again to date here we are in March and I have not gotten a response yet. This is very troubling.

LEG. CILMI:

You know, to that point last year I had proposed a measure that called for -- I think it was quarterly meetings of all of the, you know, all of the chief financial people within the County: The Treasurer, the Comptroller, the Deputy County Executive for Finance at the time, Fred Pollert.

MS. CARPENTER:

And the Legislature.

LEG. CILMI:

And the Legislature's Budget Review Office. That never came to fruition unfortunately. It would have required a quarterly meeting. And I understood based on conversations I had at the time that there was a group that got together occasionally to discuss the County's finances. What's the name of that group?

MS. CARPENTER:

Well, actually there is a formal group called the Audit Committee. And, you know, last year unfortunately the Audit Committee didn't meet. This year we are meeting. In fact an e-mail went out. We're going to be having a meeting in two weeks. And the Audit Committee is comprised of just that makeup: The representative from the County Executive, his Budget Officer, their Legislature, the Comptroller and the Treasurer. And in doing some research, the Legislature changed something in the Audit Committee makeup in that it required the Chair of the Audit Committee to rotate.

And I think when you review best practices for Audit Committees, and there's a brochure that the Government Finance Office Association puts out that really speaks to the function of an Audit Committee, how important an Audit Committee is, especially for the governing body, because ultimately it's the governing body that has the responsibility of the finances, you know. You are, you know, the be all and end all when it comes to that. But the Audit Committee should be required to meet quarterly, at least minimally quarterly according to good recommendations for best practice.

And in going back to the legislation for the Audit Committee, that might be something you might want to look at and tweak a little bit so that we don't have situations like last year where the Audit Committee never met. And the idea of having a rotating Chair is good because, again -- because of recommendations for best practice, you don't want the Chair of the Audit Committee getting too cozy with the independent auditors. There always has to be that arm's length, you know, relationship that exists there. And the thought is if, you know, it's a constant person that they develop relationships, and, you know, things are not as arm's length as they should be.

So that idea -- that change was done in early 2000, I believe, where the Legislature made that

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change to the makeup of the Audit Committee that the Chairs rotate every, you know, year. And it started out with the Treasurer. I know last year it was the Comptroller. Before that it was the County Executive's Budget Office; and before that the Legislature.

LEG. CILMI:

Last question, Mr. Chair. And I'm not sure that this is a question for our Treasurer or yourself, but I understand originally the Comptroller and the Treasurer were supposed to be here together. Last minute I suppose that changed and apparently there was a new agenda sent out last night which I saw this morning that -- that had the presentation cancelled.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

That's correct. And it was requested --

LEG. CILMI:

Well, let me just finish my question so -- but I understand that the Comptroller showed up yesterday at the Budget meeting.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Right. And I can address that for you. As I was about to say, the -- there was a request that this presentation regarding interfund borrowing be done at the Budget Committee, which is more of the appropriate committee for this mechanism as it is -- it is covered under the Budget Committee's jurisdiction. So we were -- I was willing to honor that. For whatever reason the communication did not get back to the Treasurer in appropriate fashion. So I certainly wasn't going to ask Miss Carpenter to not provide us with the information since she's here and was willing to do so today.

LEG. CILMI:

Sure. Who had originally requested the Comptroller and the Treasurer to be here today? Was it you as Chairman of this Committee?

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Yes, correct.

LEG. CILMI:

But then at some later date somebody reached out to you --

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Correct.

LEG. CILMI:

-- and said it would --

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Correct.

LEG. CILMI:

-- be more appropriate in the Budget.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Correct.

LEG. CILMI:

But then -- so -- but the Treasurer wasn't here for the Budget Committee yesterday.

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CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

As I said, for whatever reason, the communication did not get back to her in an appropriate fashion. Certainly her -- Miss Cooke was here yesterday, as I was here, and I saw her testifying yesterday, but I was -- but for whatever reason, the Treasurer was not, so.

LEG. CILMI:

Do you know when -- whoever it was that reached out to you to suggest that it might be more appropriate in the Budget Committee, was it -- was it then that person's intention to have both the Treasurer and the Comptroller at the Budget Committee meeting at the same time? Or not necessarily?

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

That was the reason I asked for them both to be here. But, as I said, the communication got disrupted for some reason. But we were -- we're going to move on. And I don't think it's necessarily pertinent to --

LEG. CILMI:

No, but it would -- it would have been nice to have them both here together --

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Of course.

LEG. CILMI:

-- because they do work together; or we hope that they do.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Of course.

LEG. CILMI:

And a lot of what they do individually relates to what, you know --

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

They most certainly do. It's probably why proposals have been put forward about the specific topic. But let's move on. Presiding Officer Gregory has a question.

P.O. GREGORY:

I don't know if it's a question or more of a statement. It is 10:47 March 12, 2014. And if I was dropped on this earth with some of the questions that were asked, I would -- it would have seemed that we just found out that we were in a budget deficit. I don't know where everyone's been. At least the past five years that I've been here, we've had deficits ranging from 130 million to 530 million, whatever number you want to throw into the mix. Certainly if I'm borrowing, this is something that has occurred since I've been here, Chair of the -- former Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, we've had the Comptroller, we've had the Treasurer before our committees every year to discuss the issue. Unfortunately we've had them before us -- or the Comptroller before us to discuss RAN borrowings, something that's become more routine, but unfortunate part of our routine. You know, there were years during the Levy years when -- and the Treasurer could speak to this better than I can where State aid was not forthcoming, and it was very difficult and there were concerns that we may not even make payroll. From what I understand that situation is not as bad now or dire now as it was back then. But it happens, you know, cash flow is an issue.

Certainly we have some challenges. We're certainly not out of the woods yet. There is certainly -- we've done consolidations; we've done the lay-offs; we've done a lot of unpleasant

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things. But in the future we have to look forward to, you know, if you're a gambler, you know {BLTs}, we have the Traffic Violations Bureau that's, you know, generates revenue for us and other mechanisms that will generate revenue. So I'm hopeful in the next several years, the picture will even be more brighter. But, you know, we're in different circumstances. And it's been difficult. And I'm grateful to have a Treasurer and a Comptroller that are -- do their jobs very diligently and look at the dollars and work in partnership together to ensure that we're meeting our obligations because we need that partnership, along with the Legislature as well as the Administration.

But to, you know -- I don't think we're on the verge of bankruptcy. There are certainly other jurisdictions, Detroit being one, that are facing those circumstances. But, you know, it's going to take all of us working together. You know, this is nothing new. You know, ask the thousand people that no longer work for Suffolk County, if they didn't realize that we had a budget deficit. It's unfortunate, but, you know, we have some challenging times ahead. And hopefully we can all work together to face those challenges and I certainly look forward to working with all of you. Thank you.

LEG. CILMI:

If I could just quickly respond, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Sure. Legislator Cilmi.

LEG. CILMI:

I certainly appreciate the Presiding Officer's remarks. And, you know, clearly we have all been aware of our budgetary challenges over the past several years. But it seems to me that they're getting worse. And I appreciate your hope that we're -- you know, we're not out of the woods yet, but there's light at the end of the tunnel. Anecdotally in looking at our economy here in Suffolk County, we've certainly seen some glimmers of hope, but I was struck by if anyone had an opportunity to look at the Clerk's Annual Report, which he distributed the other day, if you looked on page four, there's a Fast Facts for 2013. And two of those Fast Facts involved comparisons relative to foreclosures. And foreclosures in 2013 were up 30% -- more than 30% over 2012. Lis pendens which I believe are portend for future foreclosures were up -- I'm sorry. Foreclosures were up 60%, I believe. Lis pendens were up 30 some odd percent.

So, you know, the situation among our taxpayers, I think, is getting worse. And that doesn't bode well for us as a government fiscally into the future. Because as go our taxpayers goes the government. So -- and I agree with you completely that we have to continue to work together. I think we have worked together on some very important initiatives to try and address our budget problems. But I think we need to do more. I think we need to be more cohesive in terms of our efforts to ask New York State for help in terms of relieving some of the mandates that we face. And like you, Presiding Officer Gregory, I look forward to doing that together with all of our colleagues here. My comments are in no way meant to suggest that people, you know, are not addressing these issues.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Thank you, Legislator Cilmi. We appreciate it. And we're not going to keep the Treasurer here anymore. Legislator Schneiderman has a question.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Thank you for coming out this morning, Madam Treasurer. So on interfund borrowing, this is not a uncommon practice for municipalities particularly those with periodic revenue sources like sales tax or property taxes, which don't come in a daily basis, but come in on very specific times. Is the interfund borrowing that we're doing substantially different than what we've done in prior years? Is

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it more money that we're borrowing or maybe a little bit earlier?

MS. CARPENTER:

We are borrowing earlier. And to give you a specific number, in 2013 we borrowed 250 million. In 2008 we borrowed 140 million. So from '08 until now it's been a steady progression.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Let me ask, are there any restrictions on which funds you can and can't borrow from?

MS. CARPENTER:

Yes.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

I know, like, East Hampton, they got into trouble because there was very specific restrictions on the Community Preservation Fund that you're not allowed to touch that for interfund borrowing purposes. Are there any funds -- is the Quarter Penny, is that -- I know we've been borrowing from that. Is that something that is prohibitive or is that allowed?

MS. CARPENTER:

We are very careful. There are funds that we cannot borrow from and we do not borrow from; Capital Projects being one of them. So to answer your question, no, we don't borrow from anything that we're not supposed to be borrowing from. We're very cognizant of that.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. And do you have the 2009 number? Sorry, '11, you want?

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Could you tell us what they were over the course of the years? I mean, we all know 2008 was the year the financial crisis happened. So was the interfund borrowing numbers for 2009, '10, '11? I mean do we see this as an issue that evolves with the crisis?

MS. CARPENTER:

In '08 it was 140 million; in '09, because of the crisis in '08, it went to 236. Then '10 it was 238. In '11 259. In '12 it went down a little, 225. Last year it was 250. And to date in '14 we are at 43 million that we've borrowed.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

So in essence as Legislator Cilmi so well pointed out, and Legislator Gregory, we've had problems. There's been a global financial meltdown that's effected all of us from the average homeowner to the top government that we have in the country. And it's -- we're seeing the effects there. Kind of play itself out, right? And we've seen a little plateau and possibly we saw a dip in 2012. So we're starting to make some headway.

MS. CARPENTER:

You would hope. Except if you listen to some economists, as I did yesterday, it looks like the stock market might be heading for some dangerous times. And let's all hope that doesn't happen.

One thing before I conclude, on the revenue side I just want to make a suggestion. This Legislature -- actually it was Legislator Bill Lindsay, who led the move to increase the Hotel/Motel tax. Hotel/Motel tax is managed by the Treasurer's Office. We sign the people up and we, you know, collect that tax, enforce it and so forth. But I'm trying to think if it was in '06 or '07 -- no, it was '08 perhaps, that we raised it from three quarters of 1% to 3%. So for every 1% that the tax

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is raised, brings in \$3 million. And there are counties in the State -- now we're at 3%. There are counties in the state, and I'm going to say smaller counties, and not counties that have the resort tourist appeal that Suffolk County has, that are charging 5 and 6%. So that might be something you guys might want to look at.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

All right. Thank you. I have one last question for you from Legislator Trotta. And I'm going to ask everybody to try to keep it brief. We're an hour into the agenda and the Sheriff has been waiting patiently and we haven't actually even gotten to the agenda yet.

LEG. TROTTA:

I just have a quick question for Dr. Lipp. I don't know if you know it now or you can tell us in the future, what percentage of sales tax revenue would we need to increase to meet our current obligations? Like if we had our bills for \$100 million this year, whatever it might be, how much would the sales tax have to go up this year, next year and the year after to be able to pay for what we're spending? I don't know if you know it now or you can get it to us.

MR. LIPP:

That would depend upon how many years in the future you want to go. And there's a lot of variables so it's --

LEG. TROTTA:

Let's go four years.

MR. LIPP:

Four years. Okay. So the best way to answer that question is we are scheduled to do a budget model presentation for the August 22nd Budget and Finance Committee meeting. So I could project out for that because there are a lot of variables in addition to the sales tax in terms of what shortfalls or surpluses there may be in the budget. I'm sorry, if I said August, I apologize. It's one of those "A" months. I meant April. Thank you. So I can give you a number for the April 22nd meeting.

LEG. TROTTA:

You have nothing off the top of your head, like 10%, 5%, 20%?

MR. LIPP:

I'd rather not.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Okay. Thank you very much, Dr. Lipp. Ms. Carpenter, thank you very much for being here today. We appreciate you taking the time out of your schedule to come and answer the questions. It's very enlightening for us.

MS. CARPENTER:

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Thank you. Okay, we did have the Sheriff here. It looks like we've lost him in the debate. So we will reach out to the Sheriff. I was unsure what he was here for and try to make sure he has the opportunity to come if he needs to be here for something in the future.

I did have a request from the Administration that we try to do it through the agenda, first Connie Corso is here to answer questions on a couple of bills and she has another pending meeting and so

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we're going to go into the agenda and then we'll come back and circle through for last presentation by Mr. Melito.

TABLED RESOLUTIONS

So we will go right into the agenda now. I'll start with Tabled Resolutions **IR 1047, Adopting Local Law No. -2014, A Local Law to regulate pet dealers and pet stores in the County of Suffolk. (Schneiderman)** Legislator Schneiderman --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Has to be tabled.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

-- makes a motion to table; second by Legislator Lindsay. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **1047 is tabled. (VOTE: 7-0-0-0. PO GREGORY INCLUDED IN VOTE)**

INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS

Moving into Introductory Resolutions **IR 1129, Amending the Suffolk County Classification and Salary Plan in connection with a new position title in the County Clerk's Office (Senior Official Examiner of Title). (Co. Exec.)** I will make a motion to approve; second by Legislator Schneiderman. On the motion? All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **IR 1229 is approved. (VOTE: 7-0-0-0. PO GREGORY INCLUDED IN VOTE)**

IR 1233, Amending the Suffolk County Classification and Salary Plan in connection with a New Position Title in the County Legislature (Web and Social Media Administrator). (Co. Exec.) I'll make a motion to approve; second by Legislator Lindsay. On the motion Legislator Cilmi.

LEG. CILMI:

Could we just have an explanation of this from, I guess, from Budget Review?

MR. LIPP:

So this is a staff position -- actually perhaps the Clerk would better --

LEG. CILMI:

Or from the Clerk, whatever.

LEG. CILMI:

Because it's transferring from one to another; right?

MR. LIPP:

Yeah.

MR. LAUBE:

Yeah, we're transferring a position from the BRO's Office to the Clerk's Office. We did this -- mostly this position, somebody's dedicated to the website, which most of the information that's on the website, almost 95% of it, comes through the Clerk's Office. This person will now be -- would be responsible for social and web new media and keeping us on the cutting edge of that and for all 18 Legislators as well as the Legislature itself. Currently I'm using Facebook to post everything that happens here in terms of our committee meetings and times and agendas. We'd like to expand on that, go to Twitter and all the new emerging social medias as we move forward.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay. So firstly we're not adding anybody.

MR. LAUBE:

No.

LEG. CILMI:

So we're taking the person who's doing that for us now -- was it Laura?

MR. LAUBE:

Yes, Laura.

LEG. CILMI:

Provenzano. And she's now going to be just -- because she's working for you technically; just makes that technical change and it dedicates her responsibilities to what -- to what we're talking about.

MR. LAUBE:

Yes, and then moving forward, expand that role to fit this new position.

LEG. CILMI:

Talk to us a little bit, Tim, if you would about that expansion.

MR. LAUBE:

Sure. The idea came to me late last year to have somebody on staff that could do this for us. Reading Governing magazine, different municipalities that are using social media to inform the public, things the local government is doing. Currently we have a website that's packed with information. It's very comprehensive. But unless you are coming to our website, you don't consume it. With social media, we can take the information to you. Thirty percent of our users are mobile users on our website and that's a number that's growing. So moving into this field, I think it's a good way for us to present more open government to our residents and to be more available and be more responsive. It's putting the information out there for people -- making it more easier for people to know what government is doing.

LEG. CILMI:

So, each of us has our own web pages. Some of us, if not all of us, have the ability to update those web pages ourselves individually. The Presiding Officer's got the main page obviously. What more do you expect to do and how -- how will Laura, if that's the person, decide what is important for the public to, you know, to hear about and what's not.

MR. LAUBE:

Well, right now what we're posting are things that are on the agenda, things we are doing. And that's the level of editorial I've been using for that. For each --

LEG. CILMI:

All things?

MR. LAUBE:

Everything's that publicly listed. Currently that's posting links to agendas for today. So at times completed agendas. We do the marked agendas. We have the audio and hopefully some day video. And as more people carry mobile phones, they can directly access that information on the go. And that would be available to all 18 Legislators.

LEG. CILMI:

All right, so -- but that's available now, though, on the home page of the Legislature.

MR. LAUBE:

Well, I see the position as something that -- there's a constant state of flux with social media. It's always changing. I'm not on Facebook personally with the exception of the Legislature, but the format constantly changes. And to have somebody on staff who's an expert in that, who can keep us on the cutting edge, I think, is valuable to us.

LEG. CILMI:

Is Laura the one who's doing that now for our Legislature?

MR. LAUBE:

She would be the one designated to that, yes.

LEG. CILMI:

No. But is she the one who's doing it now?

MR. LAUBE:

She's doing our web page, yes.

LEG. CILMI:

She is. Okay. Robert, are you expecting to hire somebody to replace Laura in your office?

MR. LIPP:

She had left obviously. She is helping us a little bit during the year with certain things. And Allen Fung had left also so that lowered the staff to two. We since hired one person. And the plan is -- at a more junior level. And the plan is to keep it steady at that level. We have three IT people in BRO that service the entire Legislature. And now there's the fourth IT person that is now in the Clerk's Office. And her main responsibility is the web-based stuff as Tim had said. And there's no plan to hire more people.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay. All right. Thank you both.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Thank you. Legislator Hahn has a question.

LEG. HAHN:

I was very involved. My other -- my former role as Director of Communications under Presiding Officer Bill Lindsay in the redesign of the website, we had -- when I had come on staff under Presiding Officer Maxine Postal, 2003, the website at that time was five-years-old. And when I came back to work for Bill in 2006, we had the same website making it then eight-years-old. I think it took us two years to update it. And so it had been 10-years-old at that time. At this point now it's five year -- almost five-years-old again.

LEG. CILMI:

In people years that's almost 200.

LEG. HAHN:

Yes. So in web -- you know, I took great -- I think we did it with Terry Pearsall's input and your input and everyone, we did a, you know, a tremendous job, but it's a lot of work for Laura keeping 18 different individual DO sites up-to-date. You know, we're due for a redesign. We probably

should have some sort of aesthetic redesign more often than every five years; way more often than every five years. And there's functionality improvements that can always -- we can always improve functionality, intuitiveness of how to find materials, you know, content that we can add, and links, and making it just easier to find the backup and Fiscal Impact Statements and -- etcetera.

So I'm -- I think it's very important from a transparency standpoint of government, from an open government standpoint, from accessibility of government for the people that -- our internet presence. And then there's expanding beyond just, like you said, a website -- a website where people have to come find you and are searching you out. If we find the people who are interested, which you would hope is everyone, but we know is not, but you find the people who are interested and then you can send to them, I think, this is what we try to do in our DOs from an online digital newsletter perspective, but we also should do from an entire legislative perspective as well. We do very good work here and the people should know it. So thank you for what you're doing.

MR. LAUBE:

I agree. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Thank you very much. Okay. If there's no other discussion, we have a motion and a second, I believe. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **IR 1233 is approved. (VOTE: 7-0-0-0. PO GREGORY INCLUDED IN VOTE)**

HOME RULE MESSAGES

Moving onto **Home Rule Messages, and we do have some people here from the County Exec's Office to answer any questions that we might have, Home Rule Number 4, Requesting the State of New York to amend the Civil Service Law to permit the transfer of the positions of Suffolk County Parks Police Officers to the positions of Suffolk County Police Officers. (Co. Exec.)** Mr. Vaughn, County -- anybody else who is here who can answer any questions that people may have, I'm sure there's going to be some. I guess I'll start by trying to get a motion. I will make the motion; second by Legislator Lindsay. On the motion.

LEG. CILMI:

Mr. Chair, I had asked before if you could reach out --

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

We did. Unfortunately Mr. Schneider's not available right now, but there are folks here from the County Attorney's Office and the Budget Office; and hopefully they can answer any of your questions. And if not, we'll see how the day goes.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Let me start with a question I asked --

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Legislator Schneiderman.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

-- with a question I asked earlier, just logistically, since Suffolk County PD is not largely in the area that I represent, but I do have a tremendous number of parks, in terms of incidents at parks, are we

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communicating with the local PDs, whether it's East Hampton or Southampton -- I have a host of them -- to respond? And maybe they've already historically been responding in the parks, but has that been covered?

MR. VAUGHN:

Historically the local PD has been responding to the parks on the two forks.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. So let me go to a completely different question. So a number of individuals have been hoping to be Police Officers; some of them have taken the test. I think quite a number of people have taken the test. By going this route, we are going directly to the Park Police, which I understand they've also taken the test and they have also gone through the Academy. Is there any issues with the fact that so many have taken the test but we wouldn't -- no longer be -- are we allowed, in other words, to go to this group? Is that -- without going through the individuals in order of their test scores, etcetera?

MS. LOLIS:

Gail Lolis, Deputy County Attorney. There's no -- there's no legal issue with that as far as people on the -- excuse me, eligible list. We've done that research.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Gail, it might be useful to expand upon that a little bit, about what the actual State Law will do and why it would make the list itself not (inaudible) --

MS. LOLIS:

There's actually two reasons. One, in the proposed State Law it specifically states that there would not be an issue as far as any preferred or eligible list.

As far as legally, there is no property right to the position if you're on an eligible list. So it's an expectation, but it's -- there is no vested interest.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Do we know how many people took the test?

MS. LOLIS:

How many people are on the eligible list?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Yeah.

MS. LOLIS:

No.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. And are we going to -- I asked this question earlier, but maybe you could answer it, are we also going to need additional Police Officers beyond these 32 Park Police? So we'll be hiring some people off that other list?

MS. SANTERAMO:

I think right now we have not. I think the Administration has not decided yet if they're actually going to be hiring another police class from this year. We -- you know, we -- I think they have to work that through.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Do you know what's in the budget? Did we put a class in the budget? I don't recall the size of it. Maybe 50?

MS. CORSO:

There's no size allocated at this point. There is anticipation of the class at the end of the year, but no size has been decided.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Robert, was there -- when we adopted the budget, was there a particular size that we were estimating?

MR. LIPP:

I believe the intent is 60 in September, October. That being said, I think what Connie's referring to is it's hard to -- you can't specify an exact number based upon the dollars. It's an estimated number. That was the intent, I believe, of the Legislature, though.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

All right. So there may be additional hirings later in the year.

MR. LIPP:

Right. And at the end of the day, it's up to the County Executive to make the determination.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. All right. That's all from here right now.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Legislator Hahn.

LEG. HAHN:

Okay. So I have -- I think I have answers, but I'm going to ask them anyways just so that it's on the record. I had heard that there was a difference between psychiatric testing and background checks -- or not testing, clearances and background checks between what Parks Police go through and what our Suffolk County Police Officers go through, but I'm told that that's not true; that it's the same clearance, background checks, all the evaluations is the same screening that we use.

MS. SANTERAMO:

Yeah, that is correct. You know, we've spoken with the Police Department. They go through the same exact application investigation. It's the same people who do the Police investigation do the Parks Police. That's why, you know, as Lou had said earlier, you know, they don't have to waste time doing all that for the Parks Police because we have already done that.

LEG. HAHN:

Right. And I missed Lou's testimony. Sorry, Lou. And then in addition that they go through the Academy?

MS. SANTERAMO:

Yes.

LEG. HAHN:

And get the same training or -- you know, maybe -- I'm told that they might need field training before they go in line of duty as a Suffolk County Police Office?

MS. SANTERAMO:

So they go through the same exact training. They go through the Academy. They go through field training. What Lou had referenced earlier was that because, you know, there's certain -- there's certain skills that they use more often than not, you know, Parks Police, there may be -- being out there right now, you know, PD will be giving them refresher courses when they start transitioning over.

LEG. HAHN:

Good. Because some of these Officers may have only been Parks Police Officers for a handful of years, but others may have been Parks Police Officers for decades. And things like, you know, domestic -- and I'm sure they see all kinds of things in the parks, but, you know, domestic violence calls, you know, serious car accidents, robbery, burglaries in progress, there might be the latest greatest training. Is there inservice kinds of training that Police get that, you know -- and things like Narcan and we -- they're EMTs? Are they both -- are the Parks Police also trained as EMTs or basic, you know, basic EMTs?

MR. TUTONE:

Yes. Yes, during the Academy training, they are trained as EMTs. And, again, they go through the same training as us: Domestics, everything that we are trained on --

LEG. HAHN:

And the gun --

MR. TUTONE:

-- it's just a matter of use. So the field training -- the four weeks of field training will get them back up to speed on what they have to --

LEG. HAHN:

Do they have the same recertifications required as Parks Police Officers as -- I'm sorry that I don't know the answers to this already.

MR. TUTONE:

For EMT?

LEG. HAHN:

For both EMT, for their gun usage --

MR. TUTONE:

Yes, the Police Officers are the same as us.

LEG. HAHN:

Right. Okay.

MR. TUTONE:

So under the State --

LEG. HAHN:

I thought I knew that, but, you know, people say things and then you go "oh, gosh, am I right?"

MR. TUTONE:

Right.

LEG. HAHN:

So I'm glad that you're just clarifying it for me.

And I was concerned about -- I do -- you know, we put in the budget for a class of 60. This is 30 -- how many is it? Two? 32. You know, so I think there is an expectation on this Legislature that we also hold a class. This cannot be instead of holding a class, from my perspective anyways. So thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Thank you, Legislator Hahn. Legislator Lindsay.

LEG. LINDSAY:

My question is for Lisa and Tom. Have we looked at the aging population within the current force and done a projection of retirement numbers over the next five years?

MR. VAUGHN:

We have looked at the number of officers that have tread out. I think that the numbers that we got were between 60 to 80 Officers a year. So this would be -- bringing these officers on would help with the attrition rate.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

That was going quick. Legislator McCaffrey.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Thank you. Gail, I have a question for the County Attorney's Office. I'm not quite sure about your answer. I mean, you're an attorney. I'm not. But in terms of the liability the County may have in terms of a possible lawsuit, if there were a situation where someone that's on that pending list now could sue the County, because -- I know you say it's just an expectation, but I think that there may have been some people, and there may be some basis for them filing a lawsuit, which could potentially, you know, delay the hiring of even these Parks Police. Can you speak a little bit more to that, please?.

MS. LOLIS:

Sure. Well, before we even get into the case law, the proposed State Law states that the transfer of the now existing positions may be effectuated without regard to any eligible list or preferred list for reinstatement. So the State Law has already taken care of that.

But even if there were a proposed challenge, because anybody can bring a lawsuit, there is plenty of case law out there that states that individuals on an eligible list do not have any vested property right. And people that have been on eligible lists that have brought lawsuits have had those lawsuits dismissed. And these are cases -- these are State cases; these are Federal cases; United States Supreme Court cases. They're all consistent in that regard.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

So you're sure that there's no conflict with the existing Civil Service Law; with the pending State Law that we're proposing here?

MS. LOLIS:

Yes.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Okay. To the County, I want to ask how are we going to propose that we're going to patrol these parks? What's going to be different as to the way it's done now?

MR. VAUGHN:

We actually have our Parks Commissioner here, but the short answer to that is that we are going to be hiring, I believe, Park Rangers and part-time -- part-time people so that way we can right size the force during peak seasons and right size it during off seasons. So what we find right now is given the current number of Officers that we have, we usually experience greater overtime obviously during the summer; and then we have significant periods of downtime during the winter months. We believe that with -- with the new hiring plan that we're going to put in place, it'll provide greater flexibility and eliminate that.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Do we have the ability now to hire Park Rangers during the peak time to supplement the existing Park Police?

MR. VAUGHN:

I'm not sure. And I actually would be concerned that that might be a labor relations question. I believe that -- with -- with having the Park Police Officers as part of the PBA, that that might be a violation of the current deal.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

We don't have a -- we don't have Alan Schneider here from -- the Commissioner of Civil Service, but what would be the differential in terms of -- I'm concerned about the budget impact. Currently I would have to think that these Officers make significantly less than the existing Police Officers; and that there would be an impact, if not today or tomorrow, but in the future if they were to be moved from Park Police, which is probably a different status in terms of pay rate, retirement days off and things like that; and they were made Police Officers and we didn't have any change in the way we're patrolling these parks.

MR. VAUGHN:

Well, I do -- the budget that was adopted last year does take into account this transfer. It was part of -- it was part of the considered budget for last year. But specifically I think I'll let Connie Corso expound upon that.

MS. CORSO:

It would have some effect of 36 more Officers. It's just -- it's static. It would be the same. It's just moving these Officers over. There's no -- once they end their employment and -- as a civilian, they're going to go into the Police and -- it's just going to be a smoothing. There's no -- no addition. It's not like we have to pay any back retirement. It's the same. So right now your budget includes that. What it doesn't include is staffing for Park Police for the rest of the year in the Parks Department.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

What step would they come in if -- I assume there's varying years of service that these Park Police have. Would they come over in -- with the years of service into the step program in the new contract?

MS. CORSO:

I'm sorry. I'm not sure.

MR. VAUGHN:

Legislator McCaffrey, when people -- when people move all along the Civil Service chart, you end up falling into the category -- into the place where you are closest on that chart. So, for example, if I was to -- if I was to change titles and enter a Civil Service title at this point in time, and I make whatever it is my salary is, on the chart I would go to the spot that is closest to my current salary with a slight step up usually, so you don't go backwards in salary. So if I was -- you know, if I was -- if I was making, and I'm certainly not, but just because it sounds like a nice number, if I was making \$120,000 which I'm not making right now and the next step -- but I wouldn't mind making that -- and the next step was --

LEG. McCAFFREY:

We'll keep that in mind.

MR. VAUGHN:

Thank you, sir; we'll talk at budget time (laughter). But the next step would be 121, I would fall into 121. I wouldn't fall back to 118.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Okay. But my question is if we were to hire new Police Officers, okay, right now with the new contract, and we wanted to hire 40 Police Officers, instead of transferring 40 Park Police over into the PD, would they cost more money than if we were to hire new Police Officers off the street right now?

MR. VAUGHN:

I think that that's a very good question, but I think there's some other costs that we need to consider here. So for -- first of all, you save significantly on the training and the waiting period. You have an experienced force that you're being able to bring in at a still, what is a cheaper rate, because they will go into the new Police contract. So you're basically -- you're basically invest -- you're basically getting a force that is experienced at a -- at what would be a reduced rate or at a rookie rate, pardon me, not a reduced rate but at a rookie rate.

The other part is that you begin -- that you begin to save on those overtime costs as well that the Park Police are currently incurring.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

But I still really haven't got an answer to my question. If you had -- one of the Park Police that came over, and they've got ten years right now, and they became a Suffolk County Police Officer by virtue of this Home Rule passing, what would their pay rate be? Would it be at a rate for a new Suffolk County Police Officer to come in off the street? Or would it be at the rate as if they had ten years in the Suffolk County Police Department?

MS. CORSO:

Yes, but they're going to be at that new salary scale. They're not going to be at the old salary scale. So there still is the steps. And what you're missing is that we're going to be hiring part-time Park Rangers with no benefits. And there's a savings to that. You can't discount that savings.

MR. VAUGHN:

Legislator McCaffrey, the one other thing that I would want to add to that is that -- the question that you're asking is not -- is not exact -- is not exactly correct. Because part of it is, and no offense, I'm not trying to be offensive, but my point is that their salary is going to be where it falls on that scale. So it will all depend upon the individual and where they're going to fall onto the scale that is closest to what they are currently making now. So you're taking what these officers are making now and you're plugging them in to the new Police scale. So they're not -- I think that --

LEG. CILMI:

If Legislator McCaffrey will just suffer me a quick related question, so when they transfer over, are they going to be treated, from a contractual point of view, as new employees so that they will pay into their health insurance, their length of time, the top step will be extended as it is for existing PBA Officers? Or are they existing employees as per that?

MR. VAUGHN:

Legislator Cilmi, my understanding is that it's actually a bit of a hybrid. So while these Police Officers would not pay into their benefits because of their time served under the new contract, they would be under the new salary structure of the new contract. So it's a bit of both.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

One last question for Dr. Lipp. Have you done an analysis of what this cost would be of bringing these Park Police over versus what it would be to hire new Police Officers?

MR. LIPP:

No, we didn't do that specific analysis. Basically what you're asking to try to help couch the dialogue or debate is I don't have a specific number, but, yes, these individuals will see a salary increase if you look at it that way. Myopically clearly there will be an increase in cost. The question is to what extent you're offsetting that by not hiring additional Police Officers that would come in for starters at a lower salary and would have to pay benefits in terms of health insurance these people that are existing wouldn't.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

So the answer that I think I'm hearing is that there would an additional cost if we were to hire -- bring the Park Police over versus hire new Police Officers off the street.

MR. LIPP:

Yes. There would be an increase in Police if you looked at it that way. There would be a decrease to Parks, however, number two. And number three then as the Budget Director Connie Corso, I believe, was implying, then you would have to make some assumption as to -- to what extent you're offsetting that by not hiring additional Police Officers because of these particular individuals.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

And I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, one more question to the County -- because I'm really not quite clear about this answer. I know you explained it in terms of wages. Is it -- do they go in -- say there's a step program. And do they go in -- they match their wage and that's the step they're in? Or is it by use of service, which is the existing step program?

MR. VAUGHN:

They would match their wage. So, again, if a Parks Police Officer is making, you know, \$85,000 or \$120,000, whatever it is, they would go to the step that is closest to their current salary. So there is -- there's a very lengthy chart that has both years of service and levels on it. So one column -- the first column is your grade. The next -- the top column is your step. That's based on your years of service. So, for example, if you were A, you would find the place on the column that matches the grade and matches the year of service. And that's how -- that's how you're -- that's how you determine a salary. In this case you determine the salary based on how close you are to your current salary.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

And they wouldn't move any quicker through this step program because they would just be matching and going through. Okay.

MR. VAUGHN:

That is correct.

MS. SANTERAMO:

And I also want to clarify when you're talking about, you know, their cost versus a new class, we're saving with a Parks Police by bringing them into the Police because we're not paying for their Academy training or the applicant investigation because they've already been through both of these. So there's training costs that we're also saving in that respect according to the Police Department.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Just one last thing. I just want to thank the Parks Police for being here. And I don't want you to think any of my question is to demean the service that you do and that you provide to the County. Okay. I know you're very capable. You could move right into these jobs. We're talking about dollars and cents here so I hope you can appreciate that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Thank you, Legislator McCaffrey. Legislator Schneiderman.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Yes, I have a number of questions. And at some point I probably will need the Parks Commissioner as well to step forward. All right. First question, are there any members of the Park Police that have taken the test for Suffolk County PD but haven't actually passed the entirety of the test? Are all 32 fully eligible to become Suffolk County Police Department Officers, do you know?

MS. SANTERAMO:

We wouldn't know the exact stats of who took the police test or where they fall on that police test.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. Because -- all right. So they would probably have to pass all aspects of that test; correct? To be able to transfer in?

MR. VAUGHN:

Well, they had already passed -- they had already passed the test in order to become Park Police Officers. They've already gone through training; they've already gone through backgrounds.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. So I just want to make sure that all 32 of these individuals have met the requirements.

MS. SANTERAMO:

They have been qualified as Police -- I mean as Police Officers. They're Park Police. They've gone through the training; they've gone through the process; they've gone through the background checks.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. And these -- the new Park Rangers, are they going to have Peace Officer status? Will they carry a weapon?

MS. SANTERAMO:

They will have Peace Officer status.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. The next question is I think a little more complicated. In terms of, you know, pension, retirement, and maybe, Robert, you can help with this, these Park Police are currently County

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employees. They're paid through the General Fund of the County. They -- obviously there are pensions, retirement costs, benefits also paid for by the General Fund of the County.

Now, they will switch over to Suffolk County PD and their pension costs will now be covered by the Police District and the retirement costs. Is it prorated based on the time they were with the County and now in the District? Or the County taxpayers, like in my district, which are -- is out -- you know, they pay for their own police services, will they be asked to pay this pension for the Suffolk County PD, which would be an issue obviously.

MR. LIPP:

My understanding, and Ms. Corso could correct me if I'm wrong, is they would start -- they would end their tenure as part of the ERS, the general -- the Employee Retirement System and they would start from day one as PFRS, Police and Fire Retirement System so it would be -- they'd be changing their status in the New York State retirement system, number one; number two, as you had stated, they would -- the cost would be Fund 115, Police District cost as opposed to a General Fund cost.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So would that -- would then all their pension costs go to the Police District or just a portion of it?

MR. LIPP:

Well, the way the pension bill is determined --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Or is it two pensions now? One --

MR. LIPP:

Well, it would stop.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So what about, like, you know, the ten years, you know, for vesting and things like that?

MR. LIPP:

That would stop also. So, in other words, if these guys had 15 years in ERS, that's it. And then they would start day one and the clock would start again is my understanding with PFRS.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So if they only have, let's say, eight years in the Park Police, they lose -- they start fresh? So two years doesn't get them to ten?

MR. LIPP:

Correct.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. And in terms of retirement with the -- with the County, the retirement age is different than with Suffolk County PD. So they would now be eligible to retire at a younger age; correct?

MR. LIPP:

They'd be in two different retirement systems. So it would apply separately. They'd wind up with a hybrid retirement plan that would be advantageous for some; and perhaps less advantageous for others depending upon how long they stayed.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Right. But the option won't be for some to stay as Park Police. It'll be -- they all will go, right?

They're not given the option.

MR. LIPP:

Right.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. But my understanding is the Park Police want this. They're ready for this.

MR. LIPP:

Right. And it's possible that some of them might say "this isn't going to work for me." And they might -- they might leave.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. So let me ask Commissioner Dawson to come forward because this is, you know, from the Parks perspective. And although this isn't the Parks Committee, I chair the Parks Committee for the Legislature. And in terms of service levels and whatnot, Commissioner Dawson, this is a big change for the County Parks. We've all had uniformed officers patrolling in the Parks. Now we're switching to a Park Ranger type of system. Do you have any thoughts? Are we going to be able to provide adequate public safety within the Parks? A lot of these are campgrounds.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

I think not only are we going to be able to provide adequate safety, I think we're actually going to increase the amount of coverage that we have during our summer season. So we're actually going to be able to put -- as opposed to mobile patrols, we'll actually be able to have somebody at Cedar Point, actually somebody out at Indian Island at the campsites during the -- like I said --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

We'll actually have more people in the parks but they'll be part-timers.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Right.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

And we were not able to do part-timers in the past?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

We have part-timers. And we do subsidize with part-timers now.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

So do you know approximately how many full-timers versus part-time?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

I'm sorry.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Do you know how many full-time Park Police and how many part-time we have?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Right now we have 29 officers, five Sergeants, one Lieutenant. And I think we have five part-timers.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. And then in the summer that goes way up in terms of part-timers?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

No.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

No. Right now we're currently hiring five part-timers?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

We have them on staff now.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. And so what do you envision under the new scenario in terms of staff levels?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Well, because they're going to be part-timers, I don't want to give you a number of -- I mean we'll have a full-time equivalence, but I'm guessing it's probably between 40 and 45.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Forty and 45 part-timers?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Part-timers, correct.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Oh, so significantly more.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Significantly more, correct.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. And will they have Peace Officer status, any of them? Will some of them be carrying weapons?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

The Park Rangers will have Peace Officer status.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

They will. Okay. So you're comfortable with this scenario in terms of managing the parks?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Absolutely.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. And the earlier question in terms of local police responding, so typically if there was an emergency, a 911, the Police would respond anyway.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

That's the way it works now. I don't see any difference whether we have Park Rangers out there or full Park Police.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. All right. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Thank you. Seeing no other questions, I do have a motion and a second on the resolution. What I do suggest, there were a lot of questions regarding the mechanics in terms of Civil Service Law. And it may be very helpful at the General Meeting if this gets out to have Mr. Schneider there to answer any questions that we may have.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Mr. Chairman, could I make a motion to table this until we've had an opportunity to have Mr. Schneider here?

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Sure. I have a motion to table by Legislator McCaffrey.

LEG. CILMI:

Yeah, I'll second that. And if I could, just on that motion, very quickly --

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Sure. And a second by Legislator Cilmi. Go ahead.

LEG. CILMI:

The presentation from the Exec's Office has been good, but I think there are more questions, not only from -- not only from a Civil Service point of view, Mr. Chair, but also from a budgetary point of view. This is very, very complicated fiscally speaking. You have a number of factors involved. I can see where we save money from not having these 30 so officers in a class -- in an Academy class. I can see how it costs us money, because if we were going to hire 30 new officers, they'd be starting at a 40, whatever, thousand dollar salary. And these are more, but they already exist now.

There are issues associated with some other things as well. So I would like for our Budget Review Office to do a full blown analysis of this before -- before we move on it. It's been this long. I don't know that there's any urgency to doing it at this meeting today. And I know our next meeting's not for some time. I think that would give Budget Review enough time to do a full analysis and would also give us an opportunity to speak on the record with our Civil Service Commissioner, who, as we know, has, you know, has decades of experience in these issues and I think whose opinion, you know, is valued by all of us and would be important with this -- with this sort of proposal.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

You know, on the motion to table --

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Legislator Schneiderman.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

You know, it would be nice -- certainly my questions have been answered today, but in terms of the Civil Service questions, I don't see why Mr. Schneider couldn't come to the full session and answer those questions, why we'd need to hold it up here.

MR. VAUGHN:

Mr. Chairman, if I just might, just a couple of things. One, you know, this is -- this is an approved part of the budget that was adopted last November. Number two, we would ask that this be moved today to the full floor of the Legislature because there is such a large time in between now and the next meeting. We don't -- the General Meeting is not -- the next General Meeting after this one is not until April 29th. As all of you know, Albany is done by the end of June. We want to give them

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enough time to do their due deliberations as well.

And then the other thing to remember is that this is -- what we are adopting today, is we're not asking for the Legislature to sign off on this as a full process yet, but what we are asking for is the opportunity to go forward; have the Home Rule adopted, let Albany have their debate on this message and then we will have to come back and continue to debate this bill in the future.

LEG. CILMI:

Mr. Chairman?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Tom, Alan Schneider, can you have him at the main meeting; the Legislative meeting?

MR. VAUGHN:

I will do my best to have Mr. Schneider at the March 18th meeting.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Mr. Presiding Officer, I saw that you wanted to --

P.O. GREGORY:

No, I pretty much wanted to state what Mr. Vaughn stated about the timeline, given the State Legislature, their restrictions. And, you know, I think there's an urgency -- we do have a second bite at the apple, if you will, when the bill comes back before us to vet out any concerns that we may have at that time. But I think given the short timeline with the State Legislature to move forward and our next meeting being in late April, I think, it's -- you know, it's prudent for us to move forward at this time.

LEG. CILMI:

So -- Mr. Chair?

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Yes, Legislator Cilmi.

LEG. CILMI:

I can appreciate what the Presiding Officer is saying. To Budget Review, are you able to put some numbers together between now and our General Meeting on Tuesday?

MR. LIPP:

Sure, is the short answer.

LEG. CILMI:

Okay. Well, that's a good answer. And we'll make it clear to -- or we'll send a request over to Alan Schneider to be at our General Meeting for Tuesday.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

We are making the official request now. This is the third time to Mr. Vaughn that --

LEG. CILMI:

Okay.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

-- that Alan Schneider be here on Tuesday.

MR. VAUGHN:

Yes, that is loud and clear.

LEG. CILMI:

That being said -- that being said, I don't know if Legislator McCaffrey -- I would offer a motion to discharge without recommendation, then, in anticipation of getting the answers that we're looking for from Mr. Schneider and from Budget Review on Tuesday.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

And I would second that.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Okay. So we have -- the tabling motions have been withdrawn. We have a motion to discharge without recommendation by Legislator Cilmi; second by Legislator McCaffrey. I'm willing to go along with that and I'll withdraw my motion to approve. And seeing no other discussion, we do have a motion on the table. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Home Rule number 4 is discharged without recommendation. **(VOTE: 7-0-0-0. PRESIDING OFFICER INCLUDED IN VOTE)**

And that concludes the resolutions on our agenda. We do have one other item on the agenda. Mr. Melito, our Deputy County Executive for Performance Management, has been waiting very patiently to come up and give us a full brief, given our timing, overview of what they've been doing over there, how things have been moving along and how much money they're saving us.

Mr. Melito, I do have to warn you that the next Committee is scheduled to start at 12:30 so we are going to try to keep this as brief as possible.

PRESENTATION

MR. MELITO:

Thank you everyone for giving me the opportunity to come and speak before you today. We have spoken several times in the past and I look forward to it each time.

So to get started, I just want to give a little overview of what we did with the presentation. Clearly a lot has happened over the last two years and actually we started two years on the 19th ago.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Is your mic on?

MR. MELITO:

Sorry?

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Is your mic on?

MR. LIPP:

Move closer.

MR. MELITO:

It's on. Is that better? Okay, so we're beginning our third year now with a much crisper, deeper and wiser understanding of Suffolk County, its operating environments, strengths and weaknesses

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and its strategic needs.

Our first year was dominated by the creation and understanding of two budget cycles during the height of the budget crisis. Our efforts additionally focused on finding the low-hanging fruit available for direct budget impacts as we explored deeper opportunities. Year two saw us broadening our scope and developing an incipient understanding of the County's critical issues and operating infrastructure. Significant project performance management resources were spent in planning for, standing up and eventually tuning the operation of the Traffic and Parking Violations agency.

Based on what we've discovered, we want to move towards a development of a performance-oriented culture that is self-sustaining and capable of evolving. And to this end technology will play a key role.

And I just want to read the words of Maryland's Governor, Martin O'Malley, who spoke recently at a Governor's conference regarding organizational change, performance and government excellence. And I quote, "It is people who make it happen, but common technology platforms make it possible. Understanding and harnessing the powerful connections in these human chains of delivery require the building of common platforms for progress. Technology has arrived at the point where these common platforms facilitate relentless collaborations." We are certain that the IT governance capabilities of our organization can have a transformational impact on our organization.

So during the last year we met with members of departments and we discussed strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and understood better their strategic interest and we learned a lot. We learned about the stresses in departments associated with --

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Mr. Melito, I don't want to interrupt you. Does the slideshow come along with the presentation?

MR. MELITO:

They will when I get to it.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Oh, you haven't gotten that far. All right. Thank you.

MR. MELITO:

You should be prepared for that, yeah. We learn about the stresses in the departments associated with the reduced workforce. We learned just how siloed the County is. We learned that how up to 'til now DOIT's capabilities have not been fully realized relative to the majority of IT initiatives across the County. We learned about a multitude of manual base systems. We learned about routine transactional processes that take priority over higher value functions. And we learned that the constituent interactions are problematic with no standardized way to track, review, analyze and respond to.

This year we'll be addressing these issues among others including creating a stronger infrastructure for human capital management. We want to use technology to support a process of performance measurement in the vein of CompStat in New York City and CityStat, which is in Baltimore, and then branched out into the State of Maryland. We are taking steps necessary to mobilize the County's biggest asset and that's its workforce. So our plan of action will evolve a focus on the key elements of people, process and technology.

So we prepared some slides to structure our presentation. We tried to stick to things that we thought would be of interest to this group. We are involved at different levels across multiple departments with various initiatives. We meet weekly to discuss strategies and goals. And

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Performance Management, quite frankly, is operating more like a self-reflective but active process as opposed to a traditional department that actually has people in it. Our goal is to take this process viral as time goes on.

The first slide, so, just to recap, we're onto the presentation, Performance Management is working in Suffolk County to make it an accessible-constituent-friendly operation, help develop and advance evidence-based decision-making, creating training platforms and developing performance metrics and identifying efficiency and cost-savings opportunities.

So data-driven decision-making is a watch word for what we're going to be doing this coming year. While we've implemented several business intelligence tools in 2013, in '14 we'll be expanding the system of data-driven decision-making Countywide. And, quite frankly, we'd like to capitalize on the success that we've had at the Traffic and Parking Violations Agency and use that as an example of what can be developed across the County; and the ways in which we're creating a centralized database there, keep that as what we would call a data mart. And a data mart is a standard database -- oops, I forget to move the slide, sorry -- is a standardized database that can serve as an anchor for expanding access to data across the County and into different departments.

We're slowly and deliberately improving communications and working on development of dashboards. We want to increase our use of business intelligence and we're going to be certainly working with the Presiding Officer's legislation to create performance-based contracting with major County vendors. We've introduced the concept. We'll be forming a working group to help introduce this to the outside agencies. And our next steps are define and codify certain key performance indicators that can then be added into these contracts. And then we'll be working with the working group to help them understand how to evaluate that information.

As I mentioned, we spent a lot of time with TPVA and we want to use that as a model throughout the County. And, you know, quite frankly, it started with months of research and going out and looking at other operations around Nassau and Suffolk Counties. We spent a lot of time in Nassau County TPVA, in many cases learning about what not to do. We also spent a lot of time in Southampton. We observed the operations. We explored the use of software that each municipality was using. We were able to select a piece of software that was very inexpensive that saved us probably about \$500,000 over the course of the next highest proposer in the software realm. The software is simple but it did help us to form the way we set up the original operations of the TPVA. And that helped us create the structure.

Once operational, over the last four to five months, we've been working very closely with Paul Margiotta and his staff to take that sense to the next level by getting deeper into the work streams and gaining a better understanding of a constituent's ebbs and flows, for example, service cycle, staffing allocations within that context.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Tom, can I stop you for a second, just ask you a quick question?

MR. MELITO:

Yes.

LEG. LINDSAY:

In your experience in what you've seen so far, is there any collaboration between departments throughout the County when it comes to performing any of these functions?

MR. MELITO:

From a -- well, what I'd like to do is address that from a technology point of view, after our first

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year, there is more than there was, but there is very little, quite frankly. And that's one of the goals of our group is to create much more of a sense of working together, that we share resources to accomplish common goals for one organization. And that is something that we need to do. We've all heard the term "being siloed". And Suffolk County is no different than many of the other municipalities around. There are a lot of different silos and over time we hope to try to break through those.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Could you describe from the high to -- the least technologically advanced departments to the most technologically advanced, how wide is that range, from the bottom to the top?

MR. MELITO:

Oh, the range is tremendous, quite frankly. I mean, you know, each -- when we came in, each department had pretty much its own dedicated IT staff. The Department of Social Services has done a very good job. They have a -- I can't tell you exactly how many, but they have several people devoted to that function. They have to work with New York State systems. And they've done a fairly good job. And I would say, you know, down to the level of -- Consumer Affairs was probably one of the weakest. We are working with them now, but they weren't able to really fully track licensing procedures, fully track who owed money, what fines were due, how much was outstanding and things of that nature. So it runs the gamut.

The big thing we found, quite frankly, more than that, was that the mix of skills that we had in terms of titles in technology-related positions were very concentrated in skill -- job titles that were very -- what I would say on the lower end of the spectrum, more from the business/analysis side. And so what we're doing is by doing the federated approach, we're able to understand that, provide more training to get people more up to speed on some of the more advanced techniques and then introduce new tools, like software -- like Business Intelligence and try to get people up to speed. So that's really where the challenge lies.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Okay. Thank you.

MR. MELITO:

Sure. The other areas that we spend a lot of time with at TPVA was assembling the multiple divisions of police personnel. We had to work very closely with the State -- State Police, the MTA Police, the Sheriff's Department, the Police Department as well as the SUNY Police Department to let them know how we would be operating, how we would expect them to cooperate with us, and what resources we would need from them. And that went very smoothly and we've had a lot of cooperation in that regard. So we've trained the staff. And I just want to offer kudos to the -- Office of Department of Public Works for their work in designing and overseeing the construction of the actual physical layout of the TPVA in the Dennison Building.

So over the last several months as that next level of analysis has begun, we've been able to reduce the wait times. I know many of you probably remember lines around the Dennison Building with people trying to get in. You no longer see those lines. We've reorganized the physical space inside. Sorry, I keep forgetting that. Am I in the right one? Yeah. Reorganize the physical space inside the TPVA to create more areas for waiting. We've instituted online payment capabilities. We've created a new website that has a lot more information, that has reduced the phone calls and has -- helps people understand how to interact with the TPVA. We've reduced -- we renegotiated the contract with the online payment contractor and we've reduced the fees payable -- that you would have to use if you want to use that service.

As you probably all know by now, we are open during lunch. We were able to analyze those seven

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various work streams, reallocate personnel and have part-time people available for working during lunch. So that definitely cleared up a lot of the line issues associated with the beginning of the afternoons. I'm sure you all know we're open on Thursday evenings as well. And we've really used the system to help us reallocate the way in which we schedule hearings and court dates so that there's more of an even flow of work coming across. So all in all, we've made a lot of improvements. It's still on our radar and we'll continue to work with Paul and his staff to make further improvements.

In 2013 we did introduce certain Business Intelligence tools in line with Bill's questions. We have Power Pivot installed in the Public Health Protection Area, Risk Management, Consumer Affairs and, of course, in TPVA.

In terms of IT federated models, we covered a little bit of this already. We have started to customize training to help us improve service delivery based on what we discovered in terms of our skill assessment. Wrong one. Thank you. We've collaborated with the Health Department and put in -- helped them put in the EMR system. And, quite frankly, we're just trying to work on changing the perception of IT from a support group to a partner in strategy development in Countywide coordination. And that's a process that's going to continue throughout.

We did some work with regard to County security. Assistant Deputy County Executive Errol Toulon has developed an active shooter training module -- you let me know -- an active shooter training module. We piloted it up on the 14th floor. Quite frankly, it's very sobering and and it's troubling that we have to actually think about these things. But we hope to roll that out to all of the other departments over the next couple of months. And Errol will go out personally in making those presentations.

At the request of the Chief Deputy County Executive, we are beginning a new Antidiscrimination, Harassment and Workplace Violence Prevention Program. We're going to be working with a consultant to help us do this. We've issued the RFP; awarded it. We had our first scoping meeting last week and we'll be forming a working group that will be made up of representatives from all the various departments. We'll roll out the training. And then those people will then be able to train people within the departments themselves.

We just jotted down a few numbers of -- somebody'll have to remind me -- a few bullets of savings and revenue enhancements. We did work with the Budget Office very closely and identified about \$13 million of capital closeout opportunities. These were situations where bonds had been issued for projects. And over the last several years, the projects were either abandoned and/or were not moving forward. We worked with the departments that the projects fell in. And we were able to take \$13 million, pay back those bonds -- and use the proceeds to directly go to the bottom line on the budget and pay debt service costs.

We renegotiated the medical contract in the Workers' Comp area that we had discussed last year. And so far we've saved about \$500,000 on that. We've done equipment auctions, etcetera. I'd like to say that by creating the TPVA, we've created an opportunity, an organism by which we were able to bring in revenue. So, so far just in the Traffic Violations we brought in over \$14 million in this year. And that's not for the full year, starting in April. And the end of last year, beginning of January 2013 we finished -- renegotiated Red Light Camera contract. We were able to increase our revenue share up to 58%. We're actually getting a little higher than that. And so far that looks like that's accounted for about \$7 million of extra revenues as well.

We've had a couple of projects going on in Office of DPW. We have implemented Just In Time Ordering. It's a process that we've done for our MRS purchases, which is maintenance, repair and supplies. We've done it in conjunction with a large vendor who helped us for free, Granger. And

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by doing that we eliminated steps from the process, but most importantly we reduced the amount of inventory that we have to keep in-house. So that saves us a lot of money. And it also gives us the ability to oversee what actually is being purchased on a much broader basis.

We've created new systems to speed receipt of critical mail from the Health Department to developers, designers and constituents. We are working very closely with the mail group headed up by Chuck {Joaquin}. We brought them into the Health Department. They were very helpful. Constituents were really having a hard time getting plans back to them in time to go through them. And we've been -- now introducing this group into other departments. We've had meetings down in the Department of Social Services, other mail intensive areas such as TPVA and we have already implemented some changes that have been of benefit.

Department of the Social Services, we've worked very closely with John O'Neill, the Commissioner over there. He works with us as often as he can on a performance management basis. And he had two -- in particular two POET teams. And POET stands for Partnering for Operational Efficiency and reduce paper work in the housing applications, which freed up a lot of resources in house. It was easier to fill out the application. It was also much easier to go through the application from a review point of view. And he's in the process of creating a database to automate reports selecting key metrics, etcetera, completely in line with the opportunities that we're looking to do as well.

So, of course, going forward in 2014 Performance Management would like to build on a momentum of the last two years. We will continue with our process improvement projects, implemented and inchoating, if you will, cultural change and trying to introduce more and more tools to maximize the capabilities of our human capital.

We've listed just a couple of projects at the end of the presentation to give you a sense of what we're doing now. We are currently engaged with the Office of Wastewater Management and going through the improvement process for the permitting, recognizing that this has direct impact on Suffolk County's economic development. We have been working very closely for the last two months with that group with in depth analysis for our work streams, processes and procedures. And our goal is to reduce the technical review time for these permits by 50%. Improvements will be developed on a closer -- now, in order to fully realize the improvements, we'll have to work much more closely with the building community. And we have spoken with them about this. And they are going to come in with us and we're going to work with them on a presentation in the next week or so.

As we all know, water quality is a significant priority for the Administration. We are working with the Water Quality people to identify and design a program in line with what was done in the Chesapeake Bay stat process, where we can actually develop permanence indicators based on levels of nitrogen and other pollutants in various areas. We can monitor them overtime and then see how things we're doing have an impact on those amounts. So that is definitely working in the next couple of months.

We are going to take a look at our payroll personnel system, which represents a huge opportunity to save money and to change the way we operate and to also free up resources that can be better used elsewhere. The current system we have has multiple payroll points; many, many staff -- for example, in DSS there are about 20 payroll clerks alone that need to maintain that system on a day-to-day basis. From a technology point of view we have maybe six people having to program on a repeated basis any changes in the contract, changes to the next year, etcetera. So we're using a lot of labor in keeping this thing going.

In addition, there really are not any input controls. So we don't have a great sense of that we're paying people appropriately in any given case. So a new system would enable us to have much

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tighter control over that. So we're hoping to engage, perhaps, a consultant to help with this particular issue; do an evaluation of the overall processing associated from a widescale approach all the way down to the bottom clerical level and help us develop what would be an ORI going forward so that we new what it is -- it's costing us now for this process; and then what we can save by putting a knew system in. And as this Legislature has shown, they are very much in favor of approving projects once there's a known ORI available and associated with that project. So that's what our intent is. This is a longer-term project, but we hope to have some definitive information on the cost of the system later on this year.

We are also working on an Early Payment Management Program. These are programs that have been done round -- actually around the world; the United Kingdom has a very successful one. We are working in conjunction with the Comptroller's Office and will be examining early payment provisions in our contracts. We've issued an RFP. Responses have been received and we're at the point where we're actually setting up a committee to review those responses. And what will happen is we'll analyze -- we'll have to analyze the payee demographics, if you will, negotiate the terms -- new terms for early payment savings, create templates, identify weaknesses in the process; and theoretically the consultant would then work with Permanence Management to implement changes into those individual processes that will allow us to reap the benefits. We suspect based on the analysis and the estimates that we've done on our payroll, on our payments, that we could probably save about \$18 million over the course of five years. And, by the way, on the payroll personnel system, I forgot to mention we estimate conservatively that a new system could probably save us in excess of \$10 million every year on an ongoing basis.

We are leading in some other process improvements projects. We are working to build a constituent response system in response to what I said earlier in the presentation, how it's difficult for us to catalog, review and respond to constituents. These systems have been built around the County. And there's no reason why Suffolk County shouldn't have something. It's the kind of thing as well that once we get it up and running, probably it will be rolled out to the Legislature as well to use it so that they could have the ability to track constituent inquiries, complaints and performance from that point of view. I should mention that all of the things we talk about with regard to performance measures ultimately will be rolled out to the Legislature as well.

We're working on expanding our Grants Management Program that's based on the one in the Health Department. We have a lot of grants that are being written by different departments and we don't quite have the functionality necessary to allow us to understand who's doing what and then making sure we're not tripping over one another. So that's another thing that we hope to have up early this year.

We are supporting Consumer Affairs in the development of the TLC. In particular we're helping them identify software that -- not unlike we did at TPVA, could be used as a platform for running the operation of the Department. And we hope to move shortly into the Vector Control with data decision making as well as vehicle maintenance, two areas that are completely in need.

From a technology point of view, as I mentioned, I've weaved technology throughout the presentation. We definitely want to expand the use of Business Intelligence tools. We want to develop more cross training, strengthen our overall security and definitely expand one of the assets we really have, which is our GIS mapping capabilities. And we're hoping to roll those out into -- work with other municipalities as well.

And in short we want to continue with the training. We did bring in Stony Brook University. We did a pilot program of management training in the Department of Labor. It went very well. We're evaluating that and seeing if there's a way that we can roll that out to other areas as well. The training itself was paid for by a grant, so we're looking for other opportunities like that. But training

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will be a significant part of where we go next year.

And then finally, we're just going to keep trying to make government, help government perform better, use data decision making and make Suffolk County one of the most valuable, employees and constituents alike. So that's where we are.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Thank you very much. We'll open it up to questions. Legislator Hahn.

LEG. HAHN:

I just want to point out that I believe the Treasurer's still here. And she heard the piece about Early Payment. So just make sure you're talking before we do that.

MR. MELITO:

Absolutely. We haven't done anything with it yet.

LEG. HAHN:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Legislator Schneiderman.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Tom, you talked a lot about data-driven decisions. You talked a lot about IT. I imagine you've been working very closely with the IT Department in all of this and with Commissioner Rodgers. Just a quick question, because I read in Newsday there were some subpoenas related to testimony here at the Legislature related to his position at Red Dog. Is there any -- anything we need to know, anything to be aware of? Is there any software that you've procured that there's a proprietary interest that he may have? I'm trying to read between the lines in this subpoena.

MR. MELITO:

Sure. I think the -- if you're referring to the article we all saw today, I think there's a lot of need to read between the lines. Because the first time I ever heard the word Red -- I think it's Red Dog, it was when I read the article, so I've never heard of it. I can't say any more emphatically, from our point of view, that there's absolutely nothing that's been procured and, you know, the records are there, so I don't --

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

You're not aware of any purchases where --

MR. MELITO:

I'm not -- not at all.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

-- there might be any --

MR. MELITO:

Not at all.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

-- financial interest?

MR. MELITO:

Not at all.

LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:

Okay. Appreciate that. Thank you.

MR. MELITO:

Sure.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Legislator Lindsay.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Tom, just one quick question. Have you had an opportunity to look at equipment maintenance contracts, that when the County purchases equipment and we buy these maintenance contracts on them, whether they be computers, phones, HVAC, have you had an opportunity to go through those contracts? My experience with them has been in the past a lot of times municipalities and even the private sector, they'll continue to pay on these contracts for equipment that's been long retired and doesn't even exist any more or isn't in service.

MR. MELITO:

Right. We actually are working with a consultant right now to go through existing contracts. We haven't pulled up any issues associated with the maintenance aspects of it, but we are looking at it. I'll probably have more for you on that in a couple of -- two or three months.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Are you also exploring the possibility of taking them off of those contracts and going to a time and material type basis?

MR. MELITO:

We have not gotten to that -- we have not gotten to that level yet.

LEG. LINDSAY:

That would be another area I'd ask you to look as well.

MR. MELITO:

Okay, sure.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Legislator McCaffrey.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Tom, has your team had a chance to look at our healthcare costs for our County employees? Is that something you've looked at?

MR. MELITO:

That is not something that we've been asked to do, no. We have not been involved in those healthcare issues. I think that's being handled through the Chief Deputy County Executive's Office.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Okay. Dr. Lipp, if you can tell us, just off the top of your head, what do we spend on healthcare costs for County employees?

MR. LIPP:

It's in excess of 300 million. I could look up the figure, but that's ballpark-ish.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

So there's a potential there for -- there's definitely a potential there for savings if we're able to, try to come up with something with that, then, also.

MR. LIPP:

Well, there have been over the last couple of years some agreements with the unions for some savings; in particular one of the big things was the drug plan. So we have a new Administrator for the plan. And unions have agreed to a savings of 17 million a year. And I believe it's in 2015 where we do the first look back to see if the 17 million is there or not. And if not, then they would have to supposedly come up with additional savings in the form, I guess, like adjustments in service provision. So one example that they've already used to do the savings is to expand on mail-ordered drug purchases as opposed to just going to your local pharmacy for anything that's a maintenance drug.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Okay. And that would be available, right, to us if we needed to --

MR. LIPP:

We can have a conversation. And depending on what you need, I'll see what we can get for you.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Very good. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

On that point, Legislator McCaffrey, I think it's important to note that our employee medical health is governed by a body that makes -- that's made up of the union leadership of the various bargaining units as well as, I think, a member from the County Executive's Office. And any changes to the health plan need to be done through the collective bargaining arrangements. They are required, and correct me if I'm wrong, Dr. Lipp, to take a look and have an entity -- an outside entity do a review to make sure that our plan is more cost effective than going with a NYSHP, the New York State Health Plan.

MR. LIPP:

Well, there is an Employee Mental Health Plan Committee. And it meets typically once a month and -- Budget Review Office has a non-voting member as an observer on that meeting -- on the Committee so -- and we could see what's going on there. We can have some conversations.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

And I am correct that there's a -- I don't know if it's an annual or biannual review to make sure that our self-insured plan is more cost-effective than going with the New York State NYSHP plan.

MR. LIPP:

I'm not aware of that. I know that in-house that could be true but I'm not aware of that.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

I know I've seen a couple of those reports.

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MR. LIPP:

I know that I've -- well, that could be true. I'm not saying. I'm just not aware. I know that we have in-house a few years ago tried to estimate whether or not we're doing better or worse than signing on with them. And part of the problem is trying to equate what the State plan is to what we have; it's just like an apple to oranges comparison.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

So that's a jointly-administered plan, then, correct; there's equal number of trustees from the County side as there are from the labor side as well?

MR. LIPP:

I believe it's mostly labor actually, so it's not an equal number. I could get you, you know, what the breakdown is. But I don't know off the top of my head, but I'm pretty sure that it's more heavily-weighted labor.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Yeah, I'll follow up with you. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Okay. Seeing no other questions, Mr. Melito, thank you for coming.

I know Legislator Cilmi who regularly likes to get into it with you unfortunately had to leave. He had another meeting and he did say that he would be reaching out to -- he did have a number of questions and was going to try to take them offline as best as possible.

MR. MELITO:

Absolutely correct. That's fine.

CHAIRMAN CALARCO:

Good. Thank you very much. We appreciate it. And thank you everyone for their indulgences. We are getting out before the next Committee, but not by very much. Thank you very much. We are adjourned.

**THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 12:20 PM
{ } DENOTES SPELLED PHONETICALLY**

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