

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

VETERANS & SENIORS COMMITTEE

of the

Suffolk County Legislature

Minutes

A special joint meeting of the Health & Human Services Committee and the Veterans & Seniors Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, Veterans Memorial Highway, Hauppauge, New York, on May 24, 2006, to discuss the matter of the Capital Budget.

Members Present:

Legislator Eli Mystal • Chairman/Health & Human Services
Member/Veterans & Seniors

Legislator Steve Stern • Chairman/Veterans & Seniors
Vice•Chair/Health & Human Services

Legislator Jack Eddington • Vice•Chair/Veterans & Seniors
Member/Health & Human Services

Legislator Edward Romaine • Member/Health & Human Services
Veterans & Seniors

Legislator John Kennedy • Member/Health & Human Services
Veterans & Seniors

Members Not Present:

Legislator Cameron Alden • Member/Veterans & Seniors

Also in Attendance:

Rich Baker • Deputy Clerk/Suffolk County Legislature

John Ortiz • Senior Budget Analyst/Budget Review Office

Diane Dono • Budget Analyst/Budget Review Office

Verna Donnan • Budget Analyst/Budget Review Office

Barbara LoMoriello • Aide to Presiding Officer Lindsay
Fran Siems • Aide to Presiding Officer Lindsay
Deborah Harris • Aide to Legislator Stern
Lora Gellerstein • Aide to Legislator Cooper
Ben Zwirn • Assistant County Executive
Richard Chamberlain • County Executive Assistant
Carmine Chiusano • County Executive's Budget Office
Janet DeMarzo • Commissioner/Department of Social Services
Roger Barbaro • Director•Housing & Adult Services/DSS
Tom Contegni • Asst.to Director•Housing & Adult Services/DSS
Ken Knappe • Client Benefits/Department of Social Services.
Dr. David Graham • Chief Deputy Commissioner/Dept of Health Services
Diane Weyer • Budget & Finance/Dept of Health Services
Jan Moore • Director of Health Administration/DHS
All Other Interested Parties

Minutes Taken By:

Alison Mahoney • Court Stenographer

(*The meeting was called to order at 11:38 A.M.*)

CHAIRMAN MYSTAL:

Let's open the Capital Budget meeting on Health and Human Services.
Please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Salutation

We are going to start with Social Services because they only have one
Capital Project, so we're going to let them have the first crack at this. It
should be sweet and simple and then we'll attack all the Health. Go ahead,
Janet, you got the floor

COMMISSIONER DEMARZO:

Thank you very much, Chairman Mystal. The Department of Social Services
has a Capital Project 6011 for a Tier II Homeless Shelter, it's in its third year
for the Capital Budget next year. We have appropriated funds for the design

and construction and •• oh, for the design and we'd like •• we're here today to say that although homelessness over the last couple of years has had peaks and valleys and we're right now in our valley as they go, they go up into the high 500's and they go to the mid 200's where they are right now, we know that there will be another peak coming because history tells us so. So we're here today to ask that the County Executive submitted it in budget, Budget Review Office supported it, the Department supports it and we're here to ask for your support in the process.

CHAIRMAN MYSTAL:

Yes, Mr. Kennedy, go right ahead.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good morning, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER DEMARZO:

Good morning.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Tell me again just a little bit about this project; how many beds will it be?

COMMISSIONER DEMARZO:

The proposal was for a hundred, up to a hundred beds and it's to be located in the western part of the County.

LEG. KENNEDY:

So has there actually been formal planning that's been started with this? You talk about I guess the fact that there's been funds appropriated and we're looking for continuation in this Capital Project; is that correct?

COMMISSIONER DEMARZO:

Right, we're looking for the construction dollars for next year for 2007. Yes, the process has begun, there has been an effort to identify sites to develop preliminary design plans and to look at the possibility of developing an environmental impact statement once land is chosen.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Again, you know, forgive me for the base questions, but I guess the reason that you're focusing on the western end is because that's the majority of where the homeless population comes?

COMMISSIONER DEMARZO:

Correct.

LEG. KENNEDY:

And you want proximity for movement back and forth for service delivery or for ••

COMMISSIONER DEMARZO:

Okay. Our existing Tier II Shelter is in the Bellport area which is in the eastern part of Brookhaven. When you look at the distribution of homeless families, we have a significant amount that come from the western towns. One of our requirements is to keep families as close to their community of origin as possible in an effort to relocate them back to that community upon finding permanent housing, and also to keep continuity of community support, child education, perhaps employment. So the way our homeless families come to us, most of them are from the western end.

LEG. KENNEDY:

You mentioned HELP Suffolk. HELP Suffolk is, in essence, a not•for•profit, private entity that operates this homeless shelter for the County on behalf of the County I guess on the eastern end.

COMMISSIONER DEMARZO:

Correct. We have a service agreement with HELP USA and HELP Suffolk is the local entity that runs •• that provides the services at the facility, they run the whole Tier II Shelter which has 76 families there.

LEG. KENNEDY:

And is this what the department envisions for this west end facility as well?

COMMISSIONER DEMARZO:

Yes, we do envision to do an RFP for a service provider upon construction, completion of construction.

LEG. KENNEDY:

And how much is it that you would be seeking, I guess, in construction funding in '07?

COMMISSIONER DEMARZO:

Seventeen million.

LEG. KENNEDY:

What is it, a two-story, three-story facility?

COMMISSIONER DEMARZO:

Seventeen point five million. Yes, we're looking at two stories. We're looking at a facility that looks similar in a lot of ways to the HELP Suffolk. Basically the way it is is they look like really tiny garden apartments. There's two stories, there's three buildings, they're small units which have a kitchen/sitting area, they have a bedroom in the back and they have a bathroom, so it's really like a little efficiency unit. And we can either •• you know, some of them allow us to block off, if it's a small family they really have a studio, we block off the back room and it connects so if we have families of five or six we can have those two bedrooms for them, or if there's a family of two then they just have that little efficiency, so it gives the family their own space which is a good transition to permanent housing as opposed to motels or congregate shelters and there's a lot of on-site services there for the families.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Just two other questions. First, I assume from a cost perspective the per •family cost for residents or individuals in HELP Suffolk must be far less than what the department pays in order to place somebody in a rental housing unit or emergency housing things, such as that?

COMMISSIONER DEMARZO:

Well, permanent housing is always the most cost effective solution, but they're with us because they are unable to find permanent housing so there is no rental housing. As the other homeless placements go, motels, congregates and so forth, this is the most efficient model that we have.

LEG. KENNEDY:

The other question, I guess, is in your analysis as far as looking at constructing, have you contemplated retrofit for existing buildings? The thought that comes to mind is Brunswick which just recently, I guess, shut down and is, for all intents and purposes, non-existent?

COMMISSIONER DEMARZO:

We did look at the Brunswick facility but it was ••

CHAIRMAN MYSTAL:

Brunswick is a privately-owned facility.

LEG. KENNEDY:

So it's not something that would be viable for them.

CHAIRMAN MYSTAL:

It's not owned by the County, it's privately owned and it's still in litigation, the building itself is still in litigation as to the ownership of it. And when it becomes available, when that suit is settled, if the County wants to buy it, it will cost you about 40 million.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Hey, there we go. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Madam Commissioner.

CHAIRMAN MYSTAL:

Anybody else? Good-bye.

COMMISSIONER DEMARZO:

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN MYSTAL:

That was nice. The Health Department is up; anybody for the Health Department? I was going to adjourn the meeting, I didn't see anybody. Good morning, Dr. Graham.

CHIEF DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GRAHAM:

Good morning.

CHAIRMAN MYSTAL:

How are you doing?

CHIEF DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GRAHAM:

Good. You?

CHAIRMAN MYSTAL:

Okay. You have the floor.

MS. MOORE:

Okay. I just want to make ••

MS. MAHONEY:

Jan, can you pull the microphone closer, please?

MS. MOORE:

Is that okay? Okay. We just have a couple of comments we would like to make regarding the Capital Budget.

First off, the County Executive's Recommended Budget met all of our critical needs with one exception; Capital Project 1132 which provides equipment for Medical Examiner. In 2009 we requested a replacement for a gas chromatograph maspectrometer; this is an older unit which we use to analyze controlled substances, we request that that be put back in the budget for subsequent years.

In addition, the Budget Review Office made several recommendations of restored funding taken out by the Budget Office. While we support the return of these funds, these are not critical to our needs and they are Capital Project 3205 which is the purchase of equipment for EMS, this included \$45,000 to finish purchasing the automated external defibrillators for the remaining County•owned and rented buildings pursuant to Resolution 950 •2001. If this money is not put back in the Capital Budget, we will be putting it into our 2007 Operating Budget which we hope you will support at

that time.

In addition, Capital Project 4059 which is improvements to the John J. Foley Skilled Nursing Facility, Budget Review included money for the Alzheimer's Garden, sidewalk and entrance renovations and security cameras. Again, we support this but it's not critical to our needs.

The Budget Office •• the Budget Review Office did make a few recommendations which we do not support. In Capital Project 4055, they included \$450,000 for the purchase of a mammography unit in Shirley; we believe we already have adequate funding for this unit. Resolution No. 1092 of 294•2004 included \$50,000 for the repair of the mammography van and \$150,000 per mammography unit for the Shirley, Patchogue and Tri •Community. Unfortunately, there is no space in our Patchogue or Tri •Community Centers for a mammography unit. So what we were planning to do was to take the \$150,0000 allocated to the three centers, combine it and put that \$450,000, purchase funding for our Shirley site, our Shirley Health Center. We are currently preparing a BSR to determine the cost to renovate the Shirley site so we can accommodate that unit.

And our last concern that Budget Review did was the Budget Review indicated that several of our projects should be changed from bonded money to pay•as•you•go. While we recognize the option of the County Executive and the Legislature on how to fund Capital Projects, we're concerned that as pay•as•you•go funds are very limited that many of our projects may not be funded. That's the only comments we have on the budget. Do you have any questions?

CHAIRMAN MYSTAL:

I'm sure we do.

MS. MOORE:

I'm sure.

CHAIRMAN MYSTAL:

We just passed a bill basically taking the money from pay•as•you•go last week, so.

MS. MOORE:

Well, many of these pay•as•you•go was for 2007, some were 2008, 2009.

CHAIRMAN MYSTAL:

There may not be a whole bunch of money in pay•as•you•go for next year.

MS. MOORE:

Well, that was our concern.

CHAIRMAN MYSTAL:

In the Operating Budget.

MS. MOORE:

That's our concern.

CHAIRMAN MYSTAL:

Legislator Romaine.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Good morning.

CHIEF DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GRAHAM:

Good morning.

MS. MOORE:

Good morning.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Almost good afternoon. You did not support the funding recommendation of BRO for EMS; just go into what that funding was about so we could make that clear.

MS. MOORE:

It's not that we didn't support the funding, we had requested the funding,

we support the funding, but if it's taken out we're going to ask for it in our 2007 Operating Budget because it's \$40,000. So it was put in for G funding, we will put it in the operating budget if it's not included and we just ask for your support in the Operating Budget.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Okay. I'm a Legislator now, I'm thinking as an administrator; if I was sitting there I'd be pushing for it in the Capital figuring if it didn't make it in the capital I'd get it in the operating. I wouldn't put all my eggs in one basket; just my point of view, you know.

MS. MOORE:

I agree. However ••

LEG. ROMAINE:

You have a different approach. I mean, I had a lot of programs when I was a department head and I made sure that if they weren't in the Capital I'd have a second bite at the apple, some of them in the operating. But, you know, I can't criticize that approach, I mean, it's just a different approach. Let me talk about the Alzheimer's; how many Alzheimer's patients are there at John J. Foley, on the average?

MS. MOORE:

I believe we have 80 beds.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Eighty beds for Alzheimer's and you don't think cameras would help or alarms would help?

MS. MOORE:

We're not saying •• we asked for the cameras, we supported the cameras, we asked for them, in fact, we asked for them sooner, however we don't think it's critical at this point.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Okay. And that's a recommendation from the Health Department, you don't believe it's a critical need to monitor Alzheimer's patients.

MS. MOORE:

Not at all, we have electric devices that monitor where they travel. However, you know, as I said, we support that, we just •• you know, we had to prioritize what we think is the most important to us. Yes we supported it, yes we requested it, and if it's given to us we'll be very grateful.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Okay. Let's talk about mammography units, because this is something I'm going to be talking about in a few weeks and I thought we should maybe have this discussion now. Wasn't a digital mammography unit approved for the Riverhead County Center?

MS. MOORE:

Yes, it was.

LEG. ROMAINE:

And when was that approved?

MS. MOORE:

I have the resolution here, it is resolution •• it's Resolution 990•2005.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Of 2005.

MS. MOORE:

I'm sorry; is this •• yeah, 2005.

LEG. ROMAINE:

2005 and that was appropriating the money because it was in the 2005 Capital Program.

MS. MOORE:

Yes.

LEG. ROMAINE:

And that money was appropriated; where are we with that project now a

year later?

MS. MOORE:

Actually ••

MR. ZWIRN:

I don't think it was in the budget. We had to find offsets for it, as I recall.

MS. MOORE:

This is not in the budget?

MR. ZWIRN:

If I might, Mr. Chairman. I recall the two •• Legislator Romaine wasn't here when we had this debate, it was Legislator Caracciolo had asked for a another mammography van to be purchased by the County and the Health Department at that time said, you know, a mammography van does not have the best technology today, we would be better off with a digital unit that was stationary. So Legislator Caracciolo went back and we came up with offsets, we worked with the County Exec's Office to come up with the offsets, and Legislator Kennedy was involved with this as well; correct me if I'm wrong, but this is my recollection. And our problem has been, as it was at the time, was the space and where to put it. It's a large machine and we didn't have space in the Riverhead Health Center to actually put this machine and that has been an ongoing •• that was the problem then and it may remain the problem now, it's just having the space.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Thank you, Ben, for the update. Obviously you're having space problems with other mammography units for other health centers. I mean, I would think that with one in eight, one in nine chance of getting breast cancer that it would be very, very important to have these digital mammography units installed as quickly as possible, even if it meant doing an addition or leasing additional space; I don't think you own these buildings, you usually lease buildings other than the County Center. But there was no space despite the fact that there's a renovation going on in the County Center that could be identified, space that might be •• that is not surplus space?

MR. ZWIRN:

Well, DPW actually went out when we were having discussions with the Title Examiners, we were raising the license agreements there and they were very unhappy and DPW actually •• so that space could have been used and it was considered at that time, but ultimately the Title Examiners, or at least the vast majority of them decided to stay on, so we decided to look elsewhere. But at that time, in the health facility that was there, there was no space available. And that was a problem that was part of the whole discussion when we had it back in 2005, it was a great idea, we've got to have, you know, the physical plant to have •• to be able to place it and that was never resolved even back then, even though the resolution was approved and the funding appropriated.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Well, I guess it's a matter of priorities.

MR. ZWIRN:

No, no, not true, it's a question of planning. And the fact is is that when the bill came through, Legislator Caracciolo didn't have an idea of where it was going to go, he just said let's go buy a machine and we'll put it somewhere, but the fact is there's a Space Management Committee, there's a whole process in government that you have to go through to find the space to put these things.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Well, I'm sure you're aware that we're one of the few counties that allows private entities to use government space that hasn't been declared surplus.

MR. ZWIRN:

Well, the County Executive ••

LEG. MYSTAL:

Excuse me. Okay, let me see if I can refocus this. We are here to talk about the Capital budget.

LEG. ROMAINE:

Right.

LEG. MYSTAL:

I don't want to get into the debate of space management, so please ••

LEG. ROMAINE:

Right. My concern ••

LEG. MYSTAL:

•• see if we can refocus the discussion on the Capital Projects that are on the books that we are trying to look at to see if they're viable or not viable.

LEG. ROMAINE:

One sentence, Mr. Chairman, and then I will conclude.

CHAIRMAN MYSTAL:

And the discussion on the space we can leave for later.

LEG. ROMAINE:

My point was that I think mammography machines and digital mammography machines that this Legislature appropriates money for with good intentions are not being located because of space and that in a way is a frustrating thing as a member of the Legislature because we all try to do the right thing by our constituents and we're not seeing it come to fruition. And with that I'll end. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN MYSTAL:

Thank you.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Mr. Chair.

CHIEF DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GRAHAM:

I would like to add one thing, just to address Mr. Romaine. Just to show you how important it is to have a mammography unit, just for your own information, within a week or two we will have most of the equipment arriving in our Coram Health Center for the digital mammography, so that

would be our second fixed or stable unit, mammography unit. We also have one at the Brentwood Health Center and our plan is to have one on the east end as well, plus the mammo van, so that's certainly a direction we're going to and we want to see that completed as soon as possible.

LEG. ROMAINE:

I'm happy to hear it.

CHAIRMAN MYSTAL:

Thank you. Legislator Kennedy.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. My concerns or questions were also going to go towards the mammography matters as well. And Mr. Zwirn, I guess, you know, indicated it very well, when we talk specifically about the Riverhead Center, Legislator Romaine has mentioned some areas, you will recall that I spoke also about space that might be available up on the second floor. I even, you know, theorized that there may be some ability to go ahead and move across the hall there; right now we have a suite of rooms that are dedicated towards some conference areas and things like that with the Legislature.

But more importantly, I guess, what I heard Ms. Moore talk about was an administrative decision to pool funds because of the constraints at Tri•Community in Patchogue and that, similar to what Legislator Romaine said, troubles me, particularly because of what Dr. Graham's comments are which are so cogent and potent I guess, that all science indicates that the precision associated with the test comes at a much higher level with fixed base equipment. So again, I guess I'd go back to you and say I'm concerned that administratively you're electing not to go ahead and explore alternatives for Tri•Community in Patchogue and pool the funding for the Shirley area. Why aren't we able to go ahead and look at some alternatives there?

MS. MOORE:

Well, one of the problems is that we were given \$150,000 to purchase the item, each item, the item costs \$450,000, so for us to move ahead with Shirley we need the money. And as that, we have the space, we thought it's

best to go ahead with what we've got and address the other issues as we can.

LEG. KENNEDY:

But again, I'll go back to you I guess from this perspective here, and please, I don't pose to speak for my colleagues, but when I make a decision as far as authorizing funding for a particular piece of equipment, I try to do it based on what's presented to me from the department as the experts as far as what the price tag is going to be. If subsequently you go back and you find that for whatever reason, either we did not appropriate enough, the information that you were provided I guess was ambiguous or whatever, I'd ask you to come back and say, "We thought it was this, we found it's now this, we actually need this in order to get it." I don't think that the issue of 200,000 not being available to site a mammo unit at Tri•Community or at Patchogue should go into the administrative decision making to say, "Well, we only have 450, therefore we'll elect to only construct in one area." My understanding and my thinking is, again, I'll go back to what Dr. Graham has said, it's critical equipment, it saves lives and it's the best testing that can be had by fixed base. So I •• similar to what Mr. Romaine said as far as I guess from an administrative perspective •• again, having been on that side for a lot of years •• I'd be back to say •• knock, knock, knock •• "Guess what. We found out that we need this much more." We talk about matters of money all the time.

We have to prioritize. Every time we meet we make decisions, but if you come and you say, "We need this much money in order to go ahead and site it at that unit," we all get the opportunity to make the decision. If you don't bring it to us and pose and make the decision based only on, "This is what was allocated," you obviate our opportunity to make that decision to implement the policy that we believe strongly in.

So I guess that's my point as far as this administrative decision making regarding pooling that; that troubles me.

MS. MOORE:

I think we were planning on coming back with a resolution to say what we were planning on doing, we're just looking to all the costs at the moment. It's going to be several months before we find what the cost is to renovate

Shirley, but I think our intention was to come back with a resolution and say we're going to pool the funds.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Well, again, I appreciate the fact that you'd be coming back to us for Shirley, but it also sounds like administratively you've omitted then or taken a walk on Tri•Community and Patchogue, and that's where my concern lies. And then I guess I'll reference the fact that then we go back, you know, 15 months now as far as what the decision was with the unit out in Riverhead.

MR. ZWIRN:

The problem out in Riverhead has been space to put these units in. You know, the County Executive, it was in his bill originally, he supported the bill.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Yes, he did.

MR. ZWIRN:

But the timing came from Legislator Caracciolo before there was space to put it. I mean, nobody was going to say, "Don't spend the money, don't buy the unit," but practically speaking you just can't put it under a canvas tent, it has to be placed in a position where people can use it and use it comfortably and safely.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Let me ask this, then, from the procedural perspective, and I appreciate that, we've all been through it, we all know it. Has this been put before the Space Committee as a request?

MR. ZWIRN:

I believe it has, yes.

MS. MOORE:

Yes, we've submitted •• we've requested 10,000 square feet for the unit.

LEG. KENNEDY:

And what has Space Committee's determination been?

MR. ZWIRN:

I don't know. I'll find out and I'll get back to you right away, I don't know.

LEG. KENNEDY:

I have a lot of respect for the administrative process, as you know.

MR. ZWIRN:

Absolutely.

LEG. KENNEDY:

But I also have little respect for something that sits and goes on interminably because parties can't come to a decision.

MR. ZWIRN:

Well, that's true. But we also •• and here is the Bay Shore Health Clinic. Space Management has met, you know, on this for over a year and, you know, it has looked at a number of sites and a number of •• and just because they couldn't find anything that was acceptable didn't mean they weren't looking, you know, they weren't doing their job in a responsible and hard working manner. Sometimes it's just not that easy to come up with, you know, the right space and the right price and the right location so? I presume •• it's a pretty hard working group, from what I understand.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Let's put it this way.

MR. ZWIRN:

But you've had to get your Legislative Offices approved and you know that sometimes there's a lot that they do.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Information is power, though. It took me six months to find out how much it might cost to renovate space that I wanted to try to move to that would

have essentially been cost free.

MR. ZWIRN:

I understand.

LEG. KENNEDY:

A hundred grand to renovate space that's cost-free doesn't wash. But, you know, nevertheless, I think •• I'd like to know what the Space Committee has done so far as far as the Riverhead site, and I'd also like to see something coming forth from the department that takes another look at the ability to go ahead and site at Patchogue or Tri-Community and what the cost would be.

MR. ZWIRN:

Okay, I'll make the •• Mr. Chairman, I'll come back before the Health Committee before then to let you know what Space Management has been doing with the Riverhead Center and the unit.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. And then the other part of that request, though, too, goes to I guess obviously of course the County Executive's Office but the department as well, as far as taking a second look, a fresh look or something that gives us some of the concretes associated with those fixed units and those two sites. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN MYSTAL:

That's it?

LEG. KENNEDY:

Yes.

CHIEF DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GRAHAM:

Just to keep this in perspective to show you the value of digital mammography units, there are only seven in the County currently out of 71 facilities that have mammography units, so it's a very rare instrument, a very valuable instrument. And the fact that we're planning and hope to have two or three of them in the County just shows that our planning

efforts, how much we value the importance of these mammography units and we should find the •• and complete the effort.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Doctor, in deference to the Chair, I'll attempt not to go ahead and beat this dead horse too much more. But nevertheless, I can't give up the opportunity to go ahead and have you advise us from a scientific perspective. Seven units out of 71 in the County.

CHIEF DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GRAHAM:

Correct.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Women who need to have these tests done all the time. What is the measure of reliability or benefit, if you will, for digital as compared to the balance of the units that are out there?

CHIEF DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GRAHAM:

Yes, the digital mammography has three major advantages over the current instruments that are used in mammography. One is the capability to transmit the images to expert radiographic medical centers like the Mayo Clinic, Cleveland Clinic, John Hopkins Hospital; that would be one major advantage.

The second advantage would be the ability to manipulate and focus in on the image itself so you can enlarge a image, you can target a very suspicious lesion, that's a very significant advantage. And the third would be the capability to store it with ease. Those are three major advantages.

The National Cancer Institute is currently involved in a major study going on since 2001 involving 50,000 women on trying to determine the overall clinical advantages of the results from these digital mammographies versus standard mammographies, and that hasn't been decided yet but there are some preliminary findings. But those are some major issues that you should keep in mind.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Thank you, Doctor. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN MYSTAL:

Thank you. Anything else? We're done here. Thank you very much. We're adjourned.

(*The meeting was adjourned at 12:08 P.M.*)

***Legislator Elie Mystal, Chairman
Health & Human Services***

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