

**HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
OF THE
SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE**

MINUTES

A meeting of the Human Services 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 December 12, 2012.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Leg. DuWayne Gregory, Chairman
Leg. Kara Hahn, Vice Chair
Leg. Kate M. Browning
Leg. Lou D'Amaro

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Renee Ortiz, Chief Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
George Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature
Sarah Simpson, Assistant Counsel to the Legislature
Robert Lipp, Deputy Director/Budget Review Office
Joe Muncey, Budget Review Office
Paul Perillie, Aide to Leg. Gregory
Rick Brand, Newsday
Michael Pitcher, Aide to Presiding Officer
Justin Littell, Aide to Leg. D'Amaro
Marge Acevedo, Aide to Presiding Officer Lindsay
Marie Berkowski, County Executive Aide
Gregory Blass, Commissioner/Department of Social Services
Linda O'Donohoe, DSS
Lieutenant Commander Forret Woodward, US Naval Sea Cadet Corps
Thomas Vaughn, County Executive Assistant III
Julian Pessier, appointee/Teen Pregnancy Advisory Board
And all other interested parties

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Diana Flesher, Court Stenographer

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 10:06 AM

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Welcome to the Health and Human Services Committee. Will you all please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator Browning.

SALUTATION

Again, welcome. In a minute -- we're actually going to go to the agenda and do our bills. And then we'll have our presentation, because we don't want to keep -- we have a member waiting for an appointment. We don't want to keep people here unnecessarily and get them out of the way.

TABLED RESOLUTIONS

So, we're going to go to Tabled Resolutions if that's okay with everyone. I call **IR 2095, To appoint member to the Teen Pregnancy Advisory Board (Julian Pessier)**. Please come forward.

DR. PESSIER:

Good morning.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Good morning. All right. Welcome, sir.

DR. PESSIER:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Please introduce yourself and just briefly state your background.

DR. PESSIER:

Yeah. My name is Dr. Julian Pessier. I'm a clinical psychologist and the Associate Director of the Counseling Center at Stony Brook University.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Okay. Does anybody have any questions? Dr. Pessier is being appointed to the Teen Pregnancy Advisory Board. How do you feel you can assist in that capacity?

DR. PESSIER:

Well, I have a lot of prospective. We see about 1600 students a year at Stony Brook's Counseling Center. And I have a lot of perspective as the -- to be the higher ed rep on the Teen Pregnancy Advisory Board on the trajectory of where a lot of the students and the kids in question -- I work with students past the junior high and high school age and so I've gained a lot of perspective on what -- on what kids who have been through with teen pregnancy or who have had friends or family who have been through that. I gain a lot of perspective on what they think about at that time of their lives a few years out, once they get to -- once they get to college and they're looking back on that time and some of the circumstances that both may have gotten them into a vulnerable situation as well as circumstances that might have gotten them out of a vulnerable situation, so.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Okay, great. Legislator Hahn.

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LEG. HAHN:

And certainly the age group of the students you deal with are still within our target.

DR. PESSIER:

Yeah.

LEG. HAHN:

So, you know, we absolutely welcome your expertise and we thank you for your willingness to serve.

DR. PESSIER:

It's my pleasure.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Okay. Do I have a motion?

LEG. HAHN:

Yes, motion.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Motion to approve by Legislator Hahn, second by Legislator D'Amaro. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **(VOTE: 4-0-0-0)**

Thank you, sir. You are approved. You don't have to come to the General Meeting. And congratulations.

DR. PESSIER:

Thank you very much:

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Okay, the last resolution on the agenda is Introductory Resolution **2179, Accepting and appropriating \$175,104 in 100% Federal funding under the Shelter Plus Care Grant Renewal Program from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development and authorizing a contract with United Veterans Beacon House, Inc. (Co. Exec.)** I make a motion to approve and place on the Consent Calendar.

LEG. HAHN:

Second.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Second by Legislator Hahn. Does anybody have any questions? All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **(VOTE: 4-0-0-0)** Okay.

We're done with the agenda. We don't have any cards, but is there anyone in the audience that would like to come forward and make a statement? Nope. Okay.

PRESENTATION

All right. Commander, you're up.

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

Good morning.

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CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Good morning.

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

I am open to your questions.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Good morning, Commander Woodward. I invited you here today because we've met several times. You work at the Armed Services Center in East Farmingdale, which is in my district. But you have -- you have young people.

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

Yes.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Cadets that are actually across Suffolk County and Nassau County as well.

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Right? And how many -- just explain briefly what the Cadet Program is and what you do and --

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

All right. Just briefly about me, I'm the -- and it's not about me but just so you know, I'm the Director for the Region -- Empire Region 03-4 US Naval Sea Cadet Corps. My area of responsibility entails the New York City, the five -- the boroughs, the entirety of Long Island, Westchester County and the northern area of New Jersey. I currently have eight Sea Cadet units active within those areas. And quite frankly with the number of -- those cadets or those potential cadets on Long Island, who want to be a part of the program, I could start easily two more units if I had the adult volunteers to do so. We are a volunteer program, that being the crux of finding responsible adults.

I, too, was a Sea Cadet back in 1967 so I have gone full circle from after a forty year career in the military and federal law enforcement. I've retired and I'm back up in New York and trying to develop the program to its -- to a level that is worthy of Long Island.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Now, you have -- how many cadets do you have in your program?

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

I have eight units. And, I'm sorry, I don't have the count, but I have about 67 cadets out of the New York -- New York Division, which is out of Northport. I have about 57 cadets out of the Farmingdale unit. We just started a new unit at the Long Island Maritime Museum that currently has about 27 cadets. And then I have a unit in Westchester that's about 40 cadets. We have units also in -- operating out of Floyd Bennett Field, Staten Island and two units in Northern New Jersey that constitute about 60 to 70 cadets combined.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Okay. Now if you can just explain -- I know you handed out some literature -- if you can just explain what the age groups are and what -- you know, what are the things that -- what's beneficial about the program for this age group.

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

Yes, sir. The Naval Sea Cadet Corps is a volunteer -- completely volunteer youth program. It's the

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Navy's Youth Program. And if I may go back to some of the history, the Naval Sea Cadet Naval has existed for the last 300 plus years across the globe in various countries. In 1958 the Navy -- Chief of Naval Operations determined that there was a need for a Navy-supported program to teach young adults responsibility, self-reliance, educate them on the benefits of the nautical environment and service to the United States.

And a study was -- the Navy League of the United States was asked to put on a study of programs that would be appropriate for that kind of venue. And they looked at the Navy League Programs across the globe and decided that that was the appropriate type of program. In 1963 the Naval Sea Cadet Corps was chartered by an act of Congress as a non-profit youth -- volunteer youth organization sponsored by the Navy and the Navy League of the United States. We currently have about 320 units across the country and currently enrolled approximately 12,000 Sea Cadets.

We are probably -- I like to refer to us as the Navy's best kept secret. When everyone thinks about -- we have -- our Cadets are high-school age basically. When you think about high school age Cadets and the programs such as ours, you generally think the ROTC, the Navy Junior ROTC Program. You don't generally think about the Naval Sea Cadet Corp. We are pretty much a word-of-mouth organization. And that's why I go out to reach out to these kind of organizations to let you know that we're out there and we're out there for your kids and your community.

As far as success rate goes, we have followed the statistics at the Naval Academy. And the number of currently enrolled midshipmen at the Naval Academy in Annapolis that were former NJROTC is about 1%. The percentage of former Naval Sea Cadets is right about 12%. So even though we're not the first word -- the first organization on the tip of your tongue, we are a very effective organization. And we operate solely on -- at the local level unit -- solely on enrollments and contributions from the community and corporate that we're able to drum up on our own.

Congress and the Navy does provide about a \$2 million stipend for the headquarters level operation which covers summer training. And if you look in your 2010 Annual Report to congress, you'll see some of the multitudes of programs that we offer to the Sea Cadets across the nation. The -- those programs are very affordable because of that stipend that we receive from Congress. It keeps the cost of enrollment down, although none of that stipend meets or is extended out to local units. That's strictly for summer training. Local units we're completely on your own for developing our funding to support our program.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Great. Well, looking at some of the training, you have basic and/or advanced airmen training, aviation ground school, amphibious operations training, culinary arts, field training, Homeland security, fire fighting, search and rescue. They not all available -- they're available in certain states, but there's a multitude of different programs and trainings that are available for the Cadets.

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

There are. There's probably about 60 or 70 trainings that are available that are put on either by Naval Sea Cadet staff and/or the Navy itself. Our cadets, the first training they have to go through is a reduced or -- excuse me -- abbreviated version of boot camp. We like to call it recruit training to avoid the current view of boot camps being a disciplinary sort of thing. Navies also change their terminology to recruit training. And our Cadets go for two weeks up to the -- the same place where the Navy sends their recruits, which is the Great Lakes Naval Station. And they're trained as -- in the same buildings, in the same training and by the same people that train our Navy's new recruits.

After they graduate from that, they're able to go to the multitudes of advanced trainings, everything from Petty Officer Leadership Training to those that you mention, culinary arts, music appreciation. There's all kind -- the prospects are limitless if the parents can afford to send them to wherever that training is. And, once again, the affordability to the trainee is highly dependent upon the money

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that we receive from Congress. If it remains at a level that continues to grow within the lines of the cost of living, then we're able to keep the rates low. I believe the training cost around 170 to \$200 to go to a two-week training. And if it weren't for that \$2 million stipend, it would be about double that.

Again on the local level my -- when I took over the region a year ago, my intent was to reduce the cost of enrollments to a degree where hard hit families with four and five -- raising four and five kids could afford to enroll them in our program. Currently our enrollment is about \$100 a year, which is very affordable when you look at some of the summer camp trainings that cost \$2000 for two weeks and it's gone. A hundred dollars for the type of curriculum that we teach, we promote -- first of all, we're zero tolerance for harassment, no drugs, no alcohol, no gangs, no bullying. That kind of environment is intended to bring out the self-reliance in these young people, develop a sense of responsibility.

If you look to the board to my left, you see high school age young cadets out handing out food at the -- in Lindenhurst and in Island Park on their weekends, fighting the cold, dealing with the wind. And I like to ask parents at many points, when's the last time that you had -- that you saw your child, your high school age child getting away from the X-Box out of the bedroom and giving up their weekend to do this kind of community service? And this is the kind of opportunities that we present to these young people in developing a sense of community -- personal and community responsibility and developing leadership, leaders of tomorrow. And that's basically what we do. We're developing the leaders of tomorrow, whether it be military or corporate. We're not a -- we're not a recruiting mechanism for the military, but what we do is we provide the opportunity for these young people to make an informed decision as to whether they do want a military career, they want to go onto corporate life or whatever, this instills in them that sense of responsibility and sense of accomplishment, if you would.

Short story: We get parents that come up to us after these Cadets go to recruit training. And they say "what did you do to my child?" And I have -- you know, I get very defensive. "I'm sorry?" "He came back from recruit training, he makes his bed and he does his chores. What did you do to him that I haven't been able to accomplish in 13 years?" That's the kind of program that we got.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Now, as a new Cadet, what do I expect? Is it weekly meetings or trainings, monthly? What's the commitment?

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

Our units drill on -- basically like a reserve unit. We do -- we drill one weekend a month at whatever facility we're drilling at. And during those drills, we -- a new Cadet will learn discipline -- military discipline, self-reliance and finding -- knowing where regulations are. We have an abundance of -- as in any government in a military organization, we have an abundance or overabundance of regulations, knowing how to navigate through that minefield of regulations. Uniforms, all the basic military concepts that they'll need to know to go through and successfully recruit -- finish their recruit training in the summertime. After they come back from summer boot camp or recruit training, we continue to meet. It's a year-round operation. There is relatively not a month that we don't drill. So basically you drill one weekend a month and then two weeks during the summer. Very much like a reserve.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Okay. Thank you. Anyone have any questions? No? Great. Thank you, Commander, for coming and for your presentation. And I certainly look forward to working with you. I know you mentioned before in our previous meetings that you were looking to open a location in Islip or a group out of Islip?

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

We did that.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Oh, you did?

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

We've already done that.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Okay.

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

That is the -- out of Sayville, actually the Long Island Maritime Museum.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Okay.

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

The Lieutenant Michael Murphy Division. We stood that up in October. And it's functioning now with some 27 Cadets. And it's an outstanding opportunity. They're at a Maritime Museum. Where better for a Maritime Youth Organization to be stationed? They'll be working on refurbishing boats. They'll get to go on -- able to go out on boats that belong to the Museum and actually practice seamanship that we teach them, which is a very unique opportunity for these guys.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Okay. Commander, Legislator Browning has a question for you.

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

Yes, ma'am.

LEG. BROWNING:

I'm sorry. I think I forgot the percentage of young people that you have that wind up going into the military.

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

Well, if you look in the book, there's a breakdown of who goes in the military. The only figures that I have right off the top of my head is those that are in Annapolis in the Midshipman Program. And to me when people look at the NJROTC and the Sea Cadet Corps, that no one knows about, that's really the telling factor for me, is how many of these -- not how many of them end up in the military, but how many of them end up in these prestigious service academies, such as Annapolis. And when -- you know, the first thing that comes to your mind is ROTC. And it's a 1%, you never know about -- no never knew about Sea Cadets until I came here today. And we're able to success -- to have a success rate of 12% enrollment currently in the academy. Those guys and gals are going to go on to commissions in the Marine Corps and the Navy. And they're the future leaders of the military.

LEG. BROWNING:

Do you get some of the kids from the ROTC in the high school either also with Cadets or do they generally not overlap?

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

We have had, but I think there's a distinct different mindset between the ROTC Programs that operate out of a school and the program -- our programs are not school based. They actually have

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to give up their weekends to come and do drills. ROTC Programs are a target of opportunity. You're there. You're on campus. You're going to do -- you know, you get to wear a neat uniform with medals all over it. Our Cadets wear a Navy uniform authorized by Congress and by the Chief -- by the Secretary of the Navy. And they wear ribbons that they earn. They don't get medals. They don't get to parade in front of the girls at school. But these kids really want to be where they're at doing what they're doing. And, you know, it's not a captive audience. And so I think that that mindset carries over to their future endeavors.

We have been, you know, I don't want to down -- I don't want to knock the ROTC, but we've been at joint operations with the Junior ROTC folks. And I've had the Navy representatives come up to us and say, "you know, we're really impressed with your cadets." Not so much them, but for the Naval Sea Cadets. They're extremely impressed with our Cadets.

LEG. BROWNING:

You know, I mean I'm familiar. I know at Islip MacArthur Airport they have the Army version and --

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

Yeah, that's probably Civil Air Patrol.

LEG. BROWNING:

They have the Civil Air Patrol, yeah. And they have them out in West Hampton also.

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

Right.

LEG. BROWNING:

So, you know, it would be nice -- I mean, my son's in the military. My husband served. So, it would be nice -- let the kids get some more exposure. I know my high school has the -- it's the Navy NJROTC. So I think it's good for the kids to get to see the different branches because sometimes they'll look at one branch in the military and think, "oh, I love the uniform" --

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

Right.

LEG. BROWNING:

But, you know, they really don't know much about what they're going to be getting themselves into so -- I know that when my son was joining, we were definitely, you know, steering him in a certain direction because our -- because of what we knew with the military.

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

Right.

LEG. BROWNING:

But, like I said -- what about girls? How is your recruitment for girls?

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

Girls are on the top of my list for recruitment because they -- they really cause the guys to do what they're expected to do. When they get shown up by a girl, there's, you know -- girls are fantastic in this program. I love to get them involved. The percentage of girls in the program are clearly not as high as the boys. But when I went into the Sea Cadets in 1967, we didn't have girls. In 196 -- I think -- 1973, I believe, the Charter was realigned to include girls in the Sea Cadet Program. And the girls often times show up the boys. And I think it's great. So, yes, we try to get girls involved. And, of course, you know, not all the girls are of the mind to go out and go through an obstacle course.

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LEG. BROWNING:

Right.

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

And do the things that the guys do. Others are very motivated to show up the guys.

LEG. BROWNING:

Yes. Well, thank you. Thanks for your presentation.

COMMANDER WOODWARD:

All right. Thank you, ma'am.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

All right. Thank you, Commander.

All right. That's it. We don't have anything left in our agenda. Anyone in the administration? Nope? Okay. All right. Thank you. We stand adjourned.

**THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 10:28 PM
{ } DENOTES SPELLED PHONETICALLY**