

LABOR, HOUSING & CONSUMER PROTECTION COMMITTEE
OF THE
SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE
MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Labor, 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 June 16, 2011.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Leg. Jon Cooper, Chairman
Leg. Kate M. Browning, Vice Chair
Leg. Thomas Cilmi
Leg. Jack Eddington (excused absence)
Leg. DuWayne Gregory

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

George Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature
Sarah Simpson, Assistant Counsel
Eric A. Kopp, County Executive's Office
Gail Vizzini, Director of Budget Review Office
Jill Moss, Budget Review Office
Ed Hennessy, Aide to County Executive
Barbara LoMoriello, Deputy Clerk
Paul Perillie, Aide to Majority Leader
Charles Gardner, Director of Government Affairs
Dot Kerrigan, AME aide
Jack Caffey, PO Aide
Ali Nazir, Aide to Leg. Kennedy
Susan L. Odell-Pepe
Mark A. Gatz
Laurel A. Martin, League of Woman Voters
And all other interested parties

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Diana Flesher, Court Stenographer

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 1:13 PM

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

Good afternoon. I'd like to welcome you all to the June 16th meeting of the Labor, Housing and Consumer Protection Committee. Legislator Cilmi, if you could please lead us in the Pledge.

SALUTATION

And we actually may get liberty and justice for all today if the New York State Senate approves marriage equality.

PUBLIC PORTION

Thank you. Before we get to the agenda, we have two speakers. First up is Susan L. Odell-Pepe. I hoped I pronounced that correctly.

MS. ODELL-PEPE:

Yes.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

Good afternoon.

MS. ODELL-PEPE:

Good afternoon. Thank you, Legislator Cooper and members of the Committee, joint committee and staff. My name is Susan L. Odell-Pepe. I'm a current employee of Suffolk County Department of Health Services. I am here today to speak about reducing salary increases. The effect of the 2010 retirement incentive was a decrease in salary costs. Then employees had to absorb duties of retirees. Now we have a wave of employees going provisional, some who will be provisional for six months to as long as a year-and-a-half waiting for a Civil Service test to be announced or awaiting test results. The week of the memo that was sent out to all departments for a five percent decrease in County budgets, another person in the County was promoted provisionally. Action is needed.

I have submitted a salary budget of a department and the increase in the fiscal year of 2011 is six percent just in salary costs. County employees were just approved a two percent cost of living increase in the new contract. A conservative suggestion would be to temporarily freeze all provisional appointments and upgrades for a time period of one to one and-a-half years to allow Suffolk County to become more fiscally stable. In addition, revoking all provisional appointments for the fiscal year 2011. After a one-year review of the County's financial state would be done -- to see if an extension may be needed on the freeze.

In addition a freeze on overtime pay should not be overlooked. If we are going to cut budgets, let's start at a point that could be effective and avoid possible reductions in the workforce. With our current state of economy, it should encourage review and amending of current regulations to become a more economically conscious County. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

Thank you very much, Susan. I appreciate the suggestion.

Second speaker is Mark Gatz.

MR. GATZ:

Good afternoon.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

Good afternoon.

MR. GATZ:

My name is Mark Gatz from Hampton Bays. I spoke before the Committee on June 2nd, 2011 with regards to a hand-delivered letter to this building dated April 26, 2011. At the June 2nd meeting here at this building, I believe, I was promised a correspondence from the Committee. To date I have not yet received any correspondence either e-mail, telephone call or letter. I'm still waiting patiently.

And the letter that I submitted to this Committee had 30 pictures of Suffolk County Police cars being repaired at the Otis Ford Car Dealership that I personally took.

Also included in that letter were 600 names of people, Suffolk County residents, who feel that they were cheated or ripped off by Otis Ford, Inc. It also contained complaints of age, gender, racial discrimination, gross state and federal civil rights violations in front of the car dealer and also complaints of odometer fraud at Otis Ford.

Can you indicate to me today as I'm looking at a letter with the minutes dated June 9th, 2011, the last time that I was here approximately fifteen days ago, whether or not every committee member has reviewed those documents? That's the question that I propose to the Committee. I'm sorry, I can't hear you.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

I can't speak for Committee members. I have a copy of all the documentation. It's 200 pages. So I have not completely reviewed this. And the materials are in the boxes of all the other Legislators. So if they haven't received it yet, I'm sure they'll be picking it up today.

MR. GATZ:

Okay.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

And will be reviewing.

MR. GATZ:

Okay. If you'd like an extra copy or if there's anything that I can do to help you make copies, please, so you can review them --

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

No, we all have copies.

MR. GATZ:

-- expeditiously, please let me know to help you out.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

Thank you very much. And my office will be back in touch with you.

MR. GATZ:

Okay. I just had a couple more things. I'm not looking for any awards or rewards or any glory. I am simply just trying to help the people. Please help. Please.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

Thank you. So, again, Mark, give us an opportunity to review this. And as I said, my office will be back in touch with you.

MR. GATZ:

Thank you for a minute of your time and thank you for being so nice.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

Thank you for coming down again.

Is there anyone else that would like to address the Committee? There being none, we can move onto the agenda.

First of all, I'd like to mention for the record that Legislator Eddington has an excused absence since he is out of state this week.

TABLED RESOLUTIONS

All right. First resolution, tabled resolutions, **IR 1222, adopting a local law to sunset living wage subsidies. (Cilmi)** Do we have a motion?

LEG. CILMI:

Motion to approve.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

I'll make a motion to table.

LEG. GREGORY:

Second.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

Second on the tabling motion. All those in favor? Opposed?

LEG. CILMI:

Opposed.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

So noted. One in opposition. **IR 1222 is tabled. (VOTE: 3-1-0-1. LEG. CILMI OPPOSED; LEG. EDDINGTON ABSENT)**

Next **IR 1255, designating individual agents of the Suffolk County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty of Animals as volunteers of the County of Suffolk for the purposes of indemnification (Cooper).** I will make a motion to table. And we have a second.

LEG. BROWNING:

Second.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

All those in favor? Opposed? **IR 1255 is tabled. (VOTE: 4-0-0-1. LEG. EDDINGTON ABSENT)**

Next up **IR 1465, adopting a local law to ensure safe backflow testing in Suffolk County (Cooper).** Unfortunately that -- although we had a public hearing on it at the last meeting, it was not publicized correctly so it had to be recessed. So I'd like to make a motion to table this for the public hearing at the next meeting.

LEG. GREGORY:

Second.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

We have a second. All those in favor? Opposed? **IR 1465 is tabled for public hearing. (VOTE: 4-0-0-1. LEG. EDDINGTON ABSENT)**

INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS

Introductory resolutions. **IR 1478, a local law to require occupational licensees to utilize the Social Security Number Verification Service (SSNVS) and the E-Verify System (Co. Exec.).** This has to be tabled for public hearing that was scheduled for November 9th.

LEG. GREGORY:

Second.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

I make a motion to table and we have a second. All those in favor? Opposed? **IR 1478 is tabled. (VOTE: 4-0-0-1. LEG. EDDINGTON ABSENT)**

IR 1545, a local law banning the retail sale of puppies in Suffolk County to combat the problem of puppy mills. (Cooper). Again, has to be tabled for a public hearing. I'll make that motion.

LEG. GREGORY:

Second.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

We have a second. All those favor? Opposed? **IR 1545 is tabled for the public hearing. (VOTE: 4-0-0-1. LEG. EDDINGTON ABSENT)**

And last up **IR 1563, adopting a local law establishing standard work day and reporting requirements for elected officials (Pres. Off.).** I make a motion to approve.

LEG. GREGORY:

I'll second that.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

All in favor?

LEG. CILMI:

On the motion.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

Yes, Legislator Cilmi.

LEG. CILMI:

I didn't have a chance to review this. Counsel, could you please describe what this bill does, please?

MR. NOLAN:

This comes as a result of new rules and regulations adopted by the State Comptroller last year. Basically what the regulation says is that if there's any County official, employee, elected official who doesn't fill out time sheets, those people -- in particular this resolution applies to elected officials only, you have to establish a workday; the number of hours -- minimum number of hours that have to be worked by the a County Legislator. And as part of that, you probably recall last year that all the County Legislators had to do a diary, I think, over a three-month period to show their workday for a certain period that would be filed with the Clerk's Office.

So the resolution kind of goes hand in glove with that, that reporting that's required by the State. We have to pass this resolution. We're actually -- this resolution was actually filed last summer. The County Attorney's Office had some conversation with the Comptroller's Office and they said to

hold off on passing this resolution. But now after speaking with the County Attorney, we agreed now is the time we should move forward on passing this resolution.

LEG. CILMI:

Thanks.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

Thank you. Can I ask the Clerk did we have a motion and a second?

MS. LOMORIELLO:

You have a motion and a second.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

All right. All those in favor? Opposed? **IR 1563 is approved. (VOTE: 4-0-0-1. LEG. EDDINGTON ABSENT)**

Would anyone else like to address the Committee at this time? There being none I make a motion to close.

LEG. GREGORY:

Second.

CHAIRMAN COOPER:

All those in favor? Opposed? This meeting is adjourned. Thank you. Have a nice day.

**THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 1:25 PM
{ } DENOTES SPELLED PHONETICALLY**