

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, HIGHER EDUCATION & ENERGY AND

LABOR, WORKFORCE & AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEES

CAPITAL BUDGET MEETING

Minutes

A joint Capital Budget meeting of the Economic Development, Higher Education and Energy and the Labor, Workforce and Affordable Housing Committees of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York, on Tuesday, May 19, 2009 at 1:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Legislator Lynne Nowick
Legislator Kate Browning
Legislator DuWayne Gregory
Legislator Jack Eddington
Legislator Thomas Barraga
Legislator Wayne Horsley
Legislator Vivian Vilorio Fisher

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Gail Vizzini, Director, Budget Review Office
Benny Pernice, Budget Review Office
Greg Moran, Aide to Legislator Nowick
Linda Bay, Aide to Legislator Losquadro
Chuck Stein, Suffolk County Community College, V.P. Business & Finance
Bob Beodeker, Suffolk County Community College, Associate Dean
James Frost, Suffolk County Community College, Associate Dean
Jon DeMaio, Suffolk County Community College
Evon Walters, Suffolk County Community College
Kathie Rogers, Suffolk County Community College.
Kari Weidenburner, SC Community College, Recreation Coordinator
Skip Heaney, Commissioner, Economic Development
Carolyn Fahey, Economic Development
Brendan Chamberlain, Intergovernmental Relations
Allen Kovesday, Budget Office
Other Interested Parties

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Lucia Braaten, Court Stenographer

MINUTES TRANSCRIBED BY:

Kim Castiglione, Legislative Secretary

(THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 1:07 PM)

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Good afternoon and welcome to the Capital Budget meeting for Labor, Workforce and Affordable Housing and for Economic Development, Higher Education and Energy. We can, if you would, please, stand for the salute to the flag, led by Legislator Eddington.

(Salutation)

We're going to start with Labor. Is there anyone here that would like to address the committee in reference to Labor and Workforce Housing? Okay. That was quick.

LEG. BARRAGA:

I want to thank you very much for coming.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay. We lost one of our panel, one of our distinguished panel.

LEG. BROWNING:

Can we get BRO -- does she have any --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Sure. Legislator Horsley Chairs EEE. While he is not here right now, part of the committee is, right? You're --

LEG. BROWNING:

I'm not on it.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

You're not on it? Oh, you're on it.

LEG. GREGORY:

No.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

There's nobody on EEE on the committee here? Okay. Does anybody want to address the Labor Committee? Okay. I'm just going to shut this for a minute and wait for Wayne. Okay. Is there anybody here that would like to address the Budget Committee? I think that with went well.

Legislator Horsley has arrived. Gail, would you like to address the Budget Committee?

MS. VIZZINI:

Actually I just wanted to clarify the committee schedule. Budget and Finance and Ways and Means is tomorrow, first up tomorrow, according to the schedule that I received.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

I thought so, but we had to spend some time -- hello, Legislator.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Friendly group.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Well, we've had the Labor Committee meeting and EEE there's a few cards for you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay, good.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

And I'll let you take the mike that stays on.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Oh, it stays on.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Yes. Oh, I didn't know that. That's kind of cool. All right. Am I the EEE Committee?

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

You are the committee. I don't know where your people are.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

All right. Welcome to the Economic Development, Energy and Higher Education Committee public hearings on the Capital Budget. I have the first person who would like to speak is James Frost from Suffolk Community College. Hi, James.

MR. FROST:

First of all, I think --

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

I'm not sure that's on.

MR. FROST:

I think I got it. First of all, I want to say how grateful we are. I think I would be remiss if I didn't begin by saying that the college is always extremely grateful to the Legislature for doing all it does for us, and it does a great deal. So a big thank you for that. We really do appreciate it.

When it was suggested that I share my thoughts with you about the Health and Recreational Facility, I was trying to think of some valid reasons that I could bring to your attention that haven't already been expressed. Certainly the whole business of the -- our tiggers -- ticks rather, ticks and chiggers and sprained ankles and all the inclement weather, the numbing cold, the obsessive heat and all this business that's been said to you before over and over again. They're certainly very valid reasons why we need a Health and Recreation Facility on the East Campus.

Over the weekend I saw and heard probably the best reason yet I have ever seen. And I can say it in one word. Levi. Now, it's not the Levy you're probably thinking about, but rather Corporal Christopher Levi. As you know, Corporal Christopher Levi came back from Iraq a wounded soldier and he's now back with us. I'm very pleased to say that this brave young man was a student at Suffolk County Community College, did some course work for his degree in business administration, and then signed up, enlisted, and went over to Iraq. He's now back and he wants to continue with his education.

Yesterday I personally reached out to Chris and invited him to come to Suffolk and allow us to help him realize his dreams and his goals. Now, it's true he lives closer to Ammerman and he might very well take his courses in Ammerman, but I would suggest to you that he might find the East Campus, the size and intimacy a bit more appealing, not the least reason of which for a double amputee it's a lot easier getting around. So we hope he comes back. But, you know, he's just one of many. We have many returning soldiers and sailors back to us from Long Island, and many of them are students at Suffolk County Community College.

You know education, as certainly you know, Wayne, is very much so mind, spirit and body. That's what education really is, and right now the East Campus can very well address the mind and the spirit, but we can't address the body, and that's a shame. So if Chris Levi did, in fact, come out to us, we couldn't assist him with his continued recuperation and that would be a shame. So I would

suggest to the Legislature that we need this desperately and we kind of owe it. We owe it to Chris and we owe it to his brothers and sisters that have all come back from the wars, sometimes whole, sometimes not. But we owe them this facility so that they can be proud of coming to school, finishing their classes and be well educated both in mind, spirit and body.

So I ask you, please, very seriously consider putting this back in the budget, getting it right up to the top, and let's get a move on with this, you know? I know wars aren't over and there'll always be the Chris Levi's going off to defend us, and they'll come back, and we as a campus want to welcome them back. And we want to be able to give them a full service.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Frost, and we do appreciate your comments about -- is it Corporal Levi?

MR. FROST:

Yes.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Corporal, yes. And we, too, wish him well and we're glad that he's coming back home to Suffolk Community College. That's good news. All right. We now have Robert Beodeker.

MR. BEODEKER:

Again, my name is Robert Boedeker and I'm a resident of Aquebogue and I've worked at the Eastern Campus of Suffolk Community College for 15 years. I want to thank the Legislature for their ongoing support of the college and the campus. It's exciting to be prepping to have the new library built and that wouldn't have happened without the dedication and commitment of the Suffolk County Legislature.

In the past 15 years I've witnessed the doubling of the student enrollment, and more importantly I've watched our numbers of traditional aged students 18 to 22 increase dramatically. I've noted how these students are seeking a broader, more traditional college experience, including involvement in sports and recreation. But I want to speak to you today not just about how we serve our students as individuals, but also how we serve our local community.

Our campus has a long history of serving as a hub for community events and activities. We have a longstanding partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension, hosting many of their large events and seminars. The Agricultural Forum, which is held each January, features workshops, lectures and trade shows for several hundred farmers from all across Long Island. The annual -- the campus hosts annually the Eastern Suffolk BOCES Conference for Kids, which brings several hundred middle school students from across the East End to the campus each May.

Additional activities include the upcoming Pine Barrens Discovery Day, the East End Youth Leadership Summit. Each June the Eastern Long Island Quilters Guild transforms the campus into a wonderful quilt show and exhibit that brings over 2,000 people to the campus over a two day period. These are just some of the many community activities and events that we have hosted on our campus. Many people aren't aware that they are going on.

Hosting these types of events is seen as a part of our mission as a community college. These groups also give back to our campus and our students. The Eastern Long Island Quilters Guild has endowed two full tuition scholarships, which are given annually to our students.

Unfortunately, the growth in our student enrollment has required us to modify and redistribute space to meet student needs and has resulted in a significant reduction in the open, flexible space in our buildings that has allowed us to successfully host these events. The new Sports and Recreation Center at East will increase the amount of flexible space available on evenings and weekends for us to continue this vital mission to the East End. Just as the Health, Sports and Recreation Center at Grant has allowed us to expand its support of these activities in Western Suffolk County, a new

building at the Eastern Campus, which is located at the crossroads of the Twin Forks, will allow us to support and expand our connections to the local community.

In addition to some of the events that we've been hosting, we'll be able to develop new initiatives like lifeguard training, which is desperately needed on the East End for many of our towns and businesses and is a source of summer employment for many of our young people. We would be able to reach out to the growing and expanding tourism, hotel and restaurant industry on the East End to explore jointly hosting meetings and conferences. In addition, some of these new initiatives will allow us to generate revenue for the college through the rental of those facilities.

I strongly urge you to reinstate this project in the Capital Budget and move up the timeline for planning from 2011 to 2012. This building is not just an investment in the college, but in the entire East End community and the townships that look to us to support and serve their needs.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Thank you very much Mr. Beodeker. Kari Weidenburner.

MS. WEIDENBURNER:

Good afternoon, Legislators. I would like to thank you in advance for your time, attention and support. My name is Kari Weidenburner and I am the Recreational and Wellness Coordinator and Adjunct Instructor of Physical Education for the Eastern Campus of Suffolk County Community College. In these roles I have learned firsthand of all the challenges the college has faced as a result of a lack of a specified recreational facility. Even though Suffolk County Community College employs brilliant, resourceful and creative professors, you can only do so much with what you are given. By not having any type of respectable indoor facility we are doing a huge disservice to our community by withholding an environment conducive for the high equality education they paid for.

To be quite blunt about it, our facilities are embarrassing and our students deserve better. In order to paint a better picture of the Eastern Campus, I would like to point out exactly what the recreation facilities and resources are like.

The first thing I would like to talk about are the fields. The Eastern Campus has two fields, one of which 90 percent of all field sports courses take place on. A regulation size soccer field measures 100 by 60 yards; the field we have measures 65 by 40 yards. Not only is this field much smaller than regulation size, its surface is unsafe. It is slippery due to the lack of grass from overuse, it's unlevelled and is covered in small rocks. I have had to send a number of students to get medical attention due to this fact while holding events and classes.

The second field at the Eastern Campus is not fit to use because not only is it unlevelled and ridden with rocks, but is also where the Eastern Campus Guinea Hen pen is located. The one class that I attempt to have there has to spend five to ten minutes herding the hens off the field before class can begin. The ironic part about this is that these Guinea Hens are there in an attempt to decrease the high population of deer ticks on the Eastern Campus, which is just one more thing that the students are exposed to due to the lack of an indoor facility.

In addition to having field sports courses available, the college also offers walking and jogging. The professors running these courses are forced to choose between two unfavorable options when it comes to locations. They can either walk in the deer tick infested forest, or one of the two highways that surround the Eastern Campus, both of which do not have a sidewalk. Most professors have these classes on County Road 51. To get on to this four lane high speed highway the students must first go on to Speonk Riverhead Road, which only has one foot of a shoulder to walk on, dodge the 18 wheelers coming out of the contracting facilities nearby, and then go through a major intersection. All of this happens within the first quarter mile of their walk.

The Eastern Campus also offers the students courses in volleyball. There are three dirt courses on,

again, unlevelled ground. Because these courts are unlevelled, whenever it rains they become flooded, making them more suitable for swimming than playing volleyball. Professors are then forced to cancel class until the flooding recedes. Some of these classes have been cancelled for up to two weeks because of this problem.

On top of having the students at Suffolk County Community College have class on fields and roads that are unsafe, they are also forced to have class in extreme weather conditions. Physical education classes are run year-round, and the Eastern Campus students have to participate -- excuse me, participate in all types of weather, including rain, light snow, icy conditions, and extreme hot or cold.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Please wrap it up, Ms. Weidenburner.

MS. WEIDENBURNER:

Of course. I hope you realize how imperative it is to have the Recreation and Health Center built as soon as possible. It is only a matter of time until something serious happens to a student if things at the Eastern Campus do not change soon. Our community deserves a facility where students can receive the highest quality of education possible, but even more than that, they deserve a safe one. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Thank you very much. We appreciate you coming down and we love the visuals. That's good stuff.

MS. WEIDENBURNER:

We'd like to leave them with you if you'd like.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay. If you would just give them to the Clerk that would be terrific. Lance, I think you're going to get the -- one of you guys are. Charles Stein. Is Chuck here? There he is.

MR. STEIN:

Thank you. I'd like to address the committee with Jon DeMaio, who's our facilities person, who will speak to some specifics. We were here this morning to address the Public Works Committee. Our hope is to address as many Legislators as we can with respect to the needs of the college. And I'll briefly go over what I stated this morning with respect to the Capital Program. We're going to discuss it first with those projects that have State support already approved, and then the projects where we're seeking State support.

Regarding the projects with State support, the first one is Kreiling Hall, project 2114. This is an old project dating back with State support to 2003. Our concern is that the State does not reallocate these funds to other areas because we have not advanced the project. The Budget Review Office has reviewed this and has agreed that an advance of the design funds to 2010 would be appropriate. However, they left the remaining funds in 2011. Given the age of this project we really would hope to get the approval of all in 2010 with the understanding that the design would be done in 2010 and construction would not proceed until 2011.

Regarding the Health and Sports Facility at the Eastern Campus, project 2120, you just received a visual presentation with respect to the needs of that. It's important to point out that we do have State support for that. Fifty percent of the project has State support. And the recommended capital program has removed this project. In the past the Legislature has been very supportive in putting it back in. We are hopeful that you will again restore the project. Budget Review Office has recommended restoration, but has recommended it in subsequent years.

In the past, subsequent years was something we could sell to the State to get State support. They may be questioning that now, because with all of the financial problems and the requests from other

schools that have specific years designated for their projects, we could be jeopardizing this funding. We would hope that the project is restored and that the design funds be placed in a specific year, 2011, with construction in 2012. But it's vitally important that we get this project restored since we do have the commitment of the State.

As far as the Learning Resource Center at the Grant Campus, project 2159, again, this project has State support in their five-year plan. This project will have a huge impact at the Grant Campus. We really have to start the design to do that. We need to bond at the State level which requires funding in 2010. So what we're requesting is the design funds in 2010 with the remaining funds in 2011. Budget Review Office in its analysis has recommended this project, but has recommended that all the funds be placed in 2012. I think that's something that we really would like to see moved up with the design money in 2010.

The Peconic renovation, project 2181, is similar to Kreiling. It is an old project. We want to make sure we don't lose that funding. Everything was in 2010 in last year's adopted Capital Program, with the delay of construction to 2011. We want to stay within 2010 for the project and the Budget Review Office in its analysis has agreed with that and we thank them. Those are the projects that have State aid.

With respect to the two projects where we're pursuing State aid, the first is security notification, project 2140. This involves the building modifications, cameras, etcetera, and we want to thank the Legislature for its support earlier this year in providing us with transfers so that we could proceed quickly on some of the security measures.

The entire scope of this project for the three campuses is 2.6 million dollars that we're requesting in 2010. The amount that's been included is \$350,000. We have three campuses; 23,000 students. Security is something that we are all aware of from news reports, what has happened at other -- unfortunately at other locations. This is a very serious matter. We've had test runs on security with the F.B.I., with the police, with our security program. We have done everything that's been recommended and one of the things that's been recommended is the work that we had requested in this project by professionals in the area. God forbid something happens and we're not prepared. I strongly, strongly urge the Legislature to provide the funds necessary for the infrastructure project in 2010 so that we can get that support from the State and also provide a more realistic number of what's necessary at three campuses.

And finally, the infrastructure project, 2149. This is created to address all the aging assets at the three campuses before they become safety concerns. There are 46 buildings and structures that we're talking about here, so it's no small task. We requested the funds over three years to address the issues on a priority basis. Budget Review Office has reviewed this and agreed with this request, including one-third of the money, thirteen point -- one-third of the 13.5 million for 2010 so we can seek the 50% State money. Earlier today there was a question from Legislator Horsley with respect to our growing enrollment and our projections for enrollment. I would like to provide the statistical methodology that's been used --

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Thank you.

MR. STEIN:

-- for projecting that, and I guess copies can be provided to the whole committee from this morning and actually all Legislators.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Sure. Jack, can you --

MR. STEIN:

Thank you. Again, we want to thank the Legislature for continuously supporting Suffolk Community

College. It's wonderful to know that you recognize the value of the college in terms of its services to the community, to the students, and to the economy at large in Suffolk County. And I think that these projects are vitally important. There's all this discussion about shovel ready projects, etcetera. Well, you can't be shovel ready unless you take the first step, and I think that's what we have to do with these projects. I thank you for your time and we will be happy to answer any questions.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Thank you very much, Mr. Stein. Are there any questions from the Legislators? Yes, Legislator Browning.

LEG. BROWNING:

Yeah. I know I don't usually serve on this committee --

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

You are always welcome.

LEG. BROWNING:

-- but I know we've had many discussions about security. I know Jack and I, I was a student at Suffolk Community College quite a few years ago, and even back then in the parking lot, when you were coming out to get in your car, it's very scary at nighttime. And when I've been -- I've been to any events there, coming out of there in the evening, you know, the lighting is very dim, there's a lot of trees, and sometimes that parking lot -- I get lost in there anyway, but at the same time it's very -- it is very scary, and for young people to be coming out of a late class to walk out there.

But as far as the CCTV and the security cameras are concerned, I know you want all three campuses to have it at some point. I mean, you know, truly, you know, we'd love to make sure that you could have it at all three campuses tomorrow, but it's kind of prioritizing which campus you would like to start with. You know, it's new security cameras and where are you going to put them. And at least if you were to prioritize what school, what school would you like to start with and where -- you know, again, making sure that the cameras you're putting in if there's any problems, you know, kind of making it your pilot and then saying, okay, here we are. These are things that we need to tweak when we do our next one, rather than do all three at one time.

MR. STEIN:

I'm going to let Jon DeMaio answer that, but before we do I just wanted to point out that there was some miscommunication between I guess us and Budget Review Office in their report. The total dollar amount doesn't change but the allocation of the expenditures between what's on the camera line what's on the building modifications lines, building modification systems, there is a reallocation there. It doesn't change the bottom line. With that, I will allow Jon to talk about the specifics on how this will be implemented.

MR. DEMAIO:

Thank you. Certainly that is an approach we could take with regards to the cameras where you could do it one campus at a time. There's certainly a variety of different ways to look at it. From a whole, insofar as the whole community is concerned, I think it's a challenge because you're going to have two unhappy campuses who don't go first. Certainly you don't want to show any particular favoritism to security of one campus over another. That being said, certainly the larger campuses from an acreage perspective, as you pointed out, that are more complex in their roads and in the number of parking facilities that you have available, if you were concerned as to what could happen, that's a more exposed environment, because it is larger and as you correctly pointed out, more complex. So certainly I think it stands to reason you'd want to go after those campuses first. The one that leaps to mind is Ammerman, again, only because it's more hilly, we have a lot more parking facilities, we have some outlying buildings. So certainly that would be one direction we could take if we were forced to prioritize. Obviously we'd rather not, but that is an option.

MR. STEIN:

The other thing to keep in mind is this is not something we're doing willy-nilly. This is being done in cooperation on an ongoing basis with the Police Department, and as I said before, the F.B.I. has been involved in terms of our analysis of security issues. So this is professionally driven in terms of addressing these security issues.

LEG. BROWNING:

Well, I think looking at your, you know, your campuses, where do you get the most reports of, you know -- are there reports of students being attacked or robbed, you know, incidents that have occurred, you know, which campuses have the most reports?

MR. DEMAIO:

I don't have that information with me right now, but certainly the larger campuses have a higher amount of incidences. And as Chuck just pointed out, combined with law enforcement agents that can give us their input, their recommendations, the professional vendors that can look at the complexity of the campuses and recommend, and that internal information, you put all of that together and you would be able to prioritize accordingly. So we wouldn't want to necessarily say which campus would float to the top without actually looking at the data, but that's the type of study you could do so you could allocate this money on a priority basis if it had to be spread over more than one budget year.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Thank you very much. Legislator Kennedy.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Thank you very much. Thanks for giving us this background as far as the statistical methods for the enrollment projection. So it's your sense that you're going to continue to experience a 3%, an approximate 3% growth, overall growth in student body going forward?

MR. STEIN:

For 2009-2010 the projections are for a 3% growth. The -- earlier today a question came up about where the high schools were.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Yes.

MR. STEIN:

That's one factor in the analysis. The projections for high school growth are that they will continue to grow through 2012. After the meeting this morning I --

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

You checked?

MR. STEIN:

So we're looking through 2012. After that --

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

It goes down.

MR. STEIN:

-- it goes down a bit. But you also have to take into consideration what's happening with the economy, which has also been taken into consideration with respect to the projection. As I said earlier, when the economy is not so great enrollment tends to go up. Combined with that, we have a unique situation now. And I don't know whether it's because of the unemployment rate or what have you, but we are actually seeing more applications from students who would traditionally be

going to a four year institution. So that's something that has occurred now that we're seeing.

LEG. KENNEDY:

I think there's some logic to this as we speak about, but you also -- you bring up the economic factors, and a couple of things that come to mind are your HVAC Program. I know that you're actually just getting that off the ground now, and it seems to be subscribed well and may, in fact, actually wind up expanding. Your automotive training program. As you know, we have a number of dealers that are going to be impacted with closure, and I would think there may be some opportunity for GM mechanics, Chrysler mechanics, to come back in and possibly get retrained or cross trained for some of the more prominent dealerships, Hyundai or Honda or whomever it is that actually I know you have collaborations with.

Is there -- does that type of experience, the adult coming back in, even if they're not coming in for the full Associates Program, but let's say, for example, a KSAC certificate, which is only an eight course program, but nevertheless allows an adult who may, in fact, already have a bachelor's or some other type of degree, to get the certification to move back out then into the employment sector where in fact there is demand.

MR. STEIN:

Obviously there are cases that you describe and, in fact, if you take a look at that handout --

LEG. KENNEDY:

Yes.

MR. STEIN:

-- you'll notice that some of the factors involved are not only the unemployment rate, inflation rate, available jobs in Suffolk County are taken into consideration, as well as the both male and female categories in the various age brackets. So there are many, many factors that are brought into the analysis in terms of making the projection. Anecdotally, you know, you'll find that you may have one particular area that's going to get a tremendous increase.

Let me just give you this information, which is a prelude to the Operating Budget presentation, as an example. The Culinary Arts Program out at the Eastern -- in Riverhead -- we had projected what our enrollment would be, and we have achieved in year one what we projected for year four. So those factors come into play.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Right. And it's -- clearly it's an indication of the fact that you have assembled an outstanding faculty. We met some wonderful instructors there. The opportunities that you've created for the practicums for the students to actually go right into, you know, the commercial kitchens and things with some of our hotels, clubs and stuff like that, again, is outstanding. And candidly, people need to be able to go into disciplines where they're going to be able to go to work. Nobody can afford to come out with a degree that doesn't at least allow for some transition into the workforce and that's been your MO.

One other area that I'll point out to you, and I don't know what the answer to this is, but again I know firsthand is your nursing program. You've expended it, but even though it's expanded, the number of applicants to those who were accepted probably is a what, seven to one, eight to one, nine to one delta. Now, maybe there's some academic issues there, but also -- and there continues to be a need out there as far as, you know, hiring. We still have a nursing shortage today.

MR. STEIN:

I'm proud to say we have the largest nursing program in the State and probably the best, although I'm biased.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Absolutely.

MR. STEIN:

I think that -- and let me say that there is a definite backlog in terms of applicants for the available positions. Students of high caliber want to come to us and there aren't enough slots. I think Suffolk Community College has been very, very successful. We work. It works. I think this Legislature is a driving force behind it. This Legislature has been supportive in recognizing the importance of the institution, has supported it in terms of its capital needs. I think that given the influence that the college has on the economy of Suffolk County, you've recognized that and we want to thank you. These projects that we're talking about right now would only {anear} to the benefit of the community and to the County. And I ask that you support them.

LEG. KENNEDY:

One more comment, if you will indulge a personal comment, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Please.

LEG. KENNEDY:

It's been my privilege to work with you and for you. Thank you.

MR. STEIN:

Thank you very much. This will probably be one of my last times here so I thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Well, we'll talk before that moment. Legislator Eddington.

LEG. EDDINGTON:

Yes. Thank you. We all agree that there are some economic constraints here because of what's going on in our County and in our country and the world. And many unions have renegotiated and are doing lag pays. We have unfilled positions, the elimination of positions. So talk to me about the security, because you really, you know, I think emphasized how we need to do something and talk to me about what you're doing in relationship to cell phones that almost all the students have. What are you doing with the security forces that you now have? Talk to me about existing alarms, you know, internal building communication or campus communication. What have you done as a result of, you know, the problems with security before we talk about allocating additional funds.

MR. STEIN:

In terms of staffing, security staffing, we have a professional operation in terms of our public safety program and tours are assigned to provide for coverage given the number of positions that we have. One of the problems that we face, and I think the County probably does as well, is the filling of these positions. There's a long process of filling the public safety positions. It's not your traditional Civil Service slot. There are -- the individuals have to go through psychologicals, they have to go through a whole process. And there's also a high turnover in these positions. So we --

LEG. EDDINGTON:

Yeah, and I understand all that. I guess what I'm saying is okay, so you know that, I know that, what are you doing about it? I mean, you're not going to get 12 more people. So what are you doing?

MR. STEIN:

That's why we're talking about the Capital Program here to try and give us as much coverage as we possibly can recognizing the operating constraints, and it's one of the things you look for in terms of building modification systems, cameras, in order to be more efficient in your operations and still provide a level of coverage for public safety. As far as cell phones, I'll let Jon talk to it in terms of

our tying into New York Alert and some other things.

MR. DEMAIO:

Yes. Insofar as the New York Alert System, we encourage as much enrollment in that voluntary system as possible. It is a system that works with cell phones in the event there is an emergency. Anyone attending the college or working at the college who has signed on would either get a text or a phone call advising them that there is a crisis situation and instructing them what to do given the nature of the situation and where it's developing.

It is a voluntary enrollment. That being said, it also relies on cell phone technology. Not all of our students have cell phones. Certainly when they're in a teaching environment there's a strong likelihood -- certainly if I was a professor the first thing I would tell my students coming in is turn your cell phones off. There's certainly a lot of benefits to that program. It allows us to get information out, but it is not foolproof. Insofar as a first initiative, a building notification system with loudspeakers that everyone can hear that can be initiated from a remote location gives us the best chance at advising our community of a crisis situation and protecting them.

LEG. EDDINGTON:

Okay. You know what, and again, with my background in social work, you know, I look at problems and then figure okay, how can we do it? Now, you talked about the cell phones and not all kids have cell phones. Okay. And teachers may not want kids to have cell phones on in class. Great. But every faculty member could have one, could be tuned into this program, and if there was a need they could be advised and then give it to their students. So, you know, I'm not hearing that you're doing that.

MR. STEIN:

Excuse me.

LEG. EDDINGTON:

Let me finish my sentence. You know, I'm hearing you tell us what you want and when I ask you what are you doing, you tell me why it won't -- why something like that can't work, and I already told you one thing you could be doing; maybe you are. But I wanted to hear it from you that every faculty member is tuned into -- have a cell phone or do we have to buy -- have you buy them cell phones or get walkie talkies, but there is something you can do that I don't think would cost a lot of money and would at least say okay, something's being done while we try to allocate more funding for you. Because just telling me you need more stuff doesn't help me. I want to know what's happening now better than what was happening two years ago before we realized how bad the security issue is in our country.

MR. STEIN:

Okay. I think I'd like to repeat what John said, and that talks about the New York Alert System and the fact that it's a voluntary program. You cannot require people to do it. First of all, by contract, second of all, you can't require students to do it. We do have almost a 50% participation of our faculty and staff on the New York Alert System. That's a considerable amount. We have probably about six or 7,000 students that are voluntarily on it. We have taken steps. If you go to our homepage online, you'll see reference to the New York Alert System. We have it constantly on the student portal and the faculty portal, statements with respect to directing people to sign up for New York Alert.

The college has been very proactive in this for a couple of years. What we've done, though, in addition, is followed SUNY's guidelines with respect to security notification. We've called together the professionals in the area, the Capital Program that you have before you, as I said earlier, is not something that the college drew up. This is something that has been brought to our attention by professional security people in the area.

LEG. EDDINGTON:

I hear what you're saying, and New York Alert is obviously not a Suffolk County Community College initiative; it's something that's out there from New York State. Am I correct?

MR. STEIN:

Yeah, and we're taking advantage of something that's being provided without cost.

LEG. EDDINGTON:

Right, I guess I'm not -- you're saying 50% of your faculty buy into this and I'm saying why not 100%? You're telling me that you can't ask professors to be part of this program and they would say no?

MR. STEIN:

We have asked. For two years we've been attempting on a continuous basis. We have approximately 50% that have voluntarily enrolled in it and we continue to ask.

LEG. EDDINGTON:

See, here's where I can help you, because when you tell your faculty if they would like a new gymnasium or a new library, maybe they'd better be a little bit more cooperative with you and then we can do that. See, I have no problem saying if they're not cooperative with you, then they're going to have to deal with other issues, because you're not telling me about a staff that's being very cooperative, because we're talking about security for our children.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay. I think we've dealt with this issue. You're very welcome Legislator.

LEG. EDDINGTON:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

All right. Is there anything else that you would like to bring to our attention, Mr. Stein?

MR. STEIN:

I thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

We will see you again. This is not your last time, right?

MR. STEIN:

We'll see. Yeah, probably -- I'll be back tomorrow also to go before Ways and Means. As I said earlier, we want to try and discuss this with as many Legislators as we can.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

And I appreciate that. But if I don't get an opportunity again, let me just say that you have always acted as a professional and are a professional. And I appreciate a good finance guy behind the scenes who's able to keep things in check and you've done a great job, Chuck, and we appreciate you and all you've done for our college and for our County.

MR. STEIN:

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Yes, Vivian.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Sounds like you're saying good-bye.

CHAIRPERSON HORSLEY:

We are.

D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:

I would just like to thank the college for the memo giving me the breakdown of the participation in the security system. I had gotten that, I had asked for that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Legislator.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Where are you going? You're leaving?

MR. STEIN:

I'm retiring.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Congratulations.

D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:

You're retiring?

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

I saw The Times so -- some of us were --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Are you going to go into singing or anything like?

MR. STEIN:

I thought I just was.

D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:

Are you looking for a job?

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

No, I just happened to see it.

MR. STEIN:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Thank you very much, and again, good luck, Chuck. All right. Evon Walters.

MR. WALTERS:

Good evening. On behalf of the students, faculty and staff at the Eastern Campus, I'd like to thank you all for your continued support and for this opportunity to say a couple of words about the Capital Budget as it relates to advance in funding for project 2120, the Health and Recreation Facility.

The campus, which represents 17 districts and 17 high schools on the eastern end of Long Island, continues to experience record enrollment growth. Most notably within this growth is the reality that 70% of that student body is of the traditional age of 24 years or younger. In addition to fulfilling the graduate requirement of a PE course, our students arrive with a heightened expectation of wanting to have that total college experience of a diverse and vibrant set of co-curricular and athletic offerings.

As you deliberate regarding the fiscal suitability and feasibility of supporting such an investment, here are some facts I'm requesting you to consider. Despite the reality of having no athletic facility, the student generated interest and the creativity of our faculty have resulted in the expansion of the number of physical education course offerings over the past 16 years. We have grown from offering one wellness course in 1993 to over 40 sections this past academic year.

Despite this growth, our outdoor facilities, as you saw earlier, are weather dependent. If it rains or snows it is cancelled. More compelling, we lack the very basic facility of a locker room and a shower. Our off campus course options, such as weight training, has a limitation in itself to those students who may have access to personal transportation. For other basic PE courses that are not offered, a student's option in light of their already complex personal lives of work or family obligations, will have to consider driving to Selden to take such a course. Certainly, a daunting if not an unreasonable commute expectation, recognizing that 66% of our student population live either in Shirley or further west of that location.

In a much more global context in comparing our campus with other two year SUNY institutions with comparable enrollment numbers of 3800 students or less, all ten of these institutions possessed a recreational facility. We recognize the very tenuous situation of increasing enrollment compounded by the fiscal challenges that's faced by the County and the State. However, this is an investment that will not only provide immediate benefits for our students and community, but also provides for the very much needed stimulus of creating jobs for our County residents.

Thank you again for your continued commitment and investment to this campus and it's most possessed -- pardon me. It's most prized possessions, our students. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Thank you very much. Mr. Walters, we do have a quick question for you. Legislator Fisher.

D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:

Well, actually it's more of a statement, because I agree with Budget Review's recommendations to put this back in the budget for subsequent years. You know, when we're listening -- as I was driving here I was listening to an NPR report on the state of higher education and we're not on the other side of this downturn yet. And as this trend continues, our public colleges and universities are enrolling more and more students, and we certainly need to provide the services on the Eastern Campus. And when you talk about traveling, as you know, I have the Higher Education Transportation Committee where we're looking at the difficulty that students have in getting to our different campuses, so certainly having to go to Selden for their physical education requirement is really not a feasible option.

So I would like to support that Budget Review recommendation and have this back in the budget. And if it's in subsequent years, Gail, it would still be available for State matching, right, as long as we have it in the budget?

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Mr. Stein argues that point.

D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:

Oh, he does? Okay. I'm sorry.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

I'm not sure we got a definitive answer to that issue, though. It was a hedgy type of comment that you made relating to whether it --

D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:

Chuck made a hedgy comment?

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

-- would be or would be not in future -- would be in the matching if it's in subsequent years.

MR. STEIN:

If I might.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Sure. Do you mind, Mr. Walters?

MR. WALTERS:

Sure.

MR. STEIN:

What I had said earlier was that in the past subsequent years was something that the State was accepting as being a commitment of the local sponsor when they were considering their support. Given the financial circumstances that are now faced not only here, but also at the State, and the world for that matter, the State's position now is they have been advising that we get a specific year mentioned as a demonstration of local support. They are not looking at subsequent years as a commitment at this point. We brought it to the attention this morning and also earlier at this committee that it's a concern. Every school is in need, and when you have other schools that have specific commitments for specific years, you kind of get in line.

D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:

You're saying that takes the priority if they have named a specific year.

MR. STEIN:

Yes.

D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:

So what I would do is ask Budget Review to tell us how --

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

They see that?

D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:

How close we can come to naming a year to put this in. Not right now, but I'm just asking that we look at that.

MR. STEIN:

What we -- just to reiterate, what we had asked for with respect to this project was the design funds in 2011 and the construction funds in 2012.

D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:

How much are the design funds just so I can put it in my notes? I'm sorry, Wayne, but I missed the first part of this.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Yeah, I don't think we have that figure here anyway.

MR. DEMAIO:

Design funds are a million dollars, and again, 50% of that would be State aid.

D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:

And you want that in 20 --

MR. STEIN:

Eleven.

D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:

Eleven. And construction would be the other 16 and three-quarter million?

MR. STEIN:

Yeah, for 2012.

D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:

Okay. That's -- and that would be half of that.

MR. DEMAIO:

Yes.

MR. STEIN:

Fifty-fifty.

D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:

Right, okay.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay.

D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Thank you very much, gentlemen.

MR. STEIN:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Mr. Walters, are you complete?

MR. WALTERS:

Yes, I am.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

It's Dr. Walters. I'm sorry.

MR. WALTERS:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Allen Kovesday. Allen? I hear you have a correction or something like that.

MR. KOVESDAY:

Like Chuck, over lunch I went back and checked something that was inadvertently said at the morning session. The multiplier effect on the local level is between 2 and 3% because you don't factor in materials and things like that. It was erroneously said 7% this morning. It's closer to 2 1/2%. I just wanted to correct that.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Two and a half percent for construction, public construction.

MR. KOVESDAY:

Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay. Thank you very much, Allen. Kathie Rogers. Hi.

MS. ROGERS:

Hi. I am Kathie Rogers. I live in Middle Island and I teach accounting at Suffolk County Community College at the Eastern Campus.

I'm here for two reasons. First, to thank you all very much for your support of our library. We are very excited that we are finally going to be having that library built on our campus. Thank you very, very much.

The other reason why I'm here is to ask you to please consider reinstating our Health and Physical Education Facility. In 1980 I was a freshman at the Eastern Campus, and when I went on my orientation the leader pointed out the place where our library was going to be shortly. Well, 30 years later we're finally getting that library. Both my sons attended the Eastern Campus.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

So they didn't lie.

MS. ROGERS:

They didn't lie, it took 30 years, but we are getting it, and we are excited about that. Both of my sons attended the Eastern Campus and again there was no library, but more importantly to them, sadly for me, there was no gym. They had to travel to the Selden campus for their gym classes.

I have a six year old granddaughter and in 12 years my hope is to be sitting in the bleachers of the Health and Physical Education Facility cheering her on while she's playing for the Eastern Campus basketball team. Please don't make the folks on the eastern end of Long Island wait another 30 years for another building. Please, put that money back into the capital project's budget for our Health and Physical Education Facility. Thanks so much.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Thank you very much, Ms. Rogers, for your comments. All right. Is there anybody else from the college who would like to speak? How about from our Economic Development team? Our august team from Economic Development. Nothing? Carol? No? Are there any questions of our Economic Development team? We're good. I see that there has been a recommendation to hold it at \$500,000, the downtown monies?

MS. FAHEY:

Yes.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

That's okay?

MS. FAHEY:

That's fine.

CHAIRMAN HORSLEY:

Okay. Are there any questions from our august Legislators? Some of us maybe wouldn't have said that. I'm kidding. Okay. That being the case, is there anyone else who would like to be heard? Going once, twice, three?

I'll take a motion to close the public hearings on our Capital Budget for Economic Development, Energy and Higher Education. Seconded by Ms. Nowick. All those in favor? Opposed? So moved.

(THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 2:04 P.M.)