

PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE
OF THE
SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE
MINUTES

A meeting of the Parks & Recreation Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislature Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York on November 28, 2012.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Leg. Lynne C. Nowick, Chairwoman
Leg. Ricardo Montano, Vice Chair
Leg. Kara Hahn
Leg. Wayne R. Horsley
Leg. Steven H. Stern

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

George Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature
Sarah Simpson, Assistant Counsel
Leg. John M. Kennedy, Twelfth Legislative District
William Shilling, Legislative Aide
Robert Doering, Budget Review Office
Gregory Dawson, Commissioner/Parks Department
Terry Maccarrone, Suffolk County Parks Department
Greg Moran, Aide to Leg. Nowick
Bob Martinez, Aide to Leg. Montano
Paul Perillie, Aide to Leg. Gregory
Ali Nazir, Aide to Leg. Kennedy
Alyssa Turano, Aide to Leg. Hahn
Ronald Goodmark
Joyce Greenbaum
Lenora Groshans
Robert Bohlen
Helen Bohlen
June Poshkin
Lance Reinheimer, Director/Vanderbilt Museum

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Diana Flesher, Court Stenographer

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 1:03 PM

CHAIRWOMAN NOWICK:

Can I have all Legislators for the Parks meeting, please.

We'll start this meeting with the Salute to the Flag led by Legislator Stern.

SALUTATION

PUBLIC PORTION

Okay. Welcome to the Parks and Recreation Committee. We do have some cards from the public. We'll start with Ron Goodmark.

MR. GOODMARK:

Thank you. I'm here to basically make you aware of a precious public resource that is in desperate need of attention right now. Blydenburgh Park has taken an enormous beating as a result of Sandy. In fact, it hasn't completely recovered from Irene. There are enormous number of people that use this Park for not only fishing and hiking, but also for horseback riding. Being a person who rides three, four times a week, who has a permit to ride, who gets his Green Key and who pays taxes in Suffolk County, I have to say that I'm disappointed in the ability of Suffolk County Parks to keep up with what really needs to be done there.

Sandy has really devastated the trails to the point where it's unsafe really to be out there for any length of time. Local residents have used handsaws and clippers and different instruments like that to help with what's already happened. But a monumental effort needs to be put forth at this time in order to make these trails and this precious resource to the residents of Suffolk County available again.

And what I'm here really to ask and to find out is what, if anything, is being done as far as planning and for this -- for something to take place here? And, you know, as someone who uses the trails so frequently, I'd like to know some type of timetable as to when something is going to happen.

CHAIRWOMAN NOWICK:

Mr. Goodmark, just before we go into that, there are a few people that want to talk on the same subject. So what I'll do is just bring them up here.

MR. GOODMARK:

Okay, great.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

And then we'll just talk about what we can do.

MR. GOODMARK:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Lance Reinheimer.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Thank you very much. I'm lance Reinheimer, Director of the Vanderbilt Museum. I'm here to speak in favor of IR 2087, which is a Capital appropriating resolution appropriating \$100,000 for construction. I know I've been here a couple times this year. This is part of our long-range plan.

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A few months you appropriated funds for roofing. The roofing is going to be for the Planetarium, the Marine Museum and the stall wing.

This appropriation here for \$100,000 for wiring is the second piece of the Museum -- Marine Museum plan. We're set to roof it. The roofers are coming to start the Planetarium on Monday. Their plan is from there to go onto the Hall of Fishes. This resolution dovetails perfectly in timing because the next step is to upgrade the wiring in the Hall of Fishes, which is 90-years old. It was built in 1922. It was the original museum open to the public. I think it was once a week or once a month, I think, when Vanderbilt opened it up to the public.

So this is a 90-year-old building. It's safety. It just needs to be updated, the wiring. It has a lot of marine specimens in it, lighted cases. They're high energy lights. And so this is important to improve that building and to maintain safety in the museum. Other funds when that's done will be used for the other historic buildings on the property.

And so I hope that you will find this important to consider and to pass. Are there any questions?

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Any questions from the Committee? Okay. Thank you, Lance.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Okay. If I may, I have a couple minutes, if I can just give you an update on where we are in the Museum and some things that are going on.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Sure.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Right now today they're finishing up the paving. They started Monday. They're paving all the parking lots, all the blacktop areas of the Museum. And I want to thank the County. This is something that hasn't been done in probably over fifteen years. It really makes the place pop. It's really doing wonders for our parking lot. It will be re-stripe. As we have events here, we have filled both parking lots. So the paving is being done. They should finish it by tomorrow.

As I mentioned earlier, roofing is starting on the Planetarium. And we're doing our part, too. Our staff painted the planetarium. We painted the front doors. We painted the columns. We painted the dome. We've done landscaping. We've put up retaining walls coming into the planetarium. We had a donation of 23 trees from one of our Trustees, Steve Gittelman; mostly dogwoods. We're using them as ornamental trees. We put a couple in the parking lot. We did some to screen the maintenance area on your way down to the Planetarium.

In looking at the Planetarium, that as you walk in, when you first see it, from that point on, it's going to be a very positive visitor experience. We're doing the renovations in the lobby. My staff is doing the sheetrocking and the construction in the lobby. The County's portion, they're doing the high energy efficient lights in the ceiling. So, it's a joint effort. We've raised \$150,000 for the Planetarium renovations. And it's money that will be well spent. This place is going to be world class when it's done.

So I just wanted to let you know how much we're doing at the Museum. And it's really going to be something that you're going to be proud of. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Thanks, Lance. Sounds like you're not only staff but you're volunteers, too.

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MR. REINHEIMER:

Yeah. We do a lot with a little.

LEG. HAHN:

Thank you for all your leadership.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

When is the Planetarium going to open?

MR. REINHEIMER:

Excuse me? Legislator Hahn, yeah.

To answer your question on when will we open? Is that --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Yes.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Okay. It depends on the roofing. Assuming the weather will be good, the roofing will be done in the next three weeks. From that point on, they'll do the ceiling and the lighting. So I'm hoping the end of January is what I'm looking for to open. Seat installation should be done in the next couple of weeks. The seats are there. They're in the lobby. We just have to get them installed. And the installers or the company, the manufacturer is there today laying out the plan because we had a couple of glitches on installing the chairs. We've tried twice and it hasn't worked. And so I stopped it before they installed the chairs to go back to the plan and to bring back a better plan so that the chairs are done correctly. So end of January is what I'm hoping for, if all goes well.

DEPUTY PRESIDING OFFICER:

Grand opening, what's your plan?

MR. REINHEIMER:

Yes. Right now I'm looking at a grand opening for sponsors, supporters, of March 7th, which is a Thursday. And once I have the roofing done and have a better idea, I will send out notices to save that date. But that's the date I'm looking for right now.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Any other questions for Lance? Thank you.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Thank you very much.

LEG. HAHN:

I'd like to thank you, Lance, for all of your hard work and dedication. You really have been a strong leader over there. And we needed that. Thank you.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Lenora Groshans.

MS. GROSHANS:

Hi. I just want to repeat what Ron said, that the Park -- I've lived here for 22 years and the Park has always been a pleasure to ride my horse in and meet people and enjoy the beautiful scenery.

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But over the past few years, especially with the two hurricanes we've had, the trails, some of them are completely impassable with erosion, huge massive trees down. And it's really become almost -- you can't even ride. If the horse owners in the area didn't go out with their chainsaws and cut some trees down, walkers would not even be able to use the trails.

And one other problem we have in the park, I'm afraid it's a little dangerous when we go out riding or when people are out there fishing. Many -- since the Dog Park is there -- many dogs, huge dogs are off the leash including pit bulls and others. And the owners just have three or four dogs running loose down the trails with no control over them. And when you ask them to please gather their dogs, they talk back to you as though you have no right to be there. One of the horses even got bit. So it is a very dangerous situation out there sometimes to -- even with the Dog Park there.

That's all I have to say. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Thank you. Thank you for bringing this to our attention.

Joyce Greenbaum?

MS. GREENBAUM:

Hi. Well, I'm not going to repeat what was said before me but --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Talk into the mic.

MS. GREENBAUM:

Sure. Well, maybe I will repeat it. I moved here six years ago, specifically to my home because I had a horse. Now I have three; so that I can ride in the Park. And I've really enjoyed very much doing so and I love living here.

Since Irene the Park has been changed significantly, but with the help of the Parks and volunteers, we've been able to negotiate the trails. Since Sandy, that's been pretty much impossible. There have been volunteers, my husband included, who have gone in the Park and done what they could in spite of the fact that they could get hurt, which was a concern to me, certainly, but they can't use bobcats. It's illegal and they can't use other machinery, which is vital. There's been no presence of anybody in the Park. And certainly we all understand priorities. And if, in fact, the Park maintenance crew is being used to help all up the unfortunate people that have lost their homes, we would understand that. But we haven't been told anything at all so we have no information.

In addition, it's impossible for any type of emergency vehicle to navigate itself through the Parks should there, God forbid, be a fire or somebody is injured, it's impossible for any vehicle to get through, which I would -- you know, which, I think, is a huge concern.

In addition there is -- there is another concern, which was brought up by Lenora. My horse has been attacked twice in six months -- in the past six months by dogs that have not been on leashes. The dog owners brought a lot more people into the Park, which I'm fine about. I have three dogs and I enjoy using the Dog Park. However, they leave the Park and they continue to walk without their dogs on leashes.

A pit bull jumped up and bit my horse on the shoulder barely missing my foot. And about three weeks ago an unleashed rottweiler came after my horse and bit him. So without the presence of police or Park personnel, I think, that that continues to be an ongoing problem. The riders get licenses. I'm not certain if the people that use the dog run are required to get a license, but I would think that that would be something that you could talk about and consider. Because certainly the

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fees would be helpful in maintaining the park. And if they get to enjoy our Park, and many of them don't even live in this area, I can't imagine that they would be reluctant to pay, you know, the yearly fee in order to have that service.

So, if you can give us some information about what's going on in the Park, we would greatly appreciate it because we're all very much looking forward to being able to enjoy it again. Thanks for your time.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

We just have one or two questions. Legislator Montano. Who was first? Legislator Hahn first.

LEG. HAHN:

Well, I'm sorry. Legislator Nowick, my questions are actually going to be for the Commissioner on --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

We're going to bring him up.

LEG. HAHN:

-- on this issue because that's very concerning to me, dogs off their leashes, especially those types of dogs. That has to stop. And we have to figure that out.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Legislator Montano, you're going to wait for the Commissioner or you want to ask --

LEG. MONTANO:

I just want to ask her very quickly. I'm sorry to hear about your animal. The dog bits, were they serious bites? Did you have to take your animal, your horse to a veterinarian?

MS. GREENBAUM:

Both times the horse was fortunate. I actually took pictures, which I still have. He did get a bite on the shoulder both times. And teeth marks running down the length of his shoulder. And if you know where a stirrup is, my foot was probably --

LEG. MONTANO:

I don't. I'm sorry.

MS. GREENBAUM:

My foot was probably about three inches away from the horse's shoulder. I didn't call the vet.

LEG. MONTANO:

So you were on the horse when the dog --

MS. GREENBAUM:

I was on the horse

LEG. MONTANO:

-- attacked the horse?

MS. GREENBAUM:

Both times.

LEG. MONTANO:

Really?

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MS. GREENBAUM:

And when that happened, the horse, being in pain and being frightened, jumped around weird. And I was in danger of falling off the horse just because of his reaction. I did not need to call the vet. I did spend quite a bit of time over the next few days taking care of the wound by soaking it and using, you know, using antiseptic and having the vet kind of available to me should he be necessary. And luckily he wasn't.

LEG. MONTANO:

Right. If the dog was rabid, that would have posed a problem also, right?

MS. GREENBAUM:

Well, my horse gets rabies shots but I don't.

LEG. MONTANO:

Oh, so your horse -- he gets his shots --

MS. GREENBAUM:

Yeah.

LEG. MONTANO:

-- so he would be immune or whatever it's --

MS. GREENBAUM:

Right. But a severe enough bite, the horse could have been lame for life, meaning he could not have been used for life. And, you know, a leg injury like that --

LEG. MONTANO:

The dog could have also bitten you.

MS. GREENBAUM:

Yeah.

LEG. MONTANO:

Let me ask you a question. I was actually going to ask Counsel, but I think he stepped out. In a case like that, where does the liability lie? Counsel? They're both out of the room. I'll ask them later.

MS. GREENBAUM:

I can tell you one thing. The woman who had the rottweiler I had seen earlier in the Park. And I asked her very nicely to have her dog on the leash. And her answer to me was "instead of my quote mouthing off to her, I should be spending my time picking up horse poop so she could walk her dog and not deal with the horse poop." That was her answer.

So this woman was certainly not going to be giving me her name when you talk about liability. And after the pit bull bit the horse, I called the Park Police and I got no answer. Because I've been told that they're so short staffed, that they're not available. So I needed to call 911, which I was reluctant to do, but I was advised to at least file a report, which I did.

When a policeman met me at the entrance to the Park, he basically told me that unless he saw the dog bite my horse, there wasn't anything he could do. And I mentioned that the dog was off the leash. And that if -- at the very least, the owner should get a summons for having her dog off the leash. And he told me that he would get through the -- drive through the Park. And if he saw the person, give a summons. And then I didn't hear anything after that.

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LEG. MONTANO:

Well, he's probably correct. If he didn't see the dog --

MS. GREENBAUM:

Right.

LEG. MONTANO:

-- attack you -- you have other remedies in terms of, you know, relief. I'm just trying to figure out who would be liable, whether it be the County or whether, you know --

MS. GREENBAUM:

That I don't know.

LEG. MONTANO:

I know. That's why I'm asking.

MS. GREENBAUM:

But certainly --

LEG. MONTANO:

I don't expect you to know. I was hoping to --

MS. GREENBAUM:

If we saw Park Police, we would be assured, at least, that somebody sort of had our back. But right now as we've all mentioned with the condition of the trails, the police can't even drive through the Park.

LEG. MONTANO:

Okay. Thank you very much.

MS. GREENBAUM:

Okay, thank you.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Madam Chair, if I may, just based on some --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Legislator Kennedy.

LEG. KENNEDY:

-- of the complaints and concerns, as you know, there are a number of temporary workers that the County has just recently brought on through the Labor Department. And based on some of our conversations, I was able to go ahead and request an additional crew go in. As a matter of fact, they're going to be in there tomorrow, I believe, right? That's what I just heard from the Labor Department.

LEG. HAHN:

We're waiting on -- we're waiting for the Commissioner to come up. He's going to come up and answer our questions.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Oh. Okay, good. All right.

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LEG. MONTANO:

Bring him up.

LEG. HAHN:

We're going to wait for the public to finish.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

I want to finish the public. Robert or Helen Bohlen.

MR. BOHLEN:

That's okay. They said everything I was going to say.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay. That would be the cards for the Public Portion. And I'd like to bring the Commissioner up. Commissioner, sounds like we need to do something about the dogs off the leashes.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Yes, Madam Chair. That's certainly news to me. It's troubling as well. I can certainly talk to Lieutenant Sheppard about getting additional presence in the Park.

As far as the trees go, as you're aware we've had probably thousands of trees down in our 60,000 acres of parkland. And we've been getting it from park to park, but we will get a crew in there ASAP.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Legislator Hahn.

LEG. HAHN:

The dogs off the leashes is very concerning. So how does it -- right now there's nobody -- I thought there was supervision and Parks Police in Blydenburgh Park. So there's nothing; nobody at the gate? Nobody in Blydenburgh?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

We don't have any fixed posts. The Park Police go from Park to Park. They're probably in once or twice a day.

LEG. HAHN:

But at the security gate there's nobody there? Or is that just summertime?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

It wouldn't even be a Park Police Officer. It'd just be a Park staff manning the gate.

LEG. HAHN:

And how does the Dog Park work? Just remind me. We don't have any kind of license or membership or anything for dogs to come? And it's gated; correct?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Yes, the Dog Park is gated. We have rules. The dogs have to be licensed. They have to be on a leash until they get into the Park. There's a whole series of rules. But I don't think that's -- that's not really the issue here. The issue is the dogs throughout the rest of the facility, it's more of an enforcement issue.

LEG. HAHN:

The dogs are allowed in the Park; they just have to be on the leash when they're outside of the Dog

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Park itself.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

That's correct, under the control of their owner.

LEG. HAHN:

But there's no one there to enforce that.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Well, there's Park -- there are Park employees that would enforce it, that would let people know to put their dogs on a leash. And then if Park Police are there, they can certainly issue a summons for that violation.

LEG. HAHN:

So do people check in at the gate when they come in? In the car? In a car?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Just members of the general public? They do. At Blydenburgh I think it's only on Saturdays and Sundays where they actually need to pass through a check-in gate.

LEG. HAHN:

And maybe we need to be doing more reminding by our staff in the Park when there's a dog in the car, that the dogs need to be on a leash. We need to do more. This is -- this is very concerning. I mean one person, two dog bites. I mean, that's just -- so there's plenty more out there that have occurred, I'm sure, because, you know, how does that -- how does that happen?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

I'm sorry, how does what happen?

LEG. HAHN:

Well, it currently is going -- complaints are going unheeded. We aren't responding to -- you know, what is a dangerous issue when dogs are allowed to just roam and are not on their leashes. And people are getting bit or horses are getting bit.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

As I said, that's disconcerting to me as well. It's the first I'm hearing about it. They filed a police report, like they should have. And I will check with the Park Police to see how many instances we've had of violations like that. But there is a number. And I'll certainly meet with them after the meeting to give them the Commissioner's number and my office number to lodge a complaint. And we do have Park Police and we do respond to complaints. And where the complaints are, we'll send the officers.

LEG. HAHN:

How many Parks Police do we have? How short are we?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

We have 35 Patrol Officers in the field.

LEG. HAHN:

And that's down from -- what was our high and when?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

I couldn't tell you what the high was, but I do -- I do think we have four vacancies right now.

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CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Don't forget, Kara, the Parks Police in the summer go to the beaches as well.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

That's correct. And there are 20 --

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

They're spread pretty thin. And that is one big park there.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

They're covering from Montauk to --

LEG. HAHN:

How many acres do we have of Parks?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

46,000.

LEG. HAHN:

So -- and then now onto the clearing issue, obviously, since Sandy, you know, there are priorities. And we have 46,000 acres of parkland that has to be cleaned up. But if there were remaining issues since Irene, in terms of clearing trails, etcetera in Blydenburgh, that's concerning to me. Legislator Kennedy mentioned that -- is it the DOL workers that are going to head to Blydenburgh tomorrow, whenever, sometime this week? That's good to hear. And their task will be clearing the trails?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

That's correct. We've been clearing all the trails. We still have two Parks as of today that aren't open, Gardiner Park in Bay Shore. Actually it should be open by sometime this afternoon. And we have an additional -- some additional trees down in Indian Island. But that being said, all the rest of the Parks, their main -- their main features are open. But we haven't gotten into that -- into the back trails yet. And obviously -- obviously we need to do that. We've had probably literally thousands of trees down in the Park system.

LEG. HAHN:

Oh, I'm sure. And the erosion on the trails, is that -- how significant is that erosion?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

That I'll have to look into that. I'm not familiar with that.

LEG. HAHN:

Certainly it's main trails that are eroded significantly that could be a significant liability and we need to, you know, be beyond that -- and obviously we understand. This is actually a very short time since Hurricane Sandy. And we have thousands, like you said, tens of thousands of acres of parkland that has to be cleared with very limited staff. But it is on your priority list. We are getting the DOL workers this week, which is good to hear. And thank you. I'll yield to Legislator Kennedy who I know volunteered as well.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

I thought it was Legislator Montano.

LEG. MONTANO:

Very quickly. Hi, Commissioner? How are you?

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COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Good afternoon.

LEG. MONTANO:

I think you heard the question. In a situation like this, the animal that's off the leash attacks the horse, luckily neither the horse nor the owner were injured. But what about the liability issue? What if there were a serious injury to the horse or even an attack on the owner, would the County have been conceivably -- maybe I should ask Counsel.

MR. NOLAN:

Yeah, I don't -- I don't think the County would bear any legal responsibility for that. The dog owner, you know, they may have liability, depending on the facts and circumstances. But, no, the County wouldn't have a problem legally.

LEG. MONTANO:

We wouldn't have an issue in terms of failure to provide adequate safety?

MR. NOLAN:

There's no duty there --

LEG. MONTANO:

Okay.

MR. NOLAN:

-- to have a certain amount of security or public safety presence.

LEG. MONTANO:

Probably unless there's notice, right?

MR. NOLAN:

It don't matter.

LEG. MONTANO:

All right. I'll take as -- Counsel, I'm just concerned about because that we don't want to occur further liability on legal issues. So it's just one thing that came up, particularly since all of those settlements have to go to Ways and Means. Thank you, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

I think that Legislator Kennedy was next and then Legislator Horsley.

LEG. KENNEDY:

It's your Committee. I mean, I'll yield.

DEPUTY PRESIDING OFFICER:

Hey, Commissioner. Just quickly on the -- the constituent that just spoke earlier about the dogs attacking the horses, I have a question for you. How do you respond to and how do you feel about her comment about what the policeman said?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

I certainly need to look into that. I took notes. My intention was to have a conversation after the meeting.

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DEPUTY PRESIDING OFFICER:

I find that -- yeah, that's -- that's improper. You know, we don't have enough policemen, and you should call 911 when there's a whole host of things that were implied in that answer, including negligence and things like that, that Legislator Montano just brought up. So I'm concerned about that as well.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Agreed. I'd like to --

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

-- actually speak to the Police Officer involved.

DEPUTY PRESIDING OFFICER:

I understand. I mean, do your due diligence but don't let that go overlooked because that was an improper response for an officer.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Duly noted. I took notes.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. If I can just pick up a little bit on that, and I did not hear what -- my constituent's full statements were. I have heard from time to time that there have been incidents where dogs have been off the leash and they've -- have been menacing or there have been, you know, incidents with people who are just legitimately using the Dog Park. Not even horse riders so much, but then you're compounded, I guess, with the equestrian use.

So my question is going to -- I mean, what is -- what -- what is a person who's using our Parks do when they find themselves in a situation where they're either being confronted by a dog, another unruly Park user? How do they summon emergency assistance? What do they do?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Well, if there's a Park -- if there's a Park employee, they would obviously go to the Park employee. The Park employee would notify the Park Police by via radio; otherwise they could just call 911. But we do have a non-emergency number, but I mean in that case where a dog is menacing a horse, I mean, it's certainly -- I'd certainly call 911.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. And that's the piece that I want to make sure we get out there and that everybody understands. And I'll speak specifically about Blydenburgh. Now let's talk about the Dog Park. Because I've been up there many, many Saturdays, Sundays. I'll see 20, 30 cars, people using the Park. It's fulfilling its intention. And by and large it's being utilized properly. Coincidentally I've come through the entrance, as Legislator Hahn was talking about, and there are no Park people there. In November, December, January, quite frankly you're not going to expect that.

Once in a while I see a Parks Police cruiser there, but they're probably just doing simple, maybe, change of shift, maybe reporting stuff. They're not necessarily in the interior of the Park patrolling. So on a Saturday morning at 9:30 or 10:00, if somebody who's legitimately using the Dog Park gets confronted with an off-leash dog, an intoxicated resident or anything else, people that are there should be dialing 911?

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COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

In an emergency situation, yes. There are non -- we have a non-emergency number. That's 852-COPS. But to call in an emergency situation, they should dial 911 and specifically ask for a Park Police Officer.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. But so then let me go another step further with this. So if the -- we have that situation, somebody dials 911. That goes to our dispatch out in Yaphank. The dispatcher determines that this is a park based incident and then would they request our Park Police personnel? How does it get handled from there?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Generally the person calling 911 should be asking for a Park Police Officer. If one is not available, they will send a regular patrol unit.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Well, that's a conversation we're going to have to have with Inspector Rhodes because I think there's a little bit of -- I don't want to call it a question, but probably a need to have a good understanding about seeing us respond. And I would suggest maybe you and I can make -- arrange a time where we can have a conversation with Inspector Rhodes.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

To the best of my knowledge, I don't think there's ever been -- I don't think there's any situations where somebody's called 911 and they haven't gotten a response.

LEG. KENNEDY:

No, I'm not going to disagree with you there, not at all. But what I will say is I do know our complement to Park Police Officers at this point is small compared to our numbers of regular Suffolk County Police Officers. We're a force of about 20 that's covering from, you know, Cold Spring Harbor all the way out to Orient. So geographically we're a large area. And even if we've got ample patrol in the zones, the time that it takes for somebody to get from, you know, Coindre Hall over here can be, you know, half an hour, an hour, an hour-and-a-half. So that may be something that, you know, we need to be mindful of or look into.

What about the Chief of Parks Police at this point? I know Chief {Blumers} retired. Who's actually doing supervision for them now?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Lieutenant. Lieutenant Mike Sheppard is now Commanding Officer of the Park Police.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. So we have adequate supervision at all times for our Officers as they're deployed?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Yes, we do. We meet minimal coverage everyday.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Excellent. Okay. And then finally, again, Labor Department is being responsive, they've added, I guess, a second crew. So there'll be one that works out of the north side from the historic house area, we're doing some trail clearing. And we also have the other crew that's stationed on the south side here that's doing interior clearing as well, I believe; right?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

That's correct. We have 20 DOL crews working -- 20 employees working with Parks crews

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throughout the County. And I believe Blydenburg is one of the spots.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Excellent. Okay. Thank you, Commissioner. Thank you very much. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Thank you. And to the public that came here today to make us aware of this situation, I want to thank you and we will keep up with the situation.

TABLED RESOLUTIONS

We're going to go to the agenda now. **Table resolution 1700, Repealing twilight fee at County beaches. (Browning)** I'm going to make a motion to table, second by Legislator -- anybody, second? Anybody want to make another motion? Okay, there are no other -- no seconds.

LEG. HAHN:

I'll second the table.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay. Okay. 1700 is tabled.

MR. NOLAN:

Call the vote.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay. All in favor? Opposed? **1700 is tabled. (VOTE: 4-0-0-1. LEG. MONTANO NOT PRESENT)**

1949, To modify golf fees for Veterans. (Schneiderman) Motion to table by Legislator Stern, second by myself. All in favor? Opposed? **1949 is tabled. (VOTE: 4-0-0-1. LEG. MONTANO NOT PRESENT)**

INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS

2087, Appropriating funds in connection with rewiring of Historic Buildings at Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum (CP 7445). (Spencer) Motion by Legislator Horsley, second by Legislator Stern. All in favor? Opposed? **2087 is approved. (VOTE: 4-0-0-1. LEG. MONTANO NOT PRESENT)**

2094, Reappoint member to the Suffolk County Board of Trustees of Parks, Recreation, and Conservation (Alexander Glenn McKay). (Spencer) I'll make a motion, second by Legislator Spencer -- no, excuse me -- Stern. All in favor? Opposed? **2094 is approved. (VOTE: 4-0-0-1. LEG. MONTANO NOT PRESENT)**

2143, Amending the 2012 Capital Budget and Program and appropriating funds in connection with Restoration of Smith Point County Park (CP 7162). (Co. Exec.) Motion? I'll make a motion, second by Legislator Hahn. All in favor? Opposed? **2143 is approved. (VOTE: 4-0-0-1. LEG. MONTANO NOT PRESENT)**

2144, Appropriating funds in connection with Beach Replenishment at Meschutt County Park (CP 7163). (Co. Exec.)

LEG. STERN:

Motion.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Motion by Legislator Stern, second by Legislator Horsley.

LEG. HAHN:

On the motion.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

On the motion.

LEG. HAHN:

Just curious, is this as a result of the storm or is this ongoing maintenance and replenishment?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

That's ongoing maintenance and replenishment. We get \$50,000 a year to put sand back on the -- to actually rebuild a berm.

LEG. HAHN:

So we made more than this because of what happened with this storm?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

We're going to, yes.

LEG. HAHN:

Yeah. Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay. We have a motion and a second. All in favor? Opposed? **2144 is approved. (VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

2145, Amending the 2012 Capital Budget and Program and appropriating funds in connection with Improvements to County Golf Courses - West Sayville, Indian Island and Timber Point (CP 7166). (Co. Exec.) I'll make a motion, second by Legislator Stern. All in favor? Opposed? **2145 is approved. (VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

2146, Appropriating funds in connection with Computerized Reservation System (POS) in County Parks (CP 7169). (Co. Exec.) Same motion, same second.

LEG. MONTANO:

Explain that.

LEG. HAHN:

Explanation.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Sure. The money's going to be utilized for upgrades and improvements to the -- to our reservation system from back off the software and to -- the upgrade's going to allow us to generate additional reports to help us kind of figure out what our, you know, how the money's coming in.

LEG. HAHN:

The reservation for the camping?

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COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

It's actually the reservation systems for camping, for golf, everything. Correct, we have a reservation system.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Not the Indian Reservation (laughter).

LEG. MONTANO:

Yeah, that's why -- I hate to say it, I didn't know what the reservation system really was. You're talking about making reservations to attend the Parks.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:

Correct. We have an online reservation system.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Okay. We have a motion and a second. All in favor? Opposed? **2146 is approved. (VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

2147, Appropriating funds in connection with Equipment for Revenue Collection at Park Facilities (CP 7186). (Co. Exec.) Same motion, same second. All in favor? Opposed? **2147 is approved. (VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

2148, Appropriating funds in connection with Energy Savings and Parks Compliance Plan (CP 7188). (Co. Exec.) Same motion. Same second. All in favor? Opposed? **2148 is approved. (VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

2149, Appropriating funds in connection with the Removal of Toxic and Hazardous Materials in County Parks (CP 7185). (Co. Exec.) Same motion same second. All in favor? Opposed? **2149 is approved. (VOTE: 5-0-0-0)**

Okay, that's all our business, we are adjourned.

**THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 1:39 PM
{ } DENOTES SPELLED PHONETICALLY**