PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

of the

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Minutes

A regular meeting of the Parks & Recreation 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 Wednesday, December 10, 2014 at 12:30 PM

Members Present:
Deputy Presiding Officer Jay Schneiderman - Chairman
Legislator Kara Hahn - Vice-Chair
Legislator Tom Cilmi
Legislator Bill Lindsay III
Legislator Kevin McCaffrey

Also in Attendance:
George Nolan - Counsel to the Legislature
Jason Hann - Aide to Deputy Presiding Officer Schneiderman
Michael Pitcher - Aide to Presiding Officer Gregory
Mike Cavanagh - Aide to Legislator Lindsay
Alyssa Turano - Aide to Legislator Hahn
Jason Richberg - Chief Deputy Clerk/Suffolk County Legislature
Benny Pernice - Budget Review Office
Greg Dawson - Commissioner/Suffolk County Department of Parks
Tom Vaughn - County Executive Assistant
John Marafino - County Executive's Office
Greg Dawson - Commissioner/Suffolk County Department of Parks
Nick Gibbons - Principal Environmental Analyst/SC Parks Department
Kelly Morris - Industrial Development Agency/SC Economic Development
Jerry Halpin - Town of Riverhead/Committee for Conservation & Hunting
All Other Interested Parties

Minutes Taken & Transcribed By:
Alison Mahoney - Court Stenographer

(*The meeting was called to order at 1:37 P.M.*)

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay, we'll start. I would like to call this meeting of the Parks & Recreation Committee to order, this 10th day of December, 2014.
Please rise, join us for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator Kara Hahn.

Salutation

Please be seated.

Okay, welcome. We have a relatively brief agenda today. Let me ask first if there are any yellow cards. If somebody wishes to be heard, they need to fill out a yellow card.

MR. RICHBERG:
No cards.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay, there are no yellow cards. Does anybody wish to be heard on public portion who has not filled out a yellow card? Make yourself known now. Not seeing any, so we'll move to the agenda.

We're going to start with ***Tabled Resolutions:***

IR 2013-14 - Authorizing a license agreement for the use, improvements and upkeep of Long House in Montauk County Park with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County (Schneiderman). I may actually have to withdraw this. So before we make a motion, maybe I can bring the Park Commissioner forward.

I understand we need to change this. The Parks Department has met with me, they have recommended a different location nearby inside the main building. I didn't think the main building was ready, but the downstairs of the main building is the space that they're suggesting. And they're also -- Cornell is asking for an amendment to the current contract which is about to expire, so the new contract, it would be added to the new contract, which would really fundamentally change the bill. And I probably couldn't amend it, I'd probably have to withdraw it and submit a new one. So, what's your take on this, Commissioner?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
Yeah, that's my understanding. While Third House Proper might not be ready, I think it's more ready than the --

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Long House.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
Than the Long House is, so I think that's a better option. And speaking with Vito a little earlier and Chris, we think it's a better option for them as well.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Vito, could I bring you up for a second?

MR. MINEI:
Sure.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Now, I've been having meetings with Chris Pickerell and others, you know, with the desire to do a small environmental laboratory out at the Third House and do some science programming, environmental science programming, which I support. We looked at the Long House, sometimes called the Bunk House, it's -- you know, it needs extensive work, that bunk house, and the idea was you guys were seemingly willing to do that work. But this other facility might be better suited, particularly if you're going to do tanks and things like that. It's got a cement floor, so we have no load-bearing issues, water, you know, spilling water, that type of thing that a laboratory might involve. It might be better suited. Have you even had a chance to take a look at that idea?

MR. MINEI:
Yes, and I've talked it over with Chris Pickerell who is our Program leader for the Marine Program, and he's excited. I know he's discussed it with the Commissioner and with you. And in actuality, as we're trying to get a bigger presence out there in East Hampton, this alternative location would be preferable because of the reasons you just cited.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay. And in terms of structuring the agreement, I kind of have to start from scratch a little bit, because the way I had approached the other agreement was with the anticipation of Cornell, CCE having to spend quite a bit of money in getting that building ready. I'm going to have to meet with the Commissioner now, because now you have -- basically you're getting a space that's already ready to go. So we're going -- I don't want to make any promises in terms of what the arrangement would look like. I think I have to have that conversation with the Park Commissioner and we need to determine what a fair arrangement would be for the County and for Cornell.

MR. MINEI:
No, we're thrilled, actually. Whatever your time schedule, whatever involvement you want us in in discussions, we're open and ready to go.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Now in terms of doing this not as a licence agreement but as an amendment to the current contract -- and we're really talking about an amendment to the next contract; it's not really an amendment because it doesn't exist yet. This contract is about to expire, right?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
We have -- it was a one-year contract with three one-year options, and they're in their third one-year option and I think we're still discussing whether we need to maybe go out for an RFP or not to enter into the next agreement.

MR. MINEI:
You're talking Peconic Dunes.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
I'm talking the Peconic Dunes contract, I'm assuming, right?

MR. MINEI:
I think the Legislator was talking about our overall contract --

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
Overall contract.

MR. MINEI:
-- where we have access to buildings. We're in the first year of a three-year contract.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay, so that's the one we'd be amending, not --

MR. MINEI:
Yes, I believe so.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
Yeah, I need to defer with the County Attorney.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay.

MR. MINEI:
We can do that anyway, Legislator, because we do that every year. There's always some changes to the contract.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
George, am I right that we have to kind of start over here?

MR. NOLAN:
I would. It's really a new idea, so I think we should. There's no loss of time, it's just a resolution. So I think it would be best to start over.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay. So Mr. Clerk, we'll ***withdraw IR 2013*** and work on a new one with the Park Commissioner and CCE, and we'll probably see that early next year. Okay?

Introductory Resolutions

All right, moving on to ***2086-14 - Appropriating funds in connection with Fencing and Surveying various County Parks (CP 7007) (County Executive).*** Commissioner, it's just kind of a general budget line, right, that you use for basic repairs.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
That's right. Yeah, we're looking to appropriate the $50,000 that's in 2014 budget for fencing in County Parks.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay. Is there a motion?

LEG. HAHN:
(Raised hand).

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Motion by Legislator Hahn. Second by Legislator McCaffrey; if that's okay?

LEG. McCAFFREY:
Yes, that's fine.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? ***Approved (VOTE: 5-0-0-0).***

2087-14 - Appropriating funds in connection with improvements to Peconic Dunes County Park (CP 7050)(County Executive). I think there may be some questions on this one.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
Okay.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
So why don't we -- we'll do that first, even before the motions, if we could. So you're trying to -- is it the roof that needs repair for the cafeteria?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
No, this is actually the entire dining hall, we need to rebuild it. The dining hall there is probably from the existence of the original camp. Cornell did a structural survey, I want to say about two years ago, it did not come back favorably. The building was condemned, we couldn't let children eat in it, so they've been operating out of a tent for the last two summers. This money is planning money to put out --

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Why couldn't they eat in it, because it leaks?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
No, it's more structural.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
Structural, okay.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
I think the foundation. Vito, you want to elaborate?

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Because one of the concerns that was brought to my attention, you know, 150,000 is just planning.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
Uh-huh.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
It's a lot of money to actually not fix the building. What if we just took the 150,000 and repaired the building?

MR. MINEI:
Maybe I can address those?

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay. Vito?

MR. MINEI:
Again, I'm Vito Minei, I'm Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County, and I'm joined today by my colleague, Chris Colahan, who's our Director at Peconic Dunes Camp. And you'll see in the package the background on that building. The dining hall is the centerpiece. If you first -- if I can invite your attention to the aerial, that the big block box in the middle of the graphic is a high

point at the camp and we'd love to have the whole committee out there some time during the camp season. But that's a focal point for Chris when he's inviting parents to get there.

Unfortunately, that building is decades old. A 2001 evaluation by the Parks Department recommended that it be torn down. And we've been doing, you know, sort of a band-aid approach to keeping the building open for a number of years. We had an individual engineer come in, we commissioned him at Cornell Cooperative Extension. He evaluated it, he said, yes, indeed, that building had long outlived its useful life, but since it was still standing after Sandy and the hurricane, he suggested some minor modifications.

But if you read the justification that Chris has included in there, you'll see that basically what happened -- and we agree with the Commissioner. Finally at a point, in consultation with DPW, he directed that we not use it at the beginning of last year's camp season. So our camp had to incur an immediate cost of about 25, $30,000 for a tent. Again, the logistics of keeping the kitchen where it was, but moving dining to this tent is very problematic.

But the point is we're all in agreement. And I want to thank, again, the Commissioner and his staff, DPW. I want to thank the County Executive for including 150,000 in planning. And you'll also see, at the tail-end of that information package, the details of the overall CP 7050, and the idea is there is construction money. And indeed, $150,000 is not trivial, but that's relatively standard for planning and design. I think the rule of thumb our friends at DPW use is about 10% of construction costs, so that's not out of line. So the planning funds are to move forward.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
So you're anticipating one and a half million dollars in actual construction costs?

MR. MINEI:
If you see the vision my visionary colleague has, its a considerable building. This is scaled down dramatically from what we had approached the Parks Department for. In fact, we were probably here before the Parks Committee almost two years ago with a bolder plan for long-term, and we were anticipating year-round use. But maybe I can -- I'll ask Chris Colahan to maybe give you some of the details of this building?

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Sure.

MR. MINEI:
Chris Colahan.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
I mean, maybe stay there because, you know, I'm trying to -- it's a lot of money for a building, obviously, a million and a half for a camp that's extremely seasonal. I like the design, it's very nice, but the current facility is quite rustic, it's a big transition, it's much more modern type of building that you're creating. Not too modern, but --

MR. MINEI:
Maybe I can jump in here, Jay? Just quickly, if you scan down the justification, from the beginning we realized this is a pretty daunting dollar figure in these tough economic times. But Chris has been running an extremely successful camp, and we're willing, if indeed Cooperative Extension is extended, a long-term relationship out there to defray more than two-thirds of the cost with the proceeds that Chris Colahan and his staff generate. So if indeed, on a million and a half dollars, when we did the math a couple of years ago at the prevailing rate, we would provide 80,000 of the $120,000 annually to defray the cost of the bonding. So we are sensitive to that issue. We're that

committed to the camp and we want a facility that's safe and really attractive, as Chris brings new campers in every year.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
And if I can jump in, that's in addition to the $20,000 commitment that they've already been giving us for Capital Program improvements to the facility, so,

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
How does this -- you know, in terms of the County interest here, I know the County owns the land, Cornell runs this camp. In terms of serving the County interest, does this -- are there scholarships for low income kids, things like that? I mean, what is this camp doing for Suffolk County?

MR. COLAHAN:
That's a great question, Sir. Since 2010 we have been working directly with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and they provide us with funding every year that supports 96 scholarships that are all need-based. Those scholarships are distributed, the past two years, to every Legislative District in the County. To qualify for those scholarships, campers need to meet one of three criteria: They've either participated in the Foster Care System at some point in their life, they presently qualify for Federally Free or Reduced School Lunch, or their family income is below poverty level. We work with many local agencies such as Family Service League, Big Brothers/Big Sisters to create a network to get those scholarships into the hands of the people that deserve them.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
What's their total enrollment there? It's 97, you said, kids?

MR. COLAHAN:
Ninety-six. And we actually just spoke with Deputy Director Peter Scully about increasing that number to about 120 for 2015. The total enrollment of the overnight camp for which those scholarships are applied is 160 campers per week for eight weeks for a total of around 1,200 campers. So they represent roughly 10% of the camp population.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay. And what are the costs on a per camper basis; what do they pay to attend for a week?

MR. COLAHAN:
This past summer, camp tuition for overnight camp was $639 per week.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay.

MR. COLAHAN:
Which is comparable --

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
That includes meals?

MR. COLAHAN:
That includes everything.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
Lodging, meals; it's a good deal.

MR. COLAHAN:
We try --

MR. MINEI:
It is -- go ahead. I was going to say, it is a good deal. An East Ender like yourself, following Dan's Papers, every year they commend Chris for being the best camp, cost effective camp on the East End. So we're very proud of that relationship, too.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Somebody else had a question, I thought.

LEG. CILMI:
Yeah, I have one.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Legislator Cilmi.

LEG. CILMI:
Hey, guys. So is this a -- this is not a sleep-over.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
It is.

LEG. CILMI:
It is a sleep-over camp.

MR. COLAHAN:
It's both a sleep-over and a day camp.

LEG. CILMI:
Okay. And what percentage of your campers are sleep-over? And is the $639 that we spoke about a sleep-over --

MR. COLAHAN:
That's the sleep-over rate.

LEG. CILMI:
That's the sleep-over cost.

MR. COLAHAN:
We also have 48 day-campers per week, and the cost for day camp last summer was $349 for one week, and then for four more weeks there was a discount to $299.

LEG. CILMI:
And do your campers -- and this may vary depending on whether or not they're a sleep-over camper or a day camper. But do your campers typically camp for more than one week?

MR. COLAHAN:
It's split about 50/50.

LEG. CILMI:
Okay, so some do multiple weeks and others just do one week.

MR. COLAHAN:
It's two weeks -- one to two weeks is the average.

LEG. CILMI:
Okay. And Vito, you talked about CCE sort of committing to two-thirds of the cost, $80,000 a year. How does that actually happen? What -- by what mechanism does that actually happen?

MR. MINEI:
You can't imagine how glad I am that you asked that question.

LEG. CILMI:
(Laughter).

MR. MINEI:
My good friend --

LEG. CILMI:
I'm sure my colleagues will be very glad to hear the answer to that.

MR. MINEI:
My good friend the Commissioner knows, we've been awaiting an RFP. As he mentioned, our relationship has been on a year-to-year basis. We're looking for an RFP that we are staying ready to respond to -- for a long-term commitment. So once that RFP came out in a proposal, we would repeat, you know, our commitment financially, but it would be part of the long-term agreement. For as long as CCE is operating a camp, we would continue to make that commitment.

We are very comfortable that Chris is running a very successful camp and that we can do that in the future. But it would be part of the agreement once we respond, and we anticipate being a successful respondent to Request For Proposals.

LEG. CILMI:
And the request -- either to you, Vito, or to the Commissioner. The Request For Proposals would be for what, exactly?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
It would be for the operation of an overnight camp at Peconic Dunes. Their agreement currently runs through December of 2015, so we have another year, so the intent was to get an RFP out some time this year that Cornell could respond to.

LEG. CILMI:
And as part of that agreement, theoretically, CCE would pay the County for the ability to operate a camp, and then the revenue from the camp -- again, theoretically -- goes to CCE?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
That's correct, that's the way it would be worded. When we put out the RFP, we would put certain requirements for the RFP in, one of which would be a capital commitment of X number of dollars. And Cornell has already committed to I think it was $80,000 a year, so that would be part of the -- you know, that would be included in the RFP for anybody else that would want to bid.

LEG. CILMI:
So what does CCE pay the County presently?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
Right now they operate the camp and they give us -- they have a commitment of $20,000 a year of capital improvements into the facility.

LEG. CILMI:
Okay. So this is going to increase their commitment to the County three-fold, increase three-fold, so it's bringing it up by 60,000.

MR. MINEI:
Right.

LEG. CILMI:
How do you expect to be able to do that?

MR. MINEI:
I'll turn this over to my young colleague again. How are we going to do this? Go ahead.

MR. COLAHAN:
Well, over the past eight years -- I started in 2007, in the past eight years our enrollment has more than doubled; we started with 838 my first summer, we had a little under 1600 campers this summer. And the way -- it's similar to any airplane. Passenger fees pay for the first like 90% of the flight and then the last 10% is where the airline has the ability to gain revenue and excess of the cost to operate. So because we have been a successful camp for the last six years operating at capacity, because media, like Dan's Papers, has rewarded us *Dan's Papers Best Summer Camp* for the past seven years. Our camper retention is increasing every year, social media presence is one of the best in the area. We have been able to operate at above our expenses, which is very rare. The average cost to operate an overnight camp, per camper per day is $110 and we operate at $90 per day. So we've also been very efficient with how we spend our money. We have not been wasteful.

MR. MINEI:
If I can just quickly jump in, Legislator. To put this in context, none of the staff, including Chris, are paid for out of County dollars. All the staff -- including Chris, again -- are paid for from the proceeds from the campers families. So there's no other financial commitment by the County on that part.

LEG. CILMI:
So if we approve this Capital Project today, there'll be a cost to the County of $120,000 a year in terms of --

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
This is only for the planning. This is for $150,000 for planning money for the new dining hall, which is critical to them operating the camp. I mean, I know that they've been operating out of a tent for the last two years.

LEG. CILMI:
Right.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
At a considerable expense.

LEG. CILMI:
Right. But assuming that the planning proceeds to construction and, you know, the cost of the

whole project to the County will be approximately, on a yearly basis, about $120,000, that's the debt service on the bonding?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
I'm sorry. Once the dining hall is constructed?

LEG. CILMI:
Yes.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
I defer that to BRO.

LEG. CILMI:
I'm sorry, Greg, I'm reading from CCE's --

MR. MINEI:
That was based on estimates at the prevailing rate two years ago when we first proposed this relationship with the County in anticipation of Request For Proposals.

LEG. CILMI:
I don't know if I could ask Budget Review if that makes sense to you.

MS. HALLORAN:
I don't have CCE, what they handed to you, but this particular resolution on today's agenda appropriates 150,000, and the Executive fiscal impact estimates total debt service at 165,640.87, and first year debt service at $33,128.17; that's for this particular piece. And in the adopted Capital Program, I also see there's 1.65 million in 2016, besides this initial 150,000.

LEG. CILMI:
Right. So what would be the debt service on that 1.6, approximately?

MS. HALLORAN:
I don't have that immediately available.

LEG. CILMI:
Okay.

MR. MINEI:
This would also --

LEG. CILMI:
My question is are we putting the cart before the horse here? I mean, if we authorized -- if we sort of let the horse out of the barn here and begin the planning, which then nine times out of ten leads to the construction, and we don't give the contract to CCE, or if somehow the commitment from CCE to compensate the County for two-thirds of the cost associated, where do we stand? I mean, we're still then committed to a building that now we have to pay for.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
We're committed either way to run a camp. I mean, it's a very successful camp, it's been running for 30 somewhat years. Whether Cornell runs it or not, somebody is going to have to go in there and run a camp and they can't do it without a dining hall, regardless.
You just can't operate that way.

LEG. CILMI:
Well, that may be, but in this case we have Cornell saying to us they'd pay us $80,000, or something like that, a year, which is 60,000 more than what they're currently paying us. And so we then, based on that, we might commit to build this, you know, $1.6 million building. But if we didn't have that commitment, maybe we wouldn't be so quick to approve it or we wouldn't be so elaborate in our vision for what the building might look like and then, therefore, might cost.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
I think that Cornell has an excellent plan. And when we put out the RFP, we're going to put in certain criteria that we're going to expect back from perspective bidders. So that's the least that we're going to get is the $80,000, so I think the money would be well spent. Does that answer the question?

MR. MINEI:
If I could just jump in quickly, Legislator. Its a good point, but that's exactly what the planning phase is for, is to lay out all the alternatives. And if you feel this is grand, I wish you'd seen the previous plan, you might not characterize it that way. But when you're in the planning phase, you would go through all those alternatives. In fact, I think there might be a scaled-down version, especially since we changed our vision from an all-year heated facility to really focusing more on the summer time. So your point is well taken, but those alternatives would be included in the planning phase, as with contingencies, of, you know, who takes over the camp.

But the point is if you take this in sequence, Parks made the decision a while ago that the best use of this County park is for a camp, and we fully agree. And if you saw the amenities out there, you would see why we're attracted to them. But that dining hall, first of all, is unusable now, so that's academic, we're operating out of a tent.
But the point is I believe all your issues will be addressed.
And the thing to remember, as I'm reminded all the time, is it's County property and we're working on the County Capital Program, so we will respond to any issue or alternative you would want to see evaluated.

LEG. CILMI:
I appreciate that. But I do continue to be concerned by the amount of money that the County is spending outside the walls of the County for planning purposes. So we continue to issue bonds and pay outside contractors for planning. And I don't know if this is something that we could do in-house, but it seems to me that we should be doing a lot more of this in-house. And I recognize that we don't have the staff presently to do it, but at some point in time, you know, you have to weigh, all right, is it worth spending 150 grand with an outside contractor that's going to cost you 160 plus whatever at the end of the day? How much time are they going to spend on it, or is it worth hiring somebody who can do this kind of work and maybe juggle three projects, you know, during the course of a year and pay that person less than a hundred grand or about a hundred grand, let's say, to do it. So that's the question that I really have. You can't answer that question, Vito, I don't think. I'm not sure that the Administration can answer that question, but that's my concern here. I'm done. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
I have some, too. Let me go to Legislator McCaffrey, though, and then I'll come back to myself.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
Thank you. Vito or Chris, how big is the proposed dining hall square footage wise?

MR. COLAHAN:
The proposed size is on the vision sheet, I believe it's 6,000 or 6500 square feet, and most of that is open space. The only part of the building that would actually have a footprint would be the food preparation area, the kitchen.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
So anything that resembles a real structure. How many square feet is that?

MR. COLAHAN:
That question would have to be answered by DPW, Sir. I do not know the answer to that.

MR. MINEI:
Another point, too, for efficiency, Chris had done preliminary work with Parks and with DPW based on feeding all the staff, all the campers at one time. We've done it on the old dining hall in shifts, so that alternative would have to be evaluated as well. And that might bring the cost down considerably, too, because obviously the overall size of the building would change with different alternatives.

But one of the big cost savings is going from a fully enclosed, feeding all the campers and staff at one time, to what we would suggest is a far more modest proposal at this point that could still change if the desire about spending the Capital Program funds changes by the County Legislature.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
So right now the modest proposal is 1.5 million?

MR. MINEI:
Yes, that's what you have before you. But, you know, that was the commitment to the approval and authorization of the funds for -- again, I've given away my packet -- but that Capital funds for construction is out another year into 2016 or '17, I forget, I think it's '16.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
Sixteen.

MR. MINEI:
But yes, it's a sizeable building for a sizeable camp.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
Right, but do we know how many -- like I said, looking at the plans briefly, it appears that some of it is kind of like an open area and then it's like an open dining area. We don't know as we're standing here how much of it is an actual structure where you say, okay, the foundations and all these other types of things?

MR. COLAHAN:
I did forget a calculation that was made. I was at a camp food service conference two years ago put on by the American Camp Association and one of the kitchen consultants there recommended that kitchens be one-third to one-half the size of the seated dining area, so that was how the 6,000-square foot area was calculated. I believe -- I looked up the building code requirements for square footage per person in this heated dining area, and using 375 people to get the seated dining area square footage, and then I multiplied that by 1.5 to get the total square footage of the building.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
That is if you had everybody all there at once as opposed to kind of doing it as a shift.

MR. COLAHAN:
That's with every overnight camper, every day camper, our 85 staff, that includes all of those people.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
That's everybody sitting down all at once, right?

MR. COLAHAN:
Everyone sitting down all at once.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
All right, thank you.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
I have some questions as well. So you've been operating out of a tent, basically. And you're at capacity, right; all the beds are full?

MR. COLAHAN:
For the last two years that has been the case.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
But it actually hasn't hurt camp enrollment, the fact that you've been in a tent.

MR. COLAHAN:
For the last two years, that has not been the case. For the last two years, it has not hurt enrollment.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
Right, it hasn't --

MR. COLAHAN:
We have not had any negative feedback.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
I certainly understand the desire for a beautiful new building. I mean, I looked at the drawings, it's gorgeous. And I also, you know, look at pictures of what's there now, it looks like it needs a lot of work. Has anybody done a report on what it would take to actually fix the existing building up; do we have those numbers as a comparison?

MR. MINEI:
Well, DPW evaluated it. And again, I invite you to go back and look at the 2001 Parks Department evaluation where they recommended at that time that the building be demolished. If you look at some of those photos --

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
All right.

MR. MINEI:
-- they're pretty graphic. We're just barely shoring up the foundation. And again, I --

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
What would it cost to, let's say, tear it down and build something similar to it or, you know, put up a butler building?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
I think that's what we're talking about.

MR. COLAHAN:
That's more or less what we are --

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
The replacement costs are a million and a half?

MR. COLAHAN:
DPW quoted 500,000 to shore up the existing building.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
How many square feet is it?

MR. COLAHAN:
The existing building has a 140-person capacity, and that's where we eat in two shifts and day camp eat in a separate -- they eat on picnic benches.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
This is a thousand square feet?

MR. COLAHAN:
The vision that you see in front of you is simply a vision. It was not hired by any architecture firm, those are imagines from Google images. As Vito stated, the planning and design process is -- the purpose of that would be to get actual design images within the budget that we would be provided.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
This number strikes me as high. If you said we need a construction budget of a half of million dollars, that would feel more in line with, you know, the rustic nature of the camp. You know, a million and a half for a construction budget and 150,000 for planning is pretty high for a seasonal facility.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
I think the --

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
You know, at the college, maybe it's more year-round. This is very much -- what does it operate, June, July, August?

MR. MINEI:
Yeah, again, those numbers were with the guidance of DPW.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Yeah, no, I understand that. But the question --

MR. MINEI:
Under the guidance today, I mean, that's pretty powerful input going into the planning phase, that the County Legislature who strongly feel that the cost should be reduced. And whoever would be hired or whoever we ask on the already strained architectural staff at Public Works to design that, we could point them in that direction, that you should be looking to scale down the overall cost and we'll see where that goes. One suggestion would be going back to feeding, you know, the campers and staff in shifts; that would reduce the size of the building dramatically. So we will look at that

alternative regardless, but --

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
The Capital Program.

MR. MINEI:
We hear what you're saying, but we're asking please to move forward. We've waited for several years and we're operating out of a tent. I don't know how many more summers Dan's Papers will rate us the bargain if the kids continue to eat out of a tent.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
I understand that. But you're also about to enter an RFP process, right? This is -- that contract is over, right; you're starting a new one on Peconic Dunes?

MR. MINEI:
You're talking about the camp itself or CCE in general?

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
No, I'm saying CCE. At this camp, the contract's expired and you're looking for a new one, right?

MR. MINEI:
Yes, we've been on an extension now for a couple of years. We've been asking and posing that we would prefer, we would --

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
No, I'm just saying because what you had just said. I don't think that was an assumption that you're --

MR. MINEI:
The original contract is over except for the extension; we're operating legally on an extension.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay, I just wanted to clarify. Because it was built into your comment that you'll be there next year; I'm assuming you probably will be, but you have to go through the process.

MR. MINEI:
That's why we're asking for an RFP.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay.

MR. MINEI:
We stand ready to respond.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Commissioner, the Capital Project here, the full project is about 1.5 million; is that right?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
Yes. And again, this isn't just for a building. It's going to include the --

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
What year is the construction in the -- in the Capital Budget, where is the construction money and what year?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
It's budgeted for 2016, 1.6.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
And 2014 is the planning money?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
That's correct.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Of 150,000.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
Yeah, we need to get this in obviously before the last meeting.

MR. MINEI:
If I can jump in. The last two pages come right out of the Capital Program.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay.

MR. MINEI:
So you'll see where the planning funding was authorized, we're asking for you to appropriate that. And indeed the construction funding, as I see it, is authorized for 2016.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay. So we have no motions yet on this.

MR. VAUGHN:
Legislator Schneiderman, I would just ask the committee to just consider one other thing. I think that since this is going to RFP, and I understand that it is Cornell Cooperative Extension's desire to stay on board as the vendor of the County camp. Things go to RFP for a reason; they go to RFP so we can get back proposals that may be even more spectacular than the work that Cornell is doing there. And this is not to say that their work has not been outstanding, its a tremendous job for the staff out there to grow a size of a camp, especially during economic times when everything has been very difficult to grow. But the one thing that I would add is I think that with the commitment to go forward with a new facility, with a dining hall in some way, shape or form, I would say that that may very well change the nature of the RFP proposals that come back to us. I think that a commitment that we are going to be replacing a building that is in less desirable shape based on these pictures that I'm looking at could certainly possibly sway the proposals that we get as different vendors are considering all their options going forward when responding to this proposal. So I would think that this type of commitment may actually spark more proposals to come in than just one vendor who understands the process.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
And we're running out of time basically on authorizing the money, too, right?

MR. VAUGHN:
Right. So there also is no -- there is no money for this facility in the 2015 Capital Budget. So we have the opportunity to either appropriate this planning funding as it is now this year or there would be no funding in next year's budget for this project.

I would also say that since the construction portion of this is in the 2016, it gives us an opportunity next year during the 2015 Capital Program to really talk about the size of this building and how we kind of want to go forward with it. And as always, when we don't spend all the money in the planning steps, we bring you back over a resolution that -- I'm sorry, when we don't spend all the money in a Capital Program, we bring you back over a resolution at the end of the year showing why we're closing it out.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
So it would be -- and I'll support discharging this. I'll make a motion to approve. But I certainly would like the Administration to try to find a way to get this functional, usable, in harmony with the rest of the camp in terms of architecturally, and for the least amount of money. As much as some may desire a fancy building there that maybe could do more things than the current building, I just think we are still in challenging economic times and it's not unreasonable to want to see this building repaired.

MR. MINEI:
It's really irreprable. I mean essentially --

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Repaired or replaced.

MR. MINEI:
But it's actually replaced --

MR. VAUGHN:
Legislator Schneiderman, we'd be more than happy to go back and take a second look at the plan

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Nothing extravagant.

MR. VAUGHN:
We understand exactly what you're speaking about and we'd be more than happy to have those conversations with DPW to see whether or not -- and again, this is why I brought up the 2015 Capital Program, to see whether or not the size of the building, as currently conceived, is what is necessary for a replacement, or if there is something that could function on a smaller scale. We don't disagree with you about the difficult economic times that we're in and we would be happy to take a second look. But I think it is important with our commitment of that second look to appropriate the planning funding.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
So we have a motion to approve. Is there any other motions or seconds?

LEG. LINDSAY:
I'd like to make a motion just to discharge it without recommendation, given the questions we still have surrounding it.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay, motion to discharge without recommendation. How about to my right; any motions?

LEG. McCAFFREY:
I just wanted to --

LEG. HAHN:
Second the motion the approve.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay, a second on the motion to approve.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
Can I discuss now? Okay.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
On the motion.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
I just want to say, on the motion, I appreciate everything that Chris has done, he runs a good camp and everything Vito and Cornell does. But I just have trouble setting the tone by saying we're going to appropriate one point -- $150,000 which, as Legislator Cilmi pointed out, nine out of ten times that leads to that building or whatever that project would be at $1.5 million, and I have a really, really, really hard time thinking that we'd ever build a dining hall in a camp for $1.5 million. In these economic times, I can't -- I couldn't support it. I'm just concerned about by approving $150,000 for planning, that that's going to lead to a $1.5 million building; I just have a lot of trouble with that and I'm deeply concerned about that.

I think you do great work, we need to do something, but I don't think it needs to be $1.5 million. And as Legislator Cilmi said, we need to start working on getting more of this -- if we have to hire people to do this in-house, I think it would save us money in the long run. But I'm concerned about setting a tone at 150,000 leading to 1.5.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
All right. So right now -- is that a motion to table or is there a motion on that or just not going to support discharging?

LEG. McCAFFREY:
I'm not sure.

(*Laughter*)

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay. So why don't I do this; why don't I amend my motion to approve to a motion to discharge without recommendation; all right, Kara? Seconded by Legislator Lindsay. That will address the fact -- it kind of red flags it a little bit, puts it in front of the full Legislature. If you want to make a motion to table, you can; otherwise I'll call the vote on discharging without recommendation.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
(Nodded head yes).

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
There's a motion and a second to discharge without recommendation. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

LEG. CILMI:
Opposed.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
One opposed, Legislator Cilmi. Okay, thank you. ***It's discharged (VOTE: 4-1-0-0 - Opposed: Legislator Cilmi).***

Okay. So I got one yellow card that came in; it wasn't here, I guess, for public portion. Why don't we move from the agenda for a moment, because this is an item that is the agenda -- in fact, it's our next item on the agenda -- and allow the individual to be heard, all of three minutes. Jerry Halpin on IR 2127.

So, Mr. Halpin, you have three minutes to make your comments known. Just if you could identify yourself for our records and then you may begin.

MR. HALPIN:
My name is Pastor Jay Halpin. I am actually from the Town of Riverhead, New York, where I represent the Committee for Conservation and Hunting there at Riverhead as well, but I also am an active hunter here in Suffolk County.

I just wanted to implore and encourage you to continue to do the efforts that you're doing to increase hunting in Suffolk County for the individuals that live here, and I wanted to support and show my support for the pilot basis of basically the fee that's going from a daily fee to an option to a one-time fee which would, I believe, generate more revenue and give men and women the opportunity to come out and the encouragement to come out and hunt our lands more so that the cold and the harvesting of our local deer would be done by Suffolk County residents, and would also help the economy in that area. So I believe and I want to just encourage and invite you guys to consider that and continue to do and take every step and effort to encourage our residents to be doing as much harvesting of our own deer as possible.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Pastor, can I ask a question, do you mind?

MR. HALPIN:
Sure.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
You're a hunter, you obviously get this permit, you know, the shotgun permit to hunt.

MR. HALPIN:
I do.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
And you're currently paying, what, $17 a day to do that?

MR. HALPIN:
Yes, Sir.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Last hunting season, how many days would you say you --

MR. HALPIN:
I believe with the Suffolk County property and what you're referring to, I did hunt three days, so the $35 would have actually been a wash for me. But I know the other people that would have hunted, they come and they're not sure if they want to go stand-by or they only take -- they only want half a day, they can only hunt the morning, so if a guy is waiting to -- he would have to pay the full 17, I

believe, to hunt just a few hours in the afternoon, where if he had paid that solid fee, if I'm understanding that correctly, he would be able to come each day, some of the retirees and people like that that would be able to come and sit, so.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Now, each -- each day they have to get a permit? Maybe I'll ask the Commissioner, because I'm not quite sure how it works. You can't just hunt every day during hunting season, right?

MR. HALPIN:
Not during the shotgun season. You would show up at one of the check stations and you would wait and you would check in and then you would go through all your paper work and then you would pay your fee and each individual, there's three people per your party at most, I believe, at the spots that I've hunted, and they each pay their fee and then they go out and then they have to be back I believe either at four or five o'clock.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
So this would allow you to hunt a longer day or?

MR. HALPIN:
No. What it would allow you to do is -- for myself, the first time that I hunted, basically it would be the $17, the second time it would be a break-even, and then the third time basically it would allow our residents to be able to -- they would be encouraged to hunt that third time because it would be -- it would be like getting a season pass somewhere, it pays for itself.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Right. I guess what I'm getting at or trying to get to is do you have any guarantee that you'll get to use it three times or four times?

MR. HALPIN:
No, Sir, you do not.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
So you actually could go one -- you could pay for that seasonal permit and actually never get to hunt at all under it.

MR. HALPIN:
Right.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
Or maybe you'll get to hunt once. You might go try to hunt seven or eight times, but be denied seven or eight times.

MR. HALPIN:
Yes, Sir.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
So you're taking a risk, so to speak.

MR. HALPIN:
You are. But I think most hunters that are good conservationists feel like it would be putting back into the program that we're doing and they would do it. So it would be an easier thought process.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
All right. So for the guys who frequently hunt, maybe they'll come out a little bit ahead. If they're hunting -- if you're hunting more than twice you're ahead by doing this.

MR. HALPIN:
Yes, Sir.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
As long as you can get in.

MR. HALPIN:
Yes, Sir.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Right.

MR. HALPIN:
Some of the guys, like I said --

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
Now, are there guys that hunt five, six, seven, eight times?

MR. HALPIN:
Yes, Sir, I believe so. And I believe that they -- a lot of them are retirees and it would give them the opportunity, like I said, where a guy might go in the among and he may harvest his deer and go home and then his spot becomes available, and then he can go to that check station. But guys aren't showing up because if they show up at two o'clock and they only have 2-4, they don't want to pay the full days because it's a risk. But if they can show up and they've already paid that kind of membership fee, it pays for them.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
Right.

MR. HALPIN:
And then what it's doing is it's calling our deer and then we don't have to bring in outside -- you know, kind of like that whole process.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Do you think on the whole, I know you can't speak for the hunting community at large, but is there sense that hunters support this initiative?

MR. HALPIN:
I believe they would. The more they know about it I believe they will, because most guys when they go to buy their license will even buy the full game license, even though they may not use portions of it, to support conservation and hunting in the area.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay. I think the rest of my questions would go to the Commissioner, so.

MR. HALPIN:
Thank you for your time.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
Anybody else have questions for the Pastor? All right, thank you.

So let's go back to the agenda. ***IR 2027-14 - To amend Section 948-26 of the Suffolk County Codef or Deer Hunting (Shotgun season) on a pilot basis (County Executive)***; it's the bill that that gentleman was just talking about. I'll make a motion to approve.

LEG. LINDSAY:
Second.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Second by Legislator Lindsay. Commissioner, I want to understand this fully. I guess maybe the first thing is let's look at the fiscals of it. So are we losing money by doing this or gaining money by doing this?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
I think we stand to possibly gain from it. As the gentleman just spoke, we have a lottery system where these sites are booked anyway and people have paid their $17. So this is -- we're likely to have people buy this annual pass and come out and take that two or three afternoon slot that would not have been taken, it wouldn't have been taken prior, so.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay. When they pay the $17 fee, that's only after they've been awarded a slot, though, right?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
Yes, we have the lottery.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
And this would be -- they'd be paying this before they've been awarded a slot, right? This annual, this seasonal fee.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
That's correct. I mean, I don't imagine anybody --

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
You buy it in advance, I guess.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
That didn't get a slot in the lottery, I can't imagine they'd buy this. And again, this is only an option.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Oh. So the first thing you do the lottery and then they decide whether they're going to pay for the day or the season?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
That's correct. I'm going to bring Nick Gibbons up, he's our expect on hunting and he could kind of explain how the lottery system works, if that's okay.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
Okay. Yeah, I'd appreciate that. So yeah, so just a little more information like on how the lottery system works and when they'd pay and how this might be an advantage to the hunters and the pros and cons for the County of doing this.

MR. GIBBONS:
Sure. I'll give you a brief introduction to how that lottery works. January season is weekdays only, currently anyway. They are considering changes to that at the State level; when those changes, if and when they come through, we'll consider that at a later date, but for this season anyway. We participate in the first three weeks of the season and the way the regulations -- it's the first full week after New Year's, so I think this year it's the 5h; Monday the 5th is the first week of the year.

So Parks participates in the first three Monday-to-Friday periods at two parks, Montauk and Hubbard which is in Flanders, as you know. At Montauk, which is by far the more popular of the two spots, we have reservations for all three weeks. At Hubbard, significantly less popular, we have reservations for the first two weeks, the third we leave as an open daily lottery, and I'll explain that in a minute. It just so happens we had our lottery yesterday and I just kind of made a general announcement that there may be -- because that was the constituency most interested in this, that they were interested in coming today to speak, so I want to thank the speaker for coming and taking the time out to come here, he only learned about this yesterday.

We -- so for Montauk we get about -- this year we got about 200 applications for about -- there's only four spots at Montauk per day, so that's 20 slots per week, 60 slots. And the vast majority of those people are interested in hunting in Montauk, so about 200 applications this year. That's down from about 350 or 375 last year. But suffice to say, all the Montauk spots are subscribed for, they're all spoken for. However, things happen, bad weather, unforeseen circumstances, the party leader does not show up. Now instead of that spot going unused, we have a daily lottery for the areas not committed to by 9 AM. So even though you can go out in the woods at like 6:30 AM, I will hold your spot until 9 AM; if you're a no-show, then it goes into the pot and everybody picks from that. And that's how Montauk works. At Hubbard, the first two weeks is the same as Montauk, but the third week we have -- you have to be there by I think 6:15. Anybody present at that time we do a daily lottery then and you get your spot assigned then.

Back to the -- for the lottery, so the people chosen at the lottery get a confirmation letter, they pay their fee at that time. They come into Sayville or they come to Sears Bellows and they'll pay the fee and complete their paperwork, of which there's quite a bit, both from the State side and from the County side. So once that's all confirmed, then we know the person's expected to be there that day. This would give them the option to pay a $35 fee, and if by chance they got to go out on one of those stand-by days, or they can be a party member of another guy or gal who actually was selected through the lottery, they could go out for two or more times and pay that single seasonal fee. But you're right, your understanding of the basics of it is correct; after the second, it would be a benefit to the park user, the second is kind of that break-even point. And you're also right in suggesting that there's a very good likelihood that they don't get out at all, but it's a chance I think they're willing to take because I've found that, you know, our fees for hunting far exceed any other jurisdictions. At the State you essentially you hunt for free as many times as you want.
So what I'm trying to get to is getting our spots better filled and have less vacancies and have the property used and that hunting component become a more useful and meaningful management tool on the property.

And the last thing I'll say is that the proposal for this is not exactly home grown from parks, but there's a Council known as the Sporting Advisory Council, it's been around for maybe 25 years in Parks. I'm the park liaison for that group. That group is made up a variety of user group representatives and so that proposal was brought forward by the Council. It's simply my job to bring forward their requests to the Commissioner and then it's at the Commissioner's discretion as to whether or not he wants to carry that forward.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
You mentioned Montauk County Park and Hubbard; is that it?

MR. GIBBONS:
That's it for shotgun season.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Have we looked at expanding into other County parks?

MR. GIBBONS:
Well, it's a very -- from personnel standpoint, it's very labor intensive in that we have to have folks in at 6 AM, they work a longer day. So there's concern with overtime costs, what have you, for making that possible in other places. The Ridge Hunter Check Station at the DEC facility, they oversee a few thousand acres of their own, but everybody comes to that central point at Ridge, with few exceptions of the DEC managed lands.

I can't really think of a good fit, to be honest with you, as much as I'd like to expand the facility, to a nearby active use park that could oversee additional acreage, but it's always something I'm looking to do, just like on the archery.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
What about -- I know we've purchased properties in partnership with the town and, you know, things like Jacobs Farm --

MR. GIBBONS:
Yep.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
-- which is a 50/50 partnership, and they allow hunting, the town.

MR. GIBBONS:
We do it jointly, both the County and the town.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
So we do allow hunting on that property.

MR. GIBBONS:
Yes, we do. But that's not --

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
Right, any County hunter could go there then.

MR. GIBBONS:
Absolutely.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
They go through the town for that permission?

MR. GIBBONS:
Either way. We have a reciprocity there where they have their permit for their residents and I sell a permit for our residents and we recognize each other's.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
What about in that Hither Woods area where we own a lot of acres?

MR. GIBBONS:
Well, Hither Woods is though -- it's a lot of different --

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Entities there; State, Town, County, but the County owns some pieces.

MR. GIBBONS:
Correct. It's managed through a State Cooperative Agreement with the New York State DEC; I've managed that for the Praks side, too. Each -- unfortunately, I had a different answer for each one of your questions because there's a lot of different ways in which the County has gone about creatively acquiring property over the years and it's my job, in part, to see that the County's interests are served. So that we can't naturally have a recreational hunting program on a jointly-owned property that's only available to town residents. So in the case of Jacobs Farm, there's about six properties that I manage jointly with East Hampton Town. There's none currently at present with Southampton Town. There's half a dozen or so at Southold and so forth. So I have a different relationship with each town to manage these programs.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
I mean, I think you meant at the local level there's more pressure to open up lands for hunting because of the problems, you know, associated with the deer population.

MR. GIBBONS:
True.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Lyme's Disease, traffic accidents, crop and vegetation damage.

MR. GIBBONS:
That's right.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
It just might be -- you know, when you tell me those numbers and how many people are trying to hunt on County land that don't get to, it makes me think we should, you know, just take a careful look and maybe there's some other areas, possibly, that could be open.

MR. GIBBONS:
Well, I just want to talk about archery for a minute, because that's something I look at every year as we continue to add properties, which you all see come through the process. We're kind of on the receiving end of those. So when that acreage ultimately winds up in Parks, I reevaluate each site to see where we can expand the program.
I have been successful in doing that on the archery side because from a management standpoint, it's less labor intensive on us, it's a one-time permit, it's first come/first serve to the parking spot, there's essentially no interaction with Parks staff at an active park necessary for that program. So we sell you a $35 archery permit, now archery season on Long Island is a full three months, and by the time the end of this year comes around, it could be expanded to include all of January as well. So from October first through December 31st, we have about relevant we have about 20 some odd parks where I have upwards of 80 or 90 parking spots available for archery hunting. So yes, you're right. I mean, I take a hard look every time a property comes in and it's a good fit. It's a higher threshold to satisfy me that it's a good fit for the shotgun season than it is for the archery season.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
All right. Thank you, Nick. Any other questions? Legislator McCaffrey.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
I just want to ask you, in terms of that archery and the parking spaces, do we monitor if they're being utilized and how many are available that we're actually using and how many were -- could we accommodate more people, more hunters?

MR. GIBBONS:
Well, there's no -- in an anecdotal sense, yes. But it's not as if we do regular routine monitoring of the usage. We know that the peak usage, which, being no surprise to anybody here, is on the weekends. As we've discussed here before, it's only available to Suffolk County residents, the sale of our archery permit.

The 80 spots or so are somewhat distributed more to the East End. I'm always looking to add properties to the west as best we can, but at present the most western-most spots we have are County Road 21 in the Yaphank area, and a lot of that has to do with the necessary required setbacks which have been rolled back from 500 feet to 150 feet from a dwelling, but still, it eats up acreage. But seemingly good fits for addition to the program aren't necessarily the case when you consider proximity to dwellings, public buildings, what have you.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
But generally, right now your limitation is the amount of parking spaces available; is that correct?

MR. GIBBONS:
Well, I wouldn't -- yes. And we don't limit -- I think that one of the things that was misunderstood previously when there was a proposal afoot to expand the program on a pilot basis to non-residents was that we had sold 500 permits last year, which is true. But it's not -- there was no limit to the number of permits we sold, it just happened to be that last year we sold exactly 500 permits. That was off from, I believe, 350 some-odd permits the previous year. So I think we're doing the right thing and the popularity of the program is growing and that's my goal in expanding to other sites, to give more of the residents of Suffolk County opportunities out there, especially on the west end. Because, frankly, the East End where a large majority of our open space ownership is, is pretty well served with respect to availability and variety of venues. There's no real lack for properties to hunt on the East End so much as there is on the west end.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
Okay. You know, as we all know, I agree, we have a problem with our deer population and it leads to all kinds of different issues like ticks, Lyme's Disease, etcetera. And if we're using our hunters to be able to reduce that deer population to a reasonable level, and if we are not utilizing all that we can from our Suffolk County hunters, which should get the first priority all the time, should we then consider, because we had this discussion before, opening it to other outside of Suffolk County residents?

MR. GIBBONS:
I'll probably punt that to the Commissioner, if that's all right.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
(Laughter). Yeah, we went down this once before. I think what happens is by allowing Nassau County or people outside of Suffolk County, we'd be precluding Suffolk County residents from hunting and we couldn't be in all 22 places at one time and it would be a shame if somebody who bought our permit showed up at a facility and they could not get onto the premises because a non-resident was actually hunting in there.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
Well, that's why I asked the question, are we utilizing all the space that we have and I don't think

that we had a clear answer as to whether or not we are or not.

MR. GIBBONS:
They're not filled every day at all times, no.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
Okay. Could we consider maybe during the week, which is probably where the most availability would be in terms of vacancies. Would we want to consider that as a pilot program? We get too many deers and if we get -- we've got enough parking spaces and not enough hunters, why not utilize it? I don't want to shut out Suffolk County residents, and there could be the rare occasion where, you know, a thousand people show up for 50 spots and all, Suffolk County residents, but on a consistent basis, we have half the parking spaces are filled -- are not being utilized during the week. Why not allow other people to do it; that's my new thing, for the purpose of reducing the deer population.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
I mean, it's tough to make an argument on the utilization. I mean, Nick indicated before that the number of permits that we sold went from 350 to 500, it could grow even more next year. I mean, again, you know, we're here to serve the Suffolk County residents. And again, I would hate to have one displaced by somebody who wasn't -- you know.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
All I'm asking is that we take a look at what the utilization is of those parking spaces and if we consistently have half our spaces open, then we'd say maybe on a limited basis we could offer those spaces only -- not to serve the Nassau County residents at the expense of the Suffolk County residents, but to reduce the deer population, which I'm convinced, and many other people are, has been becoming detrimental to our spaces, especially out east.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
We could certainly try to look at the utilization of spaces on non-peak hours, but my guess would be that if it's non-peak hours for Suffolk County residents, it's also going to be off-peak for non-Suffolk County residents. I'm not sure what the demand would be, but we could certainly look into it.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
Thank you.

MR. GIBBONS:
I just want to tie in, on the point of the residency and back to the subject of today's discussion, is that as a point of information, the party leader, those selected for yesterday's lottery, they're required required to be a Suffolk County resident, but that party leader is entitled to bring two additional hunters with them and those people can be residents of any jurisdiction.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
So we're already allowing non-Suffolk County residents to --

MR. GIBBONS:
Provided they are accompanied by a Suffolk resident.

LEG. McCAFFREY:
Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
And that opens up an interesting question, too, because there's so many Suffolk County residents who didn't win the lottery, right? There's no way to team up the person who won with two of the people who didn't --

MR. GIBBONS:
(Laughter).

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
-- as a team? Is there a process by which you could do that?

MR. GIBBONS:
You'd be surprised that the majority of the parties that go out are fully subscribed. It's not often that we have one party leader with two vacant -- potential vacancies come to register for the day. Typically they bring two additional hunters with them.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Sure. We don't charge them until they have been selected in the lottery, right?

MR. GIBBONS:
Correct.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
I don't have any other questions? Anybody else?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
Legislator?

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
Yeah, Commissioner?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
You had asked before about the Sportsmen's Advisory and the request. I'm sure it was in your package, but we do have a petition here from the Sportsmen's Advisory Committee that they signed --

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
Supporting this --

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
-- requesting this change. And this was voted on by the Parks Trustees at their last leeting and we had their full support, so.

D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:
All right. So I think we already had a motion and a second, so I'll call the vote. All in favor? Any Opposed? Abstentions? ***Approved (VOTE: 5-0-0-0).***

All right. That is the last resolution. Commissioner, you have anything else you want to bring to our attention?

COMMISSIONER DAWSON:
No. Thank you

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:
Anybody; any questions for the Commissioner? Seeing none, we are adjourned.

(*The meeting was adjourned at 1:44 PM*)