

**ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING & AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE
PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE
OF THE
SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE**

MINUTES

A special joint meeting of the Environment, Planning & Agriculture Committee and 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 October 19, 2016, to discuss the Operating Budget.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Legislator Kara Hahn, Chair Environment, Planning & Agriculture Committee/Vice Chair Parks & Recreation Committee
Legislator William J. Lindsay III, Chair Parks & Recreation Committee
Legislator Al Krupski, Vice Chair Environment, Planning & Agriculture Committee
Legislator Sarah Anker, member Environment, Planning & Agriculture Committee
Legislator Bridget Fleming, member Environment, Planning & Agriculture Committee
Legislator Thomas Muratore, member Environment, Planning & Agriculture Committee
Legislator Leslie Kennedy, member Parks & Recreation Committee
Legislator Steve Stern, member Parks & Recreation Committee
Legislator Kevin McCaffrey, member Parks & Recreation Committee
Legislator Robert Trotta, member Environment, Planning & Agriculture

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Robert Lipp, Director/Budget Review Office
Laura Halloran, Budget Review Office
Amy Ellis, Chief Deputy Clerk/Legislature
Phillip Berdolt, Commissioner/Parks Department
Sarah Lansdale, Director/Planning Department
Naomi Paglia, Parks Department
Lance Reinheimer, Vanderbilt Museum
Debbie Harris, Aide to Legislator Stern
Michael Pitcher, Aide to Presiding Officer
Catherine Stark, Aide to Legislator Krupski
Elizabeth Sutton, Aide to Legislator Fleming
Robert Martinez, Aide to Legislator Muratore
Robyn Fellrath, Aide to Legislator Anker
Brian Sapp, Aide to Legislator Lindsay
Ali Nazir, Aide to Legislator Kennedy
BJ Intini, Farmingville Historical Society
Ellyn Okvist, Lake Ronkonkoma Heritage
All Other Interested Parties

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Diana Flesher, Court Stenographer

MINUTES TRANSCRIBED BY:

Kim Castiglione, Legislative Secretary

*(*The meeting was called to order at 2:35 p.m. *)*

PARKS PORTION

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Good afternoon. Welcome to the Parks and Recreation Budget meeting. If you'd all please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator Kennedy.

SALUTATION

Good afternoon. Thank you for coming to this budget hearing this afternoon. We have a couple of public comment cards. Anybody that wishes to speak during the Public Portion, please fill out a yellow card and hand it to the Clerk. Everyone will be provided three minutes to speak. So our first card is BJ Intini. Good afternoon, Ms. Intini. Thanks for waiting over from the last meeting.

MS. INTINI:

I'm here representing the Farmingville Historical Society. We receive County funds from the Hotel/Motel Tax. As we watch Farmingville's rich history as a community of farms and farmhouses, we give way to highways and strip malls, the Farmingville Historical Society and Suffolk County Parks have held on to a small piece of pristine land containing the Farmingville Hills Park, a 102 acre parcel of land with hiking trails, the 1850 Bald Hill Schoolhouse, the oldest schoolhouse on its original foundation in Brookhaven, and the Elijah Terry House, home of Farmingville's first schoolmaster.

In 2012, the Bald Hill Schoolhouse opened its doors to elementary students for the first time in 83 years. Since 2012, our programs have expanded. Suffolk County elementary school programs have cut back because of the cost of transportation. We worked with Lynwood Elementary School to design a schedule that allows multiple classes to rotate their school visits using only one school bus a day.

Last year we used part of our Suffolk County funding for a Civil War Encampment open to the public free of charge. This year we will expand the program, and by 2018, the program will generate enough money that we will not need the help of Suffolk County to pay for this event.

Our biggest challenge is finding funds to complete the two buildings on our site to include a restroom. We are working with Legislator Muratore to find funding for the work needed. We have also applied for and received private funds to be used towards these renovations. We will continue to apply for and seek additional private funding. The funds we receive through the Hotel/Motel Tax afford us the opportunity to provide community programs.

As an all volunteer organization, we are always mindful of the monies we are given and how it is spent and how it benefits the community. The funding we receive from Suffolk County grants keep our programs open and keep our community involved and interested. Once our buildings are completed, we are confident that we will be able to provide programs and events that would be self-sustaining. Thank you.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Thank you very much. Does anybody have any questions? Legislator Muratore.

LEG. MURATORE:

BJ, thank you for coming down and thank you to everyone in the Farmingville Historical Society. You are doing a great job out there keeping those buildings together so our young people and our visitors can come and learn a little bit about the history of Farmingville and about Suffolk County.

So I know it's not a lot of money we're trying to get here, I don't think we can hold on to it for you in the process, but again, thank you so very, very much.

MS. INTINI:

Thank you.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Legislator Kennedy. I'm sorry. Could you come back, Ms. Intini? There's another question for you. Legislator Kennedy has a question.

LEG. KENNEDY:

It's not a question. You're doing an excellent job. The schoolhouse is marvelous, and I do bring my grandchildren there. So I just want to let you know.

MS. INTINI:

Thank you.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Keep up the good work.

MS. INTINI:

Thank you.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Great. Thank you very much. The next speaker is Ellyn Okvist. I hope I pronounced that correctly. Thank you for coming in this afternoon.

MS. OKVIST:

Greetings. I am Ellyn Okvist, founder and President of the Lake Ronkonkoma Heritage Association. In 1999, we saw the need for precise and educational history in Lake Ronkonkoma. We are very proud and honored to field the results of our diligent work and how it has affected the community. I am here today to ask for monetary help from you so our work can reach as many citizens as possible. Please consider our New York State domestic not-for-profit corporation and IRS 501(c)(3) status as a beneficiary of whatever funds are available.

Our intention is to teach history, landmarks, lore and legend through hands-on events. Just this past Saturday we held the third Lake Ronkonkoma Cemetery Remembrance Day. We arranged a complete event that culminated my study of two and one-half years. One-hundred and twenty-three veterans, Revolutionary War through Vietnam, were given a military funeral. Twenty-nine local groups participated in the event, and a new flagpole was raised. A record amount of people attended the memorial. Going back on Sunday to gather the flowers, flags and nameplates, we met with people for hours who had come to visit after seeing it covered on the local Channel 12 News. What I heard from them was why didn't we not know about it? This is advertising and we need to have help with that.

Think that was enough for one month? I received a call Thursday night from United States Senator Gillibrand's team. The Senator was asking us to host a press conference on Wednesday, October 12. As usual, we were able to fulfill every request without hesitation. The Senator arrived at our American Legion, was given a tour of the Suffragettes additions to the community and gave her press conference announcing the bipartisan legislation to establish the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission in honor of the 100th anniversary of the passage and ratification of the 19th Amendment. We united with six different Long Island Suffrage groups and stood proudly among the Senator, the County Executive and Legislator Kennedy.

Lake Ronkonkoma Heritage Association has been planning for the 100th anniversary for over five years. I ask you to please look through the folder given to each of you. Any suggestions would gladly be appreciated. We are one of the special groups. Where else can you see 72 vintage cars driving from Cunningham Park, Queens, to our Ronkonkoma Lake for a Sunday drive on the Long Island Motor Parkway, the first road in the world built just for cars. Thank you.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Thank you very much. Sorry, Miss Okvist, if you could just hold on for a moment. Legislator Kennedy has a question for you.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Ellyn, the heritage is a blessing. We will support you. I know that you're new to this process, but I will definitely support every effort you make because you are inclusive, you take people from every single area in Suffolk County, and you work well. Thank you for what you do.

MS. OKVIST:

Thank you. We never really got involved with this before, but it's time because we want to reach more people. We do take every group, anybody that has an idea, and we bring them into one historical moment and we reenact it and it's absolutely great.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Hold on, Ms. Okvist. We have one more question. Legislator Muratore.

LEG. MURATORE:

Ellyn, I just publicly want to thank you and your team over there. You did a marvelous job on that cemetery. Like I said on Saturday, it was a wreck. I mean, you couldn't see the headstones, everything was overgrown, fallen down trees, trash. Ellyn brought her army, like she always does and, you know, for lack of a better expression, you brought that cemetery back to life. It's place that people can go now and learn a lot about history, too. So, again, I thank you and hopefully the funding that we secure for you will stand during the budget process. It's a little bit of a help, and I know you are working magic over there, so thank you so very, very much.

MS. OKVIST:

Thank you all.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Thank you. That was the last Public Portion card we have. Is there anybody else in the audience that wishes to speak during the public portion? Not seeing anyone, we'll close the Public Portion and we'll move into the Parks and Recreation. Commissioner, if you wouldn't mind coming forward. Good afternoon, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Good afternoon. How is everybody?

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Doing well. I know this is your first time going through this process, so we'll promise to be easy on you if we can.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

I appreciate that.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

I have a couple of questions, if I could, and then I'll open up to the rest of the committee members.

Just in going through the budget here, I see that you have 16 vacant positions based on being authorized for 94, and you only have 78 that are filled. How do you feel the challenges are going to be met without those 16 positions being filled?

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Well, we've been operating right now without them and we'll just continue to do so. We're just looking for ways to just reallocate staff where needed as opposed to zoning them out. We are making do.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

And you're comfortable with that.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

We do have, I believe, some SCINs that we'll be filling as positions come up. There are a few right now, some labor positions.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

We are working within our constraints of what we have.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

One of the items that was highlighted on the budget was that you're going to improve -- improvements in revenue collection and recording, which will enable smoother operations and better tracking analysis. How do you plan on accomplishing that?

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Well, first I'd like to introduce Naomi Paglia, right to my left. She's our new Budget Director. So we're just looking for ways for easier collection and recording of the revenues and also getting the revenues that we do collect into the banks a little bit faster. So we are just reviewing the entire process. A lot of it has just been I think bogged down as far as office work, and with Naomi's help we're hoping to streamline that process.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Okay. The other question I had was in regards to the Historic Services Division, that they have been unable to effectively utilize the Hotel/Motel Tax funding allocated to it, and it will be a challenge to preserve and/or restore all the historic structures in the County inventory. Have you had any -- I know you're, just to be fair, you're just in the position now, but have you had an opportunity to take a look at that yet? If not, do you have plans to review that, and if so, what are they?

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Yes, and I do see that the recommendation by the body was for possibly putting an architect on staff. Before we make a financial commitment like that I'd like to try and work things out between Parks and Public Works to expedite things a little bit quicker. We are looking to start some bimonthly meetings so we can prioritize our projects and really focus on the projects at hand instead of just throwing a blanket out there of, you know, 15, 20 permits, and I think by prioritizing them we'll be able to expedite them in a quicker fashion. But I'd like to try that first before we, like I said, before we look to bring on any more people.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Do you have a spreadsheet of properties that need repair and if so, is that in a list of priorities where it's most needed?

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Right. They have an old one. I'm asking for an updated list.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

So we can and I'll bring it before the Parks Committee.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

If you could.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Absolutely.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

If you could present that at the Parks Committee I think it would be very helpful for us to see, because we unfortunately in the past we've always been brought into the process of one at a time as these issues get to the point where they are dire and they need immediate attention. For us, I know for myself, I don't want to speak for the entire committee, but for myself it would be helpful if we had more of a global snapshot of what the whole picture is, and then from there we can help prioritize where our needs are. So I think it would make it easier for you as the Commissioner that you're not continuously coming in session after session asking for more and more funding.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

And I'd like to, you know, stabilize our properties to keep them from deteriorating to the point where we're going to need tremendous more funding.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Right.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

That's one of my priorities as far as looking at all these historic sites. Instead of coming in and saying, "Give me six million dollars for this", let's just see what we need right now and then progress past that.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

I agree. And it's -- you know, I feel strongly that we have an obligation to maintain these properties, at the same time we have to balance that against the financial situation that we have here in the County. It's a very difficult balancing act, and a lot of that's going to fall on your shoulders, so I appreciate the difficulty of that task. But I think if you could provide us with that global list it would be very helpful to the committee.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Absolutely.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Legislator Fleming.

LEG. FLEMING:

Just on that issue. I wanted to thank the Commissioner, even in your early part of your tenure, for your assistance with the Cedar Island Lighthouse. And a couple of points I think are so important to consider, and I think you and I have talked about with regard to these historic structures, they are

expensive to maintain. So I think certainly when we're considering acquisitions, you know, we need to be very mindful. When I was on the Town Board in Southampton we had the same exact problem. You buy these properties and then you have to maintain them and they come with significant costs. So I think we need to be mindful not to load up the County's balance sheet with the assets that are very expensive to maintain.

And just along with that I think, you know, we found in working on the Cedar Island Lighthouse that there are often not-for-profits or other organizations that are willing to -- and many of these have -- many buildings have foundations attached to them or, you know, community groups that want to see them used and fixed, and we really need to work with the community to save our taxpayer dollars if there are folks out there who are willing to do the work themselves. So I appreciate your efforts in as far as that goes, and I think as you're looking at the whole picture it will do us all a good turn to take a close look at the opportunities for public/private partnerships in stewarding some of those old buildings.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

No, and I totally agree with that to the point where however we can use these community groups legally within the constraints that we need to operate in, obviously under all the laws set before us for working in County properties, but yeah, if we can do it we will.

LEG. FLEMING:

And if you could give us feedback, too, in terms of legislative support that we could give you if you do run into any kind of legal obstacles. I know we will not with Cedar Island Lighthouse, but with other -- like if you need -- if it's a question with regard to prevailing wage or competitive bidding or that kind of thing, maybe we can work together and with the State authorities and see if we can come up with some ways to work around those obstacles.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Thank you. I will.

LEG. FLEMING:

Thank you.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Legislator Krupski.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

So congratulations and good luck.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Thank you. I would need it.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Yes, you do. How many people do you have in your department that are paid out of the 477 Fund? I know a number of years ago you had a -- you know, it became commonplace instead of using that fund for water quality projects to poach that money for personnel. And now your department, now it's your department, certainly has people in there from the 477 Fund. I was unsuccessful last year in trying to take two people out of it. I don't know if it would fly this year, but is there any way you could see clear next year to free up some of that money which could be spent then on drinking water, actual water quality projects, and not just be used for payroll.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

For the first question I don't have that number offhand, what is funded out of that.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

But, yeah, if we can work out something to, you know, balance the budget and put more of the 477 into construction money, obviously we'll try.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

I appreciate that. What's the -- so did you look at the fee structure for all the uses of the parks? I know there's vendors that rent the parks, you know, and obviously all the other user fees. Have you looked at that yourself? Have you looked at that fee structure and do you recommend any changes to that?

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

We are looking at it now and, you know, we're thinking of ways to possibly restructure things, but right now we have nothing definitive. But, yes, there are I think, in my opinion, a lot of changes that could take place.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Thank you. There's a position that's retiring in November, a Senior County Park Superintendent. Are you going to try to replace someone? What's that?

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Are you looking for the position?

LEG. KRUPSKI:

He wants it.

LEG. TROTТА:

Two.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Two applicants now.

LEG. KENNEDY:

We'll all take it.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

That's three. No, but is there -- are you looking to replace from existing ranks or what's your plan there?

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Yeah, it's just going to be somebody moving up.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Okay. And then finally, while I'm sure it's going to be your favorite topic in the coming years, the North Fork Preserve. You know we have a big drainage liability there that we inherited when we bought the property in 2011. It's never been addressed. We have had very good meetings with the DEC and with the DPW on the site to look at retaining all that stormwater on-site, certainly as a wetland enhancement and wetland creation project. So I really look forward to you working on that. That's before we have more of a problem there.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Correct, and we have been in talks with Public Works. I do have a little bit of an in there so it's helpful. Also, just so you know, we're working diligently on the RFP to get that out. There are concerns about the usage and we want to make sure we get that correct.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

You mean on the farmland parcel?

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Yes.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Oh, yeah, that's a separate thing. I was really just referencing the drainage problem.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

About the other acreage, yeah.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Because we will be out of compliance on that 50 acres that we purchased. Under our own County Chapter 8 we will be out of compliance soon. So I appreciate you working on that.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Thank you.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Thank you.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Legislator Kennedy.

LEG. KENNEDY:

We've been working back and forth together since before you were confirmed and I want to congratulate you for constantly being attentive to any Parks disaster, Parks issue or Parks problem. Combining the work of DPW and Parks was done years ago, back when I worked for Donald Blydenburgh, and I don't know what caused it to stop, but you reinitiating that and working on my Bavarian Inn project with Gil, that is the way government should work. We should not have to bond out for 1,000 other people when we have people at our own -- in our own hands that can do projects and flip. So I am thrilled with your work, I am thrilled with your department, and I don't think I have ever said that about any department in County government, so thank you.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Thank you so much. I really appreciate that. Thank you.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Legislator Krupski.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Just one more question. It's about the future of the development at Cupsogue. Is there any plans or is it just status quo for the moment? We do get -- I'm sorry. The reason I ask is there's an awful lot of constituents who, you know, periodically ask that question, so we just would like to have an answer, official answer, for them.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Okay. As of now we just have plans that are being finalized for the expansion of the upper deck. Also the possibility -- we're doing different options so the deck is one part and also another part would be for another extension of the upper deck for the concessionaire at his cost that he's looking to possibly do, a tiki bar or something up on the top deck, with an alternative staircase just for staff to run food up to the top. Also, I don't know if I just said it, a maintenance building, which will be cold storage just for our equipment. Right now all the equipment is sitting out in the elements. And that wouldn't be right in that general vicinity. We're looking to place it closer to the toll both when you come in in the northeast corner of the parking lot. And also we are designing some changing stations that will be built inhouse. We feel right now that that is a big issue with the bathrooms. People are going in there to change and it's creating a backup, so we're hoping to alleviate the bathroom problem by creating changing stations.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Something that would be -- and you mentioned also the dry storage for equipment. Is that something that would be, you know, without electric or plumbing or just basic -- same with the changing station, just --

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

There would be electric for lights, but there's no heat or plumbing.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Okay. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

We're looking at just a block building.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Legislator Hahn.

LEG. HAHN:

You guys went there. I wasn't planning on bringing up Cupsogue. You know how I feel.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Yes, I do.

LEG. HAHN:

We really need to be included before anything moves forward, first of all, the Parks Committee and the whole Legislature. Smith Point and Cupsogue are our two flagship oceanfront beaches. I think Cupsogue we were thrilled with how quickly you were able to get up temporary structures, but we do not want a trailer park to be there forever. So I think it's very important that the Legislature is part of these design discussions or you're going to go too far down a road that could be problematic for some people up here. So I really don't think you should go too far down that road without including folks on the Parks Committee.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Okay.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Legislator Trotta.

LEG. TROTТА:

It's probably not for you, maybe for Dr. Lipp. When that burned down, you had insurance money

apparently. I was wondering, what happened to the insurance money?

MR. LIPP:

I'm not quite sure other than, you know, we have like stopgap insurance. We're self-insured, number one. We have stopgap insurance if it's over a certain amount, so I don't know if it was over that amount that what we --

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

It was. The deductible on it was a million dollars.

MR. LIPP:

Okay. So anything over a million then we get back. So I'll try to get back to --

LEG. TROTТА:

But we didn't spend it. We didn't spend anything yet, so we probably wouldn't hit the million dollar deductible.

LEG. FLEMING:

No, they did. They put in the temporary buildings.

LEG. TROTТА:

And that was over a million dollars?

LEG. FLEMING:

It was almost a million.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

I'm not positive. I would say it was up around 750 for the decking and the --

LEG. TROTТА:

The bill is for 750 for architectural plans and the rental of the -- did we buy those trailers? We were renting the trailers if I remember.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

No, they were purchased.

LEG. TROTТА:

We since purchased them? Because initially we were renting.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

We ended up buying them because they felt that after the reconstruction was completed they could be utilized in other --

LEG. TROTТА:

So before we rented them we bought them.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

It was more cost effective because of the amount of time it would take to rent them. I'm recalling from memory here, from past meetings.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

I think so.

LEG. TROTТА:

Do we know what we paid for them?

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Individually? No.

LEG. TROTТА:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

I know that rebuilding the burned out decking was a lot.

LEG. TROTТА:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Just for the fact of bringing in the machinery to drive the pilings in. That was the bulk of the cost.

LEG. TROTТА:

Okay.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Legislator Fleming.

LEG. FLEMING:

Yes, just to follow-up on the Cupsogue thing. I want to compliment the folks who have been involved so far, and I certainly appreciate Kara's, you know, wanting to have -- what's that? No, but wanting to have the Parks Committee included, but I think it's really important to note that we have reached out to the community. We've met at the site and actually it was during the season that we had the last meeting and folks were coming up to us, you know, with their beach towels on saying how wonderful these temporary buildings are because the pavilion was tall and the new buildings are not, and so you have this incredible, incredible vista. You have the bay on one side and the ocean on the other, and the community does not want the pavilion rebuilt. I think it's a great savings and folks are -- I mean, I know a lot of people who are very, very happy with it, except for the bathrooms and the issues that you said you're going to be addressing.

LEG. HAHN:

Well, I've had multiple constituents, remember, this is a County-wide park, constituents from all over the County come to Cupsogue to use the ocean beach. And it is a spectacular vista, and windows do miraculous things to allow people to see through and see both sides, but right now there are trailers there operating as buildings, and that is unacceptable. And, you know, the whole height issue is certainly something that can be addressed, but what is there now is unacceptable and I've had many people complain about that. And I'm sure there are ways to solve it with a permanent structure that does not impede the view, that actually takes advantage of both views, and does not involve trailers.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Just for your reference, and I think I did speak with you about it, Legislator Hahn, that the --

LEG. HAHN:

We don't need to debate.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Well, no, not at all. But just so you know that the structure we're building with the pilings can support anything at a later date, you know, it's being built for that reason so in the near future if funding does become available.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Well, thank you, Commissioner. I appreciate you coming in and answering questions here. I don't see any other questions for you, so I appreciate you coming on board and good luck to you in your new position. We look forward to working with you in the coming year.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Thank you. Thank you very much.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

I'm sorry, Chairman, I have one more question for the Commissioner.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

No, it's too late. Sorry.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

I'll get you next year.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

We are not filling that.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Go ahead, Legislator Krupski. I'll allow.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Thank you. Wow, you're so indulgent. So the question is about the \$2 million that we had to borrow as part of a settlement and that some of us felt should be used for water quality improvements of the septic systems at our own County parks. Do you have a list of priorities, do you have a list of parks where you think these advanced wastewater treatment systems should go in and, you know, how far that two million will go.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

I don't have that information, I'm sorry, but I will get it for you.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Okay. Because, I mean, that's -- it's our own money that we have to borrow.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Right.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

And I think it's a good idea to spend it at our own County parks to improve our wastewater treatment like we did at Meschutt, but this is money that we're going to have to spend, so.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Yeah, you know, Legislator Krupski, I think that might be a question that Sarah Lansdale would be probably better qualified to answer in all fairness to the Commissioner.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Well, just that it would be spent at Parks so he would be part of the --

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Part of the discussion.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

I know the discussions --

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

But in terms of cost and how far that would go, I think she would have more information that would be helpful.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Thank you.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Thank you, Commissioner. I appreciate you coming in today.

COMMISSIONER BERDOLT:

Thank you.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

I see Lance Reinheimer. Lance, do you want to come forward so we could just ask you a couple of quick questions about the Vanderbilt?

MR. REINHEIMER:

Sure. Thank you very much. Do you want to ask me questions or do you want me to talk?

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Why don't you add whatever comments you think are pertinent to the discussion.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Sure, and I'll be brief. It's the same story from all our agencies that are using Hotel/Motel. We're very happy with what's included in the budget, it's about 10% of the distribution. I work within the budgets that are given to me as far as expenditures go, because people ask well, you know, *If you get \$2 million is that enough?* I work within the budget. I'm very happy with the Hotel/Motel Tax and what we're receiving. I understand the situation that you have, but I hold off hiring custodians. I have no full-time custodian. We have 100,000 people, we have ten major buildings, it's a challenge.

The museum is looking beautiful. I have a tree person there today taking down trees that are in the public area that need to be taken down and trimmed because it's a hazard to the public. That's not in my budget, I had to do it. I bought a leaf loader for \$7,000 last month because the leaf loader that we have now is 15 years old, it doesn't work, and the guys spend most of their time trying to get it to run. So I'm buying the tools that people need to get their job done.

And I can just say the Hotel/Motel Tax is critical to the survival of the museum. We spend the money wisely. It's a County facility. We service all through Suffolk County. Our traveling classroom goes out east, it's been to Southold, it's been to Southampton. And we have schoolchildren from across this Island.

So I just want to thank the Legislature for your support. I understand the decisions you have to make, but it's crucial that we have, you know, what's provided for us in Hotel/Motel. I can tell you now that the recommended budget, you know, I put in a guesstimate of what Hotel/Motel would be. I put in \$1,050,000. The budget provides 1.1 million. I'd be happy if I came away with what I requested. That's the budget I asked for. I can manage the budget. You know, it's \$50,000 more was put in there than I requested. I certainly could put that money to good use, but I can work within the budget that I submitted. Any cuts past that are cutting into people and services and making this museum something for Suffolk County to be really proud of.

I'm proud of it. I'm optimistic about the future and we're going in the right direction. And it's a fun job. It sucks the life out of me during the summer, but I'm fully committed to this job and to make this a great institution. I'll answer any questions you have.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Sure. With that in mind, how are you looking for this year in terms of what you were budgeted from Hotel/Motel Tax and what you're projecting to finish the year up at?

MR. REINHEIMER:

This year, in 2016?

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Yes.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Sure. I do have a couple of notes. I mentioned the tree work I'm having done. I think this session will be three days or four days. That's about \$8,000.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

I'm more interested in the revenue side, though.

MR. REINHEIMER:

I'm sorry.

CO-CHAIR-LINDSAY:

I'm more interested in the revenue side.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Oh, the revenue side?

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Yes.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Revenue side, as far as admissions, I'll come in a little -- I'm projecting now about \$32,000 less than what's in the budget for revenue. I also have I said unexpected expenditures, but my revenue, you know, when I put a budget together, my revenue is pretty close to what I really expect it to be, but I'm in a little short in revenue and I had expenses. We can muddle through this year but, you know, this year goes into next year, so any cuts I have next year is going to, you know, impede our progress.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Right, which was the reason for my questioning and I concur.

MR. REINHEIMER:

You know, I'm not accumulating funds, you know, I'm working with what I have.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

No, I don't think -- I think we all know the challenges that you're faced with having been to the property several times. You know, you can see it firsthand. It's a massive undertaking what you have to maintain. And, you know, unfortunately we have limited resources to do that. On the Hotel/Motel Tax portion though, what you're being allocated for 2016, how is that trailing versus what was budgeted last year?

MR. REINHEIMER:

Oh, for -- how is 2016 coming in from what was budgeted for 2016?

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Correct.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Well, the way Hotel/Motel Tax works, or revenue works, what's in the budget is what we will get. So it's, you know, we will get that 800, almost \$878,000.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

And then if it comes in higher it goes to --

MR. REINHEIMER:

Yeah, there's a reconciliation. You know, I can make your head -- you know, I could make your eyes bleed if I talked about that, but there's a reconciliation when the actuals come in two years later. And, you know, luckily for the County, the County Executive and Budget Review I think last year recommended it to be cut a little bit. The estimates for the revenue are conservative, which means that the prior years reconciliations have been positive rather than negative, and I think this year, according to BRO, they agreed with the County Executive on what the estimate is for 2017, which is probably conservative. I think revenue's coming in 9 1/2% higher than what's in the budget. So we get what we are budgeted in the current year, and then the following year a reconciliation is from two years ago.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Okay. So maybe my question is for BRO.

MR. REINHEIMER:

There's a slight positive reconciliation I think for 2014.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Dr. Lipp, as we see the hotel and motel industries doing better than expected and through some of the efforts of the Comptroller enforcing the Hotel/Motel Tax more stringently, we received information of additional funds that he's collected. Where are those funds going and how do they get dispersed and at what time do they get dispersed.

MR. LIPP:

So whatever fund balance, as Lance was talking about, whatever fund balance ends the previous year, let's say it's over or under, it would be a plus or a minus, those monies are spoken for within each of the pieces. So, for instance, the Vanderbilt doesn't receive the full amount, there's some extra, then it goes -- it gets carried over to their side of the ledger. Other items, same thing. So they start out with different amounts from the fund balance and then it's split up, in this case here recommended at 10% for 2017. The 9.9%, I believe that he was talking about growth, really is over

two years because of the way we distribute the funds. We don't change the 2016 column, we just change the 2017 column.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

So those funds are held over and then they go into the next corresponding year?

MR. LIPP:

Yeah, so it's a two year thing. So basically what you'll see is there are specific allocations, percentage allocations. Like, for instance, 10% for Vanderbilt. But if you did the math you wouldn't see it's exactly 10% because of the fund balance that's in the background there.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Okay. So, for example, in this year, for 2016 we came in say \$300,000 higher than expected. That wouldn't be realized until 2018 or reallocated until 2018?

MR. LIPP:

Yes, that's right.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

And then it would be -- the division of the money or how the money is split up would be the normal formula at that point.

MR. LIPP:

Correct. And Vanderbilt is one of the questions that we speak to upfront because the way the language of the law reads, we're allowed to lower them below 10% in each year so that we have the conversation to start out our discussion.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

But is that factored into their budget for that year or is that additional funds on top of what they're -- so let me backup for a second. So right now for the line items that we have budgeted for 2017, so we're really working off of the 2015 revenues for the Hotel/Motel Tax.

MR. LIPP:

Yeah, it takes into account the 2015 fund balance the 2017 --

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Okay. So if those were higher than expected, that number is already allocated into the budget.

MR. LIPP:

Correct.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

So it's not like there's a windfall at any point in time. The money is accounted for.

MR. LIPP:

Correct.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Okay. Thank you. Legislator McCaffrey.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Thank you. Hi, Lance.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Hi.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

What does it cost us to run Normandy Manor, my favorite subject?

MR. REINHEIMER:

Not much right now because it's empty.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

No, I know it's empty, but we still have -- you know, I'm sure there's costs involved and we still have to put the heat on, we still have -- I know we've got some capital programs going on in there.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Yes. Utilities, if I had to guess, are probably about \$4,000 a year to heat and maintain temperature control in there. It would be mostly heat. We don't really air-condition in the summer above probably, you know, 75 degree, or below 75. We do have -- the Legislature did appropriate funds earlier this year for the capital program for roofing. I have spoken to Public Works. If I had my way in life, you know, Normandy Manor would be roofed today. That project hasn't gone forward yet because Public Works doesn't have the resources to start that. But all the funds are in place to reroof it. So the cost right now is basically utilities and we do maintain the property. So it's opportunity cost. My grounds people are over there cutting the grass and trimming bushes and doing the things that need to be done to maintain the property, so that's an opportunity cost.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

Thank you.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Legislator Krupski.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

So was it -- and Debbie's here. Was it earlier this year or was it late last year that we supported selling Legislator Stern's little red schoolhouse.

MS. HARRIS:

That was for the library. We did a Home Rule Message but the State did not pass the bill.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Why wouldn't they pass it? I mean, that's what could happen with Normandy Manor. I question if we can do that and we could put it back on the tax rolls and not have it as all the extra opportunity costs that are associated with it.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Yes, that's correct. My understanding is you need State enabling legislation. It's parkland. That's a policy decision. You know, I can wear my museum hat and say I'm happy that the property is united as Willy K the II wanted it to be. If his wife had predeceased him we wouldn't be having this discussion, it would have been part of the original bequest, but because he predeceased his wife he carved out Normandy Manor for her separate from the estate. But that's a policy decision to sell it and to get State enabling legislation to do that. I know the Board, the Vanderbilt Board wouldn't be happy. I'm staying out of it.

LEG. KRUPSKI:

Thank you.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Lance, how many acres? That's the question that was asked.

MR. REINHEIMER:

It's about three and change. You know, and possible, you know, I know the neighborhood, when the County bought that piece of property, was concerned about the future of that estate or that parcel in terms of subdivision and building.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

And the plan, Lance, is once it's repaired and inhabitable you're going to rent it again?

MR. REINHEIMER:

That was the decision of the Board about three years ago, and it was a short-term decision. In other words, the Board does not want to go into the long-term business of real estate, at least when they discussed it, because it's not in line with what we are as a museum. We're a museum, we're not a realtor, we're not in the real estate business. My vision is, you know, at that time it was -- it was \$5500 a month, which was set -- and that came before the Legislature when we set that monthly fee plus utilities, so it's about \$70,000. Where the real estate market is now maybe it's more in terms of revenue.

The other -- my feeling is, you know, we don't know what the future holds, but another good purpose for that house, in the past there have been Executive Directors that were from out of town that lived on campus, and that would be a perfect house to have the Executive Director live in if they were from out of town. It would be part of their total compensation package. I don't want to live there so I'm not advocating for myself. It's a little too close to my job for me. But we did have, probably about 15 years ago, we did have an Executive Director live on campus. And that's part of a compensation package. So instead of -- in lieu of additional high salary, you have the residence as compensation. So that's a possible use for it in the future, too.

One of the visions we had is also using it for an extension of our gift shop and consignment shop to generate revenue and have a consignment antique shop in there. That's another possibility for the future.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Okay. I think most of the people here on this committee would advocate for renting it and deriving income.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Excuse me?

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

I think most of the people on the committee would advocate in favor of renting it to get that 70 to \$80,000 in annual revenue.

MR. REINHEIMER:

I would, too. And, you know, that's, you know, that's a significant percent of our budget.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Sure.

MR. REINHEIMER:

And what's nice, if I had tenants like the last ones, that check comes before the first of the month every month.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Right.

MR. REINHEIMER:

That worked out nicely. We did have the plumbing and the electric upgraded because after those tenants left, and they were very part-time tenants. I don't think they were there more than 90 days in the three and a half years they were there, the mechanics of the house had to be upgraded to support a full-time family. So that work has been done. That's been done.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Another question. Legislator McCaffrey.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

And, Lance, you know, in our discussions, you know, I visited and I've been there and I appreciate you not moving there because I like having you as one of my constituents.

MR. REINHEIMER:

I am in Kevin's district.

LEG. McCAFFREY:

That's right. That's why I always have to tread lightly on my discussions on the Vanderbilt, as if it was in my own district. But as we've discussed, you know, in my thoughts about excising that as parkland, and my goal would be to take any of the proceeds, if we were to sell that property, and put it back into the Vanderbilt for capital improvements which we all know are much needed there. So I wasn't looking to just cut it off and put it away, but this would be money that could be going back into the Vanderbilt for its core interest that it has down there, so.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Yeah, and I know that that was, you know, your intent was not to take something away from the museum, but possibly it was a more financially better alternative not having the expense and then to have long-term investment from say \$3 million if that's what we would net. We still owe bonds on it. We probably owe somewhere between 600 and \$800,000 on it. That parcel was bought in 2001 I think it was, or 2000, so it probably was a 20 year bond, averaged 20 years. So I'm not sure what would be left, but you'd have to pay the balance of the bond on that parcel. As I said, that's a policy discussion. You know, I'm always open with you and, you know, support your decisions and we all want to do what's best for the County and for the museum. It's our museum, it's your museum.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Legislator Fleming has a question as well.

LEG. FLEMING:

Thank you. Hi. Good to see you, Lance.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Thank you.

LEG. FLEMING:

And I appreciate your perspective on the County budget as a whole. Obviously it comes from long experience and knowledge.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Yes.

LEG. FLEMING:

So I'm just, I guess I'm not clear. I thought in the County Exec's recommended budget the recommendation is to -- that your Operating Budget should be as requested, but it sounds as though just looking -- I mean, it sounds as though you got a little bump from your requested.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Yes. I can address that if you like.

LEG. FLEMING:

Thank you.

MR. REINHEIMER:

We're a separate fund so, you know, the budget has to be balanced, each fund has to be balanced. So the County Executive's Office put in \$1.1 million. When they did that they went in and they increased salaries. They increased my part-time salaries by \$50,000 and my full-time salaries by four thousand and change. The 50,000 -- you know, if I were to get that, first of all, that would be a nice present. If I were to get that, those funds would go to hire part-time people, as I said, custodians, grounds people. I do have -- I just brought in a second custodian now.

We're open, you know, six days a week during the summer. We have schoolchildren coming there year round, so -- and we have ten major buildings. So it's a challenge for one or two custodians. I have three and a half when you take the equivalence of what my part-time grounds people work, and so I have two full-time grounds and about the equivalent of three and a half part-timers. So they put the money in salaries, which is where, you know, it would have been spent if I get it.

As I said in the beginning, you know, I'm not greedy. My budget request was for a million-fifty-thousand, roughly \$54,000 less than what the County Executive gave me. I'm happy with that. I can work within that budget. That provides \$50,000 for the Legislature to use for whatever other historic agencies or, you know, other Hotel/Motel uses. So I'm happy with what I requested. I'm not looking for more.

LEG. FLEMING:

Thank you. I really appreciate your candor on that.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Thanks, Lance. I appreciate you coming in today, and I look forward to continuing to work with you through the Parks Committee.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Thank you. I'm available if anyone has questions and, you know, I'm always there for tours if anybody wants to stop in, especially a day like today. I'm going to go back and walk along the beach I think.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

Enjoy.

MR. REINHEIMER:

I've got a Trustee meeting tonight, so I've got meeting upon meeting. But I thought it was important to be here in case you had questions. That's why I didn't have any prepared speech. I wasn't going to speak unless you wanted me to.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

No, that's okay, Lance. We appreciate it and you're always before the Parks Committee, so you're

always accessible. We appreciate that.

MR. REINHEIMER:

Thank you very much.

CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:

At this point I'm going to turn the microphone over to Legislator Hahn for the EPA portion of the budget hearing.

EPA PORTION

CO-CHAIR HAHN:

Do we have any cards for EPA? I was told we had one but I guess it was for Parks. Okay. If we could have Sarah, I guess, if you'd like to come up. Unless there was anyone in the audience who didn't fill out a card that would like to speak? Seeing none, we will close the Public Portion. Okay. Hello.

DIRECTOR LANSDALE:

Hi. How are you?

CO-CHAIR HAHN:

Okay. How are you doing?

DIRECTOR LANSDALE:

Good.

CO-CHAIR HAHN:

I don't know if there's anything you'd like to comment about.

DIRECTOR LANSDALE:

No, I'm here to answer any questions that you may have.

CO-CHAIR HAHN:

Okay. Budget Review Office, did you want to -- Sarah, did you bring along any of the 477 charts that say how much money we have in each of the funds?

DIRECTOR LANSDALE:

I didn't, but BRO did a wonderful job in detailing that in their summary.

CO-CHAIR HAHN:

Yes. And so that's -- when did this go to print, just Friday, right? So those numbers are fairly recent; correct?

MR. LIPP:

(Shaking head yes).

CO-CHAIR HAHN:

We haven't closed on anything since then. Do you have pipeline information? You didn't have pipeline information in here, did you?

MS. HALLORAN:

We project the amount of money we expect to come in in '17, and also the pipeline stuff they're mostly taking out of previous appropriations, like money that was already appropriated or they're

starting to also use the new bonded money. So let's see what I -- I don't have detail here, and I believe I wrote -- let me just read my writing for a second. Previously appropriated funds. Now, this was as of August 31st, so those numbers, you know, I didn't have the end of September numbers yet. So that was 20.8 million previously appropriated, and if things currently in contract or with accepted offers proceed to closing, it would be reduced to 17.7 million. And, again, that's just what was already appropriated, not counting new money.

CO-CHAIR HAHN:

Okay. Sarah, how are you feeling about staff that handles, you know, appraisals and -- I know that sometimes we slip into Economic Development because we're not totally in silos here. Some of my questions may be appropriate for other departments, but the staff that handles the real estate, the appraisals, you know, everything that happens with regard to land purchasing.

DIRECTOR LANSDALE:

So there's two divisions that work on land purchases jointly, Planning as well as Real Estate. Planning works with the Legislature and County Executive's Office to advance proposals, and then Real Estate conducts the appraisals and closes the deal. So from the Planning perspective, we have a great -- I have a great staff, very capable. I'm very happy with what we have.

CO-CHAIR HAHN:

Remind me your requested numbers versus the numbers the County Executive put in his proposed budget. Is there a difference there?

DIRECTOR LANSDALE:

I don't believe that there is any difference.

CO-CHAIR HAHN:

Okay. Anyone have any questions for Director Lansdale? We're all good? Okay. Really, nobody has questions? Okay. Thank you.

DIRECTOR LANSDALE:

Thank you.

CO-CHAIR HAHN:

Thanks for all you do. Seeing that, I think we're done. That's great. Thank you.

(*The meeting was adjourned at 3:29 p.m. *)