

PUBLIC SAFETY & PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE
of the
Suffolk County Legislature

Minutes for Day 1

A special meeting of the Public Safety & Public Information 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 **May 27, 2003**, to discuss the matter of the Capital Budget.

Members Present:

Legislator Fred Towle - Chairman
Legislator Joseph Caracappa - Vice-Chair
Legislator David Bishop
Legislator William Lindsay
Legislator Andrew Crecca
Legislator George Guldi

Also In Attendance:

Paul Sabatino - Counsel to the Legislature
Bill Doyle - Aide to Legislator Towle
Greg Miglino - Aide to Legislator Towle
Anthony Figliola - Aide to Presiding Officer Postal
Ray Zaccara - Aide to Legislator Bishop
Fred Pollert - Director/Budget Review Office
Lance Reinheimer - Budget Review Office
Rosalind Gazes - Budget Analyst/Budget Review Office
Kevin Duffy - Budget Analyst/Budget Review Office
Ken Knappe - County Executive's Budget Office
Bill Faulk - County Executive's Office/Intergovernmental Relations
Alfred Tisch - Suffolk County Sheriff
Walter Denzler - Undersheriff/Suffolk County Sheriff's Office
Donald Sullivan - Undersheriff/Suffolk County Sheriff's Office
Alan Otto - Chief of Staff/Suffolk County Sheriff's Office
John Gallagher - Commissioner/Suffolk County Police Department
James Abbott - Deputy Commissioner/Suffolk County Police Dept
James Maggio - Assistant Commissioner/Suffolk County Police Department
Mike Pirone - Suffolk County Police Department
Vincent Stile - Communications/Suffolk County Police Department
Frank Luciano - Sergeant/Suffolk County Police Department
Stuart Cameron - Captain/Suffolk County Police Department
John Blosser - Lieutenant/Suffolk County Police Department
Don Papavaro - Lieutenant/Suffolk County Police Department
Robert Kearon - Division Chief/District Attorney's Office
Lon Kachany - Executive Asst for Finance/District Attorney's Office
Cindy Scesny - Legislative Liaison/District Attorney's Office
Vincent Iaria - Director/Suffolk County Probation Department

Marty McIndue - Suffolk County Probation Department
Mike Polchinski - 1st Vice-President/Correction Officer's Association
Bill Ellis - Director of Public Relations/Correction Officer's Assoc.
Mike Sharky - Deputy Sheriff's Benevolent Association

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All Other Interested Parties

Minutes Taken By:
Alison Mahoney - Court Stenographer

(*The meeting was called to order at 2:28 P.M. *)

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

My apologies for being late. We're going to call the Public Safety meeting to order. And if Legislator Lindsay would lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Salutation

Yeah, if the other Legislators would join us, we're going to start the committee meeting. Do we have any cards? Okay. For no other reason but since the Sheriff's office is in the front row, why don't you guys come on up first, if that would be okay. See what you get for sitting in the front row? That's the right thing to do, Sheriff, send them up first, check out the landscape. Good afternoon.

SHERIFF TISCH:

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

I guess we'll allow you to give an overview of your Capital Program for 2004.

SHERIFF TISCH:

We'd be privileged to do it. I've asked Chief Otto to identify the projects that are in existence and to give our comments on them.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay.

CHIEF OTTO:

Good afternoon, Chairman. The Sheriff's Office has nine Capital Projects in various stages of completion. We've received Budget Review's comments on four of these projects. The five projects that we did not receive any comments are 3009, 3011, 3013, 3014 and 3044. We have recently have been advised that if no comments were received

regarding any particular Capital Project, then the Budget Review Office agrees with the Proposed Capital Project Program as submitted by County Executive Robert Gaffney. Therefore, with regard to the five Capital Projects previously mentioned, we concur with the County Executive's Capital Budget proposal.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay.

CHIEF OTTO:

We have received comments from Budget Review regarding the following four Capital Projects; Capital Project 3229 which is the Mobile Data Computer System. Why we concur with Budget Review's comments and evaluation, it is important to note that although Resolution 209-03 was to transfer \$200,000 for the purchase of Mobile Data Computers,

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this transfer has not been received.

On Capital Project 3035 --

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Would you mind holding off? Can we -- just let's go over that, if we could.

CHIEF OTTO:

Sure.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Fred, you want to give what your recommendation was just for the purpose of the record?

MR. POLLERT:

The project was not included by the County Executive's Office primarily because Resolution 209 of 2003 transferred \$200,000 to the Sheriff's Department. I was under the impression that the transfer had been made, clearly we have to touch base with the Treasurer Office to find out what the status of the transfer is. However, the resolution was adopted, it's just a proforma type of task to do the budgetary transfer.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Assuming that the funding is moved forward, then the Sheriff's Office would have no problem with that at that point or you need additional funds or you don't?

CHIEF OTTO:

No, absolutely it's fine if the money is there.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay. Thanks. If you want to go on to the next one, that would be fine.

CHIEF OTTO:

Capital Project 3035, the construction -- reconstruction of the Correctional Facility. We concur with Budget Review's comments that this project should be completed as originally planned and construction should not be delayed.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Fred, as far as the planning and design for the facility, that money has now been put in for 2005 in the County Executive's proposal; is that true?

MR. POLLERT:

Actually, that's a different Capital Project, that's a Capital Project that deals with the construction of a new jail in Yaphank. What this project deals with is the reconstruction of capital facilities that we currently have with \$360,000 scheduled in 2004 and \$3.458 million scheduled in 2006.

CHIEF OTTO:

Yes. Chairman, that project title, we would like to say that it

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includes the administrative office expansion, the closed circuit TV for the Riverhead facility and a prefab building for our garage. Budget Review's recommendation was that the project should be completed as originally planned, okay, not delayed and construction should also not be delayed.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Originally being for 2004-05, is that it?

CHIEF OTTO:

That's correct.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

As opposed to 05-06.

CHIEF OTTO:

That's correct.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay. If any of the committee members have questions on the individual projects, we'll do them as they go through them as opposed

to trying to do it together. Go ahead, Chief.

CHIEF OTTO:

Capital Project 3033 which is the personal body alarm system for the Riverhead Medium and Maximum Security. We concur with Budget Review's evaluation and recommendation, but we also request that the County Executive submit an Introductory Resolution to amend the Capital Program to reschedule the purchase of the body alarms to 2003 as recommended by Budget Review.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Fred, your recommendation is \$600,000?

MR. POLLERT:

Yes, that is correct. An offset would -- is going to be required for 2003. What our recommendation was is that if the resolution is not successful for 2003 that as a contingency that amount of money be included in 2004 so that you won't have to come up with an offset. So under the best of circumstances you would buy the personal alarms this year and if you can't come up with an offset you would have a back door with being able to buy it in the 2004 budget.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

When can we amend the 2003 budget, Capital?

MR. POLLERT:

You can amend it whenever you want to.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

This Capital Budget?

MR. POLLERT:

Yes.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay. Do you guys have an offset for the amounts, \$600,000?

MR. POLLERT:

Not at the moment, no.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay. Why don't you work on drafting a resolution for the 2003 but also do a stand-alone for 2004, so in case that does not pass in 2003 it will be covered. And if any of the members of the committee want to put themselves on there, you're more than welcome to do so now.

LEG. GULDI:

Add me.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Add Legislator Guldi. Okay, next issue.

CHIEF OTTO:

Capital Project 3008 is the Jail Utilization Study and the new replacement at Yaphank. The County Executive proposed construction of an 1,130 bed correctional facility to replace the current facility in Yaphank. We concur with Budget Review's evaluation that planning money be made available for 2004 and construction in 2005.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Fred, what's the total planning money needed for 2004?

MR. POLLERT:

In total, our recommendation was to advance \$7 million of planning funds to 2004. We heard from the Commissioner of Corrections which indicated that the time schedule that was contemplated by the County Executive's Office postponed the construction time of the jail beyond what they consider to be a reasonable time line. We made the recommendation that you advance both the construction funds and the planning funds; the planning funds would be advanced to 2004, the construction funds to 2005.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

And that was the letter to you from the State Commissioner of Corrections, a two page letter?

MR. POLLERT:

Yes, that's correct.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay. Do you want to do a stand-alone resolution on that as well? Obviously you can put my name on it and if any of the other committee members want to be on there, they can as well. And also attach a copy of the letter from the Commissioner to the stand-alone. Legislator Bishop?

LEG. BISHOP:

Mr. Pollert, this is the project that the Budget Review Office estimates will raise the operating budget of the County by \$60 million if fulfilled?

MR. POLLERT:

That is correct. That number is based upon two different factors. Number one was what the estimated operating costs would be as prepared

by the Sheriff's Department and is attached to their Capital Project request, and it also included \$10 million which is the approximate cost of the debt service for this Capital Project. So between the two of them, the total cost is approximately \$60 million.

LEG. BISHOP:

What's the total cost of our current General Fund Property Tax Levy?

MR. POLLERT:

It's approximately \$55 million.

LEG. BISHOP:

So it's more than a hundred percent increase in the General Fund Property Tax Levy.

MR. POLLERT:

There would be a large increase in the tax warrant, everything being equal.

LEG. BISHOP:

Is this State aided?

MR. POLLERT:

No, it's not directly State aided. To the extent that we have State ready prisoners in our jail, we do get some aid; however, it is not an aided project per se.

LEG. BISHOP:

So if we go into the housing of State prisoner business then we get some State aid.

This project at 60 million is designed to add how many more -- the capacity for how many more prisoners?

MR. POLLERT:

The project as was originally contemplated included two different phases, one of which would be for 280 beds and then the remainder to increase the total capacity to approximately 1,100. What the project as it's currently consolidated as recommended by the Budget Review Office would do one large project of approximately 1,100 cells.

LEG. BISHOP:

How many cells do we currently have?

MR. POLLERT:

Currently what is proposed is the replacement of the dormitories in Yaphank. It's a total of 1,130 beds. However, there would be a net gain of --

LEG. BISHOP:

I guess we should measure beds, right, not cells.

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MR. POLLERT:

Six hundred and twenty-six according to the Sheriff.

LEG. BISHOP:

Six twenty-six is what we currently have and we would have --

MR. POLLERT:

No, no, that's what the net gain would be.

LEG. BISHOP:

Net gain of 626. Are we anticipating -- this is where I begin to get fuzzy. Are we anticipating 626 more prisoners?

MR. POLLERT:

No. In part, the sizing of the jail is because you can't be at a hundred percent capacity or you should not be operating at a hundred percent capacity. So it is recommended because of classifications that about 80% of the total capacity is what the operational capacity will be.

LEG. BISHOP:

Does this plan still contemplate double-bunking of prisoners? I see Chief Otto shaking his head no.

MR. POLLERT:

The double-bunking of prisoners in Riverhead currently is covered underneath a variance, I believe that would probably continue on. I would have to defer to the Sheriff's Department on that specific topic.

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:

We currently -- I'll talk round numbers so it's easy to understand. We currently have variances totaling about 350; we had had 400 back in February, they took 52 away from us. So when you look at all those numbers, the variance number, that's what's got to go away, how many they're letting us have that the facilities are not capable of actually housing. So what they're saying is in effect when you build this new facility, there will not be the need for any variances.

LEG. BISHOP:

Including double-bunking.

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:

Well, the double-bunking is included in there right now and, you know, they're telling us they're going to take away all the variances, so

that's what we have to assume.

LEG. BISHOP:

So we're ending our policy of double-bunking.

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:

It's not a matter of a policy, it's a matter of the State having given us a variance allowing us to do it.

LEG. BISHOP:

It is a policy, we passed a resolution in this Legislature

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establishing double-bunking five years ago.

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:

They may continue with the variance or not, we don't know.

LEG. BISHOP:

I understand, your position is that the State made us do it, that's been the consistent position all along. Mr. Pollert, to send -- what do we have, 400 variances; is that correct, is that the number I should use?

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:

Three forty-eight now, 52 were taken away in February.

LEG. BISHOP:

Taken away is a bad thing.

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:

Well --

LEG. BISHOP:

Taken away a variance -- what I'm trying to get at is how many prisoners over --

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:

The State used to permit us to house 400 inmates in excess of what the design capacity was for.

LEG. BISHOP:

Right, okay.

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:

Of the 400, they rescinded 52 of those.

LEG. BISHOP:

What's the design capacity according to the State?

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:
Thirteen hundred.

LEG. BISHOP:
And what's our count?

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:
Today?

LEG. BISHOP:
Yeah, today, as we sit here; approximately.

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:
About 1,515; counts are down right now. As a matter of fact, as of Friday we no longer have any inmates boarded out-of-County.

LEG. BISHOP:
What's -- really? What's the high count? You know, summer is coming,

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so I assume our peak period is August or September; is that -- that's incorrect? You're shaking your head no. What's our peak period?

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:
Peak period is in winter.

LEG. BISHOP:
Oh, really? That's counter-intuitive. All right. What are we at then?

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:
We go over --

LEG. BISHOP:
What was our high last year, 1,800?

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:
October 15th and 16th of last year we had 1,635 inmates.

LEG. BISHOP:
I'm going to make it 1,650. So to take 350 inmates, Mr. Pollert, and send them to -- what's the County we send them to at 120 a day?

SHERIFF TISCH:
Oneida.

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:
Oneida is 85 a day.

LEG. BISHOP:
Okay. What's the high County?

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:
Two hundred.

LEG. BISHOP:
Which is what County?

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:
New York City, Riker's.

LEG. BISHOP:
But we rarely send to them. I mean -- I thought there was one at 120 that we generally send to.

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:
You've got 140 which is Nassau.

LEG. BISHOP:
Okay, let's take Nassau. Can you do the rough math to send -- they wouldn't have 350.

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:
No. See, that's the thing, you can't send all of these people to any one institution. As a matter of fact, Oneida County can only accommodate about 80 of our inmates. So if we actually lost all 400,

we would have to identify space at various locations throughout the State at varying daily costs.

LEG. BISHOP:
What is -- let's send them all to New York City in this hypothetical. What do we get for an operating cost?

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:
I think housing alone would be about \$29 million in New York City.

LEG. BISHOP:
Okay. That's about half as much as if we built it.

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:
That's every year.

LEG. BISHOP:

Yeah. Well, this is every year, it's operating budget. We're not talking about the Capital Budget cost, the Operating Budget cost is 60 million.

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:

Well, we don't agree with that.

LEG. BISHOP:

If we had a policy to send them all to New York City we'd save the taxpayers 50%.

UNDERSHERIFF DENZLER:

We don't agree with that additional figure of 60 million as an additional operating cost.

LEG. BISHOP:

Okay, thank you.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

As I said, if you do the stand-alone and attach the memo and if any of the other committee members want to add themselves to it, that's up to them. Any other comments?

CHIEF OTTO:

That's all the projects, sir.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay. I appreciate your appearing before us today and giving us an update. Thank you.

SHERIFF TISCH:

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

On the batter's deck, our Police Commissioner. Commissioner, don't worry about the jacket, it's got to be about a hundred degrees in here; I'm dying myself.

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COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Can I bring some designated hitters?

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Anybody you'd like; the more the merrier. The first thing we've got to do is do a Capital Project to fix the air-conditioning here in the building. I like this when they come with bags, this is good.

LEG. BISHOP:

Who's the longest serving Commissioner of Police?

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Commissioner Gallagher is working on that title.

LEG. BISHOP:

When did he get that title?

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

He wants to know who the longest serving Police Commissioner is.

CHIEF ROBILOTTO:

John Barry did a full term, '61 through probably '72.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

This Commissioner's got him beat. Commissioner, Chief, Deputy Commissioner, how are you guys doing?

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, thank you. Just for the record, I'm here with Chief of Department Phil Robilotto, Assistant Deputy Commissioner Jim Maggio. We have members of the department who are knowledgeable of some of the issues that I'm going to address in case we have any specific questions to ask of them.

I want to just highlight some of the issues in the Capital Program and Budget that we would like to make sure the committee is made aware of and like to make sure the committee has an attention given to it. First that our highest priority in submitting our program was the Highway Patrol Building. And I think, Mr. Chairman, you are aware, at least I know I made you aware, we did that for a purpose of bringing to the attention of the Legislature the fact that the Highway Patrol Building is an issue that will have to be addressed within this next year because the current lease on the property we now occupy ends on the end of December in 2004 and the owner, the landowner has indicated they're not going to renew that lease.

So neither the Budget Review office nor the Legislature's budget -- the Executive's Budget Office recommended a building, a new space, but Budget Review has recommended that the Space Committee review our request and look for possible alternatives. That really was the purpose of bringing that in the budget, making the universe of those who control these decisions aware of the fact that we did need attention paid to a new home for the Highway Patrol Bureau.

There are two areas that have been brought up, one of which I would ask that those who are going to be reviewing take a serious look at and that is the County-owned property on Horseblock Place just off of Nicoll's Road; I believe it was a mental health center at one point, now it's been -- I believe it's been vacated. It would be an excellent location I think because of its proximity to both the Expressway and Sunrise Highway and the main road access up and down Nichol's Road. So it would serve our purposes, it's certainly large enough to serve our purposes.

As I think we discussed, we're pretty wide open to any alternative that anyone would want us to look at. But we just, again, just as the clock ticks, we just want to make sure people are aware that we've got to find a building at some point to get ready, prepared for the Highway Patrol Bureau to move into before the end of next year.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Commissioner, when does the lease or the contract with the building that we're currently in expire?

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

December 31st of next year, 2004.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Fred, when does the Space Committee meet again? Obviously Budget Review has a seat on the Space Committee, right?

MR. POLLERT:

Yes, there's a meeting on a monthly basis. I believe it is coming up in a few weeks, I don't know the date offhand.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

If you would make it a point to please bring this issue up before the Space Committee on our behalf.

MR. POLLERT:

Yes.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

And on behalf of the Police Department, that would be helpful. Obviously I think that's something that we ought to be tackling months in advance. Because obviously if we're looking to do a lease, we're going to have to do that via a resolution at some point and that's a four or five month process. And if we're looking to build a building, we're going to probably have to move the Highway Patrol to my backyard by the time we get the building constructed, so that won't become a viable option.

Commissioner, I appreciate you bringing that to our attention because that obviously is a major concern not only for you but for us as well.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Thank you. We had another project that funds were not included by the County Executive's Budget Office but we do concur with the BRO recommendation that funds for this equipment be included in the 2004 budget, that's on page 154 of the Budget Review Office, that's the

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Radio Interconnect System. It provides communication between agencies using different radio systems. It's transportable, can be taken to any location that's needed so that all agencies can communicate on one frequency, regardless of the equipment that they use. The portability of it, the one that we're looking for in this project would be especially helpful to us. Actually, I think within the last two weeks I think it was we had a problem in the Huntington area where a cable was cut to our misery radio tower site. And while this is wireless communications, they all -- they do depend on a certain amount of cable communications going to the sites.

And there was a point at which we were scrambling to communicate, you know, with that misery tower down after the cable had been cut. This kind of equipment would have been a big help to us at that point, to bring that -- to have that portable interconnect system available to us. So I recommend it highly. I do agree with BRO that the funds for this equipment -- how much are they?

ASST. DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MAGGIO:
Seventy-five thousand.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:
Seventy-five thousand dollars.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

If Budget Review would do two things. We'll do the same thing that we did with the Sheriff's Office, do an amendment to this year's budget for 75,000 and also file a stand-alone for 2004. We're obviously able to approve it this year, we won't need it on the stand-alone. And if any member on the committee wants to be on it, they're more than welcome.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Next is CP 3117, helicopter purchase. We have been meeting with the manufacturers of the two MD helicopters that we now own, the MD-902's. There have been, as you know, some problems with the maintenance and manufacturer's timeliness of their ability to meet our needs. In the past they have made a concerted effort, they have pledged to make a concerted effort and so far it appears they are making a concerted effort to correct past-like somewhat lax maintenance attention to us.

So I'm just bringing that out in terms of that it was involved in the decision talking about including purchase of a fourth helicopter was -- it still doesn't take away the ideal situation of a fourth helicopter as one that could take care of constant maintenance schedules that object with the three we have, but I thought it was only right to bring to your attention that it looks like the company of that we rely on for maintaining the MD-902 is stepping up to the plate more than they have in the past.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Commissioner, if I just could on that, a couple of points. First and foremost, I guess that BRO, in our guide I guess on 141, "We're estimating the total cost to be \$10,425,000;" what were we buying?

MR. POLLERT:

The first column is a total estimated cost including all previous

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appropriations, so that includes the funds that we already expended on the helicopters that we already have.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay. I was getting nervous, I thought we were buying a fleet of Cobra Gunships there for a second.

Commissioner, assuming that we've worked out our problems with the MD's which, God willing, from your mouth and my mouth to God's ears, the department was recommending an additional A-Star; what were you talking about as far as dollars were concerned? Maybe somebody from Aviation wants to join you.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Two million for the additional A-Star.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

I think your demonstration at the last Public Safety Committee meeting in regards to the peaked volume of use of the east end operation as well as the peak volume of use for the west end operation clearly supports the fact that we can't be without a fourth helicopter. Because quite honestly, there could be an instance where we're down to one aircraft or no aircraft due to routine scheduled maintenances and/or problems. So I would personally be completely supportive of that.

I know I've spoke to Legislator Guldi and Legislator Caracciolo, so I'm going to ask Budget Review to do a stand-alone for \$2 million for the purchase of a fourth helicopter putting all three of us on as sponsors.

MR. POLLERT:
For what year?

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:
For 2004.

LEG. LINDSAY:
I have a question.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:
Legislator Lindsay.

LEG. LINDSAY:
Would the fourth helicopter be a Medevac or would it be a multi-use?

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:
It would be multi-use but included in it's use of course would be Medevac capability. The A-Star model that we're looking at is an improvement over the previous A-Star as far as its medevac capability.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:
Commissioner, just as an aside before I recognize Legislator Bishop; I saw him reaching for the mike after I opened my mouth, so I apologize for that. I just want to commend your staff in the Aviation Unit for their professionalism in providing the committee with any and all

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information that we've needed and for the demonstrations that they've set up for the purpose of the committee members to better understand their difficulties. Clearly, they make us all look good in the job that they do. Legislator Bishop.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:
Thank you.

LEG. BISHOP:
Commissioner, the change advocated by Legislator Towle, would that have an impact on the operating budget of the department or is it simply a matter of moving up an investment?

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:
It would have some impact on the operating budget because it would include -- we would have to include funding for maintenance of the fourth helicopter. I don't know about personnel, if there would be -- I don't -- other than that, you know, we'd have to assign personnel over to -- obviously you'd have to assign them to the Aviation Section.

LEG. BISHOP:

Mr. Pollert, is that outlined in your report? I haven't read that.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

But the mechanic would be a major -- not major, but it would be the most impact in terms of personnel reassignments, you would need an additional helicopter. We would go for a civilian position.

LEG. BISHOP:

You know the answer, Legislator Guldi.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Yeah, I actually do.

LEG. BISHOP:

What's the answer.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Well, the answer is twofold. First of all, I would imagine that with the staff that they currently have they would be able to operate the fourth helicopter, from my understanding and having gone to the two demonstrations that they had.

LEG. BISHOP:

Right.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

As far as the maintenance, a lot of the maintenance is covered under the warranty of the helicopter for the first year, and those things that aren't, we'd obviously have those expenses. The only question would become --

LEG. BISHOP:

What would those expenses be, do we know?

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CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Well, if they're not covered under -- how do I know it's going to break? I mean, {carnack} unfortunately I'm not.

LEG. BISHOP:

I recall when we did the last helicopter, though, the Budget Review Office had a different take, that it had a more greater impact than you're describing on the operating budget.

MR. POLLERT:

Specifically what we had identified in our report, that if you add a

fourth helicopter that there's a possibility of privatizing the Medevac function so that you would have two helicopters for the Public Safety function, two would be used on Medevac and at that point in time it may not be necessary to have the Medevac helicopters underneath the Police Department, they could be privatized. And that was something that the last consultant's report had identified where they felt that only three helicopters would be required but if we moved to a fourth helicopter that the possibility of privatization could be explored and that in turn could reduce operating costs.

LEG. BISHOP:

Do you really want to privatize a public safety function?

MR. POLLERT:

No. What, in fact, would be privatized would be the Medevac function, not the public safety function. So that if you purchased a fourth helicopter you would have two helicopters for Medevac.

LEG. BISHOP:

No, I guess we're defining public safety different.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Well, Medevac being medical public safety --

LEG. BISHOP:

Medical evacuation to me is public safety, I guess you're defining it as law and order public safety, which it's not.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Right now, you know, there's a positive to having helicopters that perform both functions because obviously you can use them for both functions. You have police functions that go on constantly, too, search and rescue missions, some pursuits sometimes and observations, aerial observations. So that -- you know, if a helicopter has that capability, obviously, and if it's defined as both a police and a medical emergency craft then we can use it for both. If you go the route that Fred just mentioned, then I think you'd have to be setting those craft aside strictly for medical evacuations which is not outside the realm of possibility, it's done in other jurisdictions.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Anything else, Legislator Bishop?

LEG. BISHOP:

I don't know if it's ripe yet, but where would the funds go that they

would that arrangement work in theory?

MR. POLLERT:

It would be included in the General Fund because the Aviation Unit is a General Fund charge.

LEG. BISHOP:

Oh, it is.

MR. POLLERT:

Yeah.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Yeah, Aviation is charged because of its functions on the east end.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

I think the bottom line, though, is to get back to -- go ahead, Legislator Bishop. I'm sorry, I thought you were done.

LEG. BISHOP:

Over the years I remember an issue about billing for insurances, would that facilitate that or is it -- we resolved that?

MR. POLLERT:

Clearly if you charge for the transport to the insurance companies you would be picking up the revenues that the County currently does not charge for.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

There are other -- you also don't pick up other kinds of costs, the liability. And on the insurance, I explored this when I was in the County Executive's Office one year and you then -- if you're doing that, if you're charging for the transport, then there's certain insurance requirements that you must meet as, in effect, a carrier, and that will -- you know, there will be insurance consequences to pay for that; I don't know that they outweigh the benefits of collecting a fee, though.

LEG. BISHOP:

There's also FAA regulations also.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Yeah, you become a different class of carrier under FAA.

ASST. DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MAGGIO:

Maintenance is more stringent.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

There's obviously also an issue of billing, there's also an issue of do people have insurance or not, "no, I don't want to be transported

by helicopter because I can't afford it and I don't have insurance," and now God forbid something happens with that person going from point A to B. We clearly don't even want to get into that Pandora's box, I think. I mean, clearly the Aviation Unit has demonstrated the need. The updated statistics that we saw at the last Public Safety meeting

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show and support the Legislature's action and our consultant's recommendation to place an aircraft at Westhampton.

And in addition to that, I think the numbers have shown that as the County continues to grow and as we better educate our fire department and EMS agencies about the tools that are available, those tools are called on to use and assist in saving people's lives. And quite honestly, there is no way that we could sit at this meeting today at five after three and put, you know, a dollar amount on the value of someone's life that was saved or rescued by the helicopter. And you look at some of the calls and the dramatic calls that are being serviced by the Aviation Unit and the medical crew that are part of the helicopter that if I'm not mistaken we don't pay for the medical crew, that's provided to us through Stony Brook.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:
That's correct.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:
So that there is no inherent cost to us for the medical crew, so to speak, with the exception of the fact that they're occupying our space.

But I think clearly, Commissioner, as I said, your staff has demonstrated a need for an aircraft and I know at least the three of us that are committed to try to make that happen.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:
Thank you. Next is --

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:
You're three for three right now, I just want to let you know that.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:
I'm rolling along.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:
Okay. I don't want to say push your luck, but you feel free, you go for the fourth.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

About the furniture in my office, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

How do you like the chair you're in now? You're more than welcome to take it when you leave.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

3198, Repowering Police Patrol Boats. Last year's Capital Budget, the boats, the repowering of the boats was adopted with funds for both the commands, north shore and south shore, you know, both commands within the Marine Bureau. This year's budget, the County Executive's budget moves the purchase of the south shore boats to repower those engines back to 2005 and Budget Review agrees with us and we agree with them, that recommending the finding be restored to -- funding, rather, be restored to 2004.

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This is one of these, you know, cyclical things that best works when you keep up the cycle, when you have -- you know, we have done this for years, it's so many -- every year, once -- north shore gets powered, repowered one year, south shore the second and next year, and we eventually cycle them out.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

A hundred and seven thousand, Commissioner, is that the right number I'm looking at?

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Yes.

ASST. DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MAGGIO:

107,333.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

One hundred and seven thousand, three hundred and thirty-three.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

If you promise not to tell anybody, Fred, why don't you do an amendment for this year; let's hope to try to resolve it this year if we can so that we're moving forward with this.

LEG. BISHOP:

Sure.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

I'll explain why in a second, Legislator Bishop. And secondarily, do a stand-alone.

In light of what just took place in the Moriches Inlet with the people losing their lives and the fact that we have a limited number of pieces of equipment and the fact that the Federal government has basically almost pulled all of their services off of Long Island and the fact that we are surrounded by water and the fact that, you know, there are real no major requirements for people to go out and buy a boat and go out and use these recreational crafts clearly has put some people in harm's way. And there's no question in my mind that our marine unit needs to be funded and properly resourced.

We've had two incidences over the last twelve months that did not look very favorable on us, I think. You know, the last one not being any doing of our own, our response time was incredible and we did what we had to do. But clearly there's an issue of placement, where we're placed, when we're placed and when we're operating; have you guys looked at that at all in any way, shape or form?

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Yes, we have. The Chief can address what I think what is the latest development.

CHIEF ROBILOTTO:

We're in the process of attempting to get permission, and we have every reason to expect that they're going to grant it to us, to place

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the south shore boat, the Double Engine Whaler at the Moriches Coast Guard Station.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

That would be great, that obviously would improve our response time enormously to that area. Legislator Guldi and Caracciolo as well on those, Fred.

Commissioner, anything else besides the furniture for your office?

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

No, we'll skip that for now, I'll suffer with it.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

A leather couch?

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Police Headquarters Computer Operation Center Renovations, Capital Project 3231. This one is of special interest to me because it goes to administrative logic, really.

We're envisioning renovating the existing computer center on both the

first and second floors of headquarters. It's reconfiguring the consoles that are there, the so-called servers that we would bring in two new servers where these two, under modern technology can serve what ten servers -- were doing the work of ten servers previously. We're bringing in a new {RAC} system, I'm not sure I understand what a {RAC} system is but that's what they refer to it as, a {RAC} system that holds the computer equipment to handle -- that works in tandem with the servers. The whole system is surrounded by its own atmosphere, it's own universe, that is provided by air-conditioning that keeps the system free of any pollutants in the air and also at a certain temperature. The air-conditioning, the present air-conditioning system is a menace to the system. It is broken down, it has flooded the system repeatedly, we've had floods in the computer room due to the air-conditioning, you know, just going caput.

And it just makes no sense to me. We're going to spend the money to put the machines in and the money to put the {RACs} in and while we're in there doing the renovations, I would recommend strongly that we put back the air-conditioning. And we concur with Budget Review's support of this concept rather than a piecemeal support which I just don't -- you know, I had strong feelings about this, if you're going to do it, do it right the first time. So I would recommend that we adopt a Budget Review recommendation, go ahead with an air-conditioning system which is to the tune of 153,000.

CHIEF ROBILOTTO:
No hundred.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:
Commissioner, what page is that?

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:
Oh, sorry, I'm sorry. Page 153. While it's a little -- I said 153, it's 840,000.

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CHAIRMAN TOWLE:
It's within the ballpark.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:
A dollar here, a dollar there.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:
Legislator Bishop is adding up the dollars on his laptop right now.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:
You know, I just feel that it's a strong point with me from an administrator's standpoint, that if you start a project, make sure the

project gets done the right way instead of going back over it. And BRO I think had the right idea to support this concept, put the air-conditioning in as you're putting in the new service.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Where did we get the estimate of the \$840,000 for the air-conditioning?

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

I will have to ask -- defer to the rear guard.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

The air-conditioning experts, okay. You're going to have to come up and use the mike, unfortunately. Sorry. Boy, knocking the Chief out of his chair, this is pretty good.

SERGEANT LUCIANO:

Good afternoon. I'm Sergeant Frank Luciano, Suffolk County Police Department. I work in -- assigned in IT Section. The 840,000 not only covers the air-conditioners, the Commissioner's quote of approximately 153,000 was correct on the air-conditioners.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

See?

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

I always said you were right.

SERGEANT LUCIANO:

He was correct. It's also incorporating -- we have approximately 30 servers that we want to also change out and redo the floors. The floor in our second computer room is collapsing, you can hardly walk, traverse the area without actually falling through it. We have a raised floor -- I'm not sure if MIS has the same thing, I think they do -- so the wires are underneath it and that floor on the second -- the computer room on the second floor, the floor is falling apart.

Initially when we started out, the computer situation in technology, it started with one computer, two computers, it started growing and growing and now we have a hodge podge of systems and we're trying to consolidate, we're trying to make things work a lot easier for us. Also, currently in light of the home land security situation that developed, what our hopes were when we get the new servers and if we can get the {RACs} and new additional servers, we want to consolidate,

save some money and try to rebuild, and I think we can, use the current servers to rebuild and refurbish them and store them off-site.

Currently, if something happened to Police Headquarters right now, God forbid an Anthrax attack or whatever the case might be where personnel will have to evacuate the building and we couldn't get to those servers, that's it, that's the only servers that we have to run the Police Department.

So we would like to use the current resources that we have to refurbish and put offset so God forbid something happened we could at least go back on-line at another site. So it would kind of kill two birds with one stone. So the Capital Project of \$840,000 includes the new air-conditioning systems which we must have because those air-conditioning systems control the temperature and if the temperature falls down the servers will fail. They're flooding, they're malfunctioning, they're breaking, so those are going to have to be done.

And with the new servers and the consolidation that we'd like to do, clean up the place, replace the floors and put a new center console in, we need more proactive as opposed to reactive. We recently had a situation where someone knocked out a plug and knocked out a communication center, a communication to the police department -- to the cars, the MBC's. We're looking to be -- in our new console and our ideas, we would like to be more proactive so we'll know when there's a network down, when there's a problem somewhere else, before we get a phone call ten minutes later or whatever that there's a problem. So that's what the \$840,000 was for.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Sergeant, the 840 was an estimate from DPW internally to do the project or outside?

SERGEANT LUCIANO:

It was basically outside, it was a combination of getting prices on some servers and construction costs and the console and with the help of MIS because they recently got one, they did the same thing also.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

We consulted MIS, what it cost them.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay. Any questions by the committee? Why don't you do a stand-alone for consideration.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Thank you.

SERGEANT LUCIANO:

Thank you.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

CP 5723 which is the hangar at Westhampton. I recommend that the County Executive's Budget included 220,000 for construction in the recommended 2004 budget, but I have to say that I don't believe that that's sufficient, I don't think that amount is adequate for 2000 --

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175,000 -- rather 220,000. Budget Review recommended the budget be increased to the 2,290,000, but that close supervision be maintained to keep the cost down; I'm not sure about the 2,290,000 figure either, but that is DPW's figure.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Somewhere in between I guess, right?

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

I would hope somewhere far between -- towards the 220,000. I recommend that we go ahead and, as Budget Review said, go ahead with the number to have a number plugged in, but obviously look to substantially reduce that number.

I might bring to the committee's attention, too, that our Support Services Division has been looking at a hangar presently at the Ex Grumman Facility at Calverton. I just want to bring to it to your attention that there's been an offer, in effect, made by the owner I guess to sell to the County the hangar space that's available at that location. We looked at it, it does have some positive sides to it, the offer is for a million four to purchase the hangar, the entire operation. It is air-conditioned, it has office space in it, it has -- it would be available, you know, substantially soon because it's up there for purchase at this point. And it comes with nine acres of land, too, attached to the sale of the property.

LEG. LINDSAY:

I have a question.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

I'm not recommending it but I'm saying I think that it certainly should be brought to your attention as a possibility. The location is both negative and positive because it's not Westhampton, it's Calverton. If you want to explore --

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

If we move the building what are we going to do with the property?

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

If you want to explore this, you know, I would be happy to meet with anybody. I had our Support Services Unit look at this from the Aviation Section also. You know, go over this with you as to just as

a possibility.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Commissioner, if you would provide a copy of the report to each of the committee members. Legislator Lindsay had a question and then Legislator Guldi.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Really it's -- I would be very interested in that because I think that a couple of us on the Safety Committee choked at the cost of that hangar on our property.

Just a technical point to BRO. If we included in the Capital Budget an appropriation to construct a police helicopter hangar and this

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proposal did seem more -- a better way to go, I mean, would it be just a matter of changing the appropriation to the purchase of an existing facility rather than build this other one?

MR. POLLERT:

Yes, that's correct. All you'd have to do is change the title of the resolution and then just appropriate the funds for purchase as opposed to construction.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Okay.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Legislator Guldi.

LEG. GULDI:

Thanks, Commissioner. Yeah, I'm glad you mentioned it. I had received a telephone call from Legislator Caracappa who informed that he had discussed with either you or someone from the department, so he gave me some preliminaries.

I share Legislator Lindsay's concern about the cost projections for building a facility at Gabreski, but I don't think that our cost projections are simply out of line there, I think our cost projections are outright bizarre, and I've said so in the past. The private cost for building an equivalent facility is approximately 5% of what DPW is telling us it's going to cost us to do that. And I don't care how you bend the Wicks Law or prevailing wage, you don't get from 5% to the number they did by that mechanism alone.

When I spoke to Legislator Caracappa about it, I said certainly I don't have any objection at looking at any alternative that meets the

mission needs of the department and is cost effective. But what I fear that we have is a straw man that we're comparing it to in that the costs for building a hangar, as I have just criticized, are what they are.

The other concern I have, though, is that the access to the facility from a lot of -- the drive time to and from Calverton is going to be substantially different because of its lack of proximity to a major roadway that's serviced by secondary roads is one concern. But in addition to that, I'd like to -- I'd like the department to compare the real opportunity there to purchase an existing structure with an evaluation of its maintenance condition, what's its -- you know, unlike a new building, what's its five year, 10 year, 15 year maintenance requirement going to be? And at the same time, I'd still like to really get a handle on what it should cost to do what we should be doing in our own airport.

I am -- while I'm aghast, like my colleagues are, at the projected number to build a hangar at Gabreski, I'm also aghast at the fact that the County has and owns a 1,500 acre airport and the County operates two aviation facilities in leased space at other airports. It strikes me that if that's the result, that that result is absurd and it's as a result of -- it can only be laid at the feet of governmental failure. And I don't think we should -- I mean, if that's what it should cost

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to be doing it, that's what we should be able to get our costs in control to do it in a facility we own and that's, you know, really my concern.

I have no objection to making the comparison, I think the comparison is a good one. I also hear that the facility you're looking at is substantially larger and would be available for some additional departmental needs.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

If possible, yeah, because there is -- I believe there's 2,100 square feet, 2,000 square feet of air-conditioned office space alone in the building. So yeah, there would be --

LEG. GULDI:

How many square is the hangar? Or you'll give me then report.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Yeah, I think -- you know, certainly any -- I think what I would like to do is in the interest of making the due diligence, let's take a look at this with people who know better than I do certainly what about -- like you just said, what's the condition of the building,

what's its potential life span from here on in, how much renovation would it be looking down the road for? And then look at that against what we've had up till now which is a recommendation to put a building up or to purchase -- I think another option was to purchase a facility right at Gabreski, wasn't there one that's right by the airport, by the tower?

LEG. GULDI:

Well, that one -- the one that's by the tower is Sea Hangar; Sea Hangar is currently under a long-term lease which lease also includes the cancellation clause for government use. However, that hangar is identical to two others that the Air National Guard has restored. They were pre-60's construction and I know that the National Guards renovation cost on the ones that they're using was well over a million dollars each.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

All right, so --

LEG. GULDI:

And this one is, in my opinion or estimation, in worst condition now than those others when the Air Guard renovated.

Further, I understand or have been advised that the Air Guard has expressed an interest in expanding its operation to that hangar on its own behalf.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Okay. Well, then again, back to look at what is available at Gabreski versus what this offer would do a comparison of some sort.

LEG. GULDI:

Well, I think also that we shouldn't throw out and give up on the fact that, you know, our department of Public Works, when they itemize to

me the way they made their estimate up, we still don't have an estimate for what it costs to build a hangar out there. We have an admittedly unfamiliar with construction in this industry a mathematical computation based on theoretical algorithms while, in fact, there are dozens of contractors nationally advertising and soliciting to build these hangars at costs below 10% and in some cases 5% of what our DPW estimated it would cost to do one.

So I think still think that we should consider both alternatives but we should consider them all realistically, as you will measure and evaluate them all with the same standard.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Fred, has the Space Management Committee discussed this issue of the hangar?

MR. POLLERT:

Not that I'm aware of. I noticed at the back of page two they had indicated that it was brought before the committee, but that's probably before the working group.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay. If you'd make it a point to also --

MS. MAHONEY:

Yes, they met last week.

MR. POLLERT:

Yes? Okay.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

If you'd make it a point to add that to the agenda items that you'll discuss or bring up at the next meeting, that would be helpful. We obviously need to do a stand-alone, there's no way we're going to get something done for this year for 2003, but clearly to continue to lease or rent a building is absurd on our own location. I think the only thing absurder would be to spend \$3 million to building a building --

LEG. GULDI:

To build a \$200,000 building.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Yeah, a \$200,000 building. So, you know, I agree with Legislator Guldi, if you want to do one for -- a stand-alone for two million max for 2004, I think that would be helpful and at least set an end point, you know, maximum end point, obviously putting myself, Legislator Guldi and Legislator Caracciolo on that bill as well.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

That concludes the comments, Mr. Chairman. Other than that, we concur with the Budget Review Office, any other recommendations they make; or in their absence of recommendations, obviously we concur with the Executive's Budget.

LEG. GULDI:

Um, well one point of information, whoever is doing the field work on this. The non-aviation uses of an aviation area to the extent that Calverton is receiving FAA aid for aviation, they all have covenants

against permitting non-aviation uses in the aviation area such as the housing of automobiles. So someone should look closely into that if we're looking at buying the building.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Yeah, we really might be buying something that's very restricted as to how we could use them.

LEG. GULDI:

Yeah, it's something that comes up with airports.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Okay.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Commissioner, just one other issue that's not -- might necessarily not be and probably isn't a Capital issue at all but I'll ask you since we're talking about things. That 7th Police Precinct, where are we as far as any additional Capital improvements that may need to be made to that building to move forward with operating it, if any, and how are we as far as staffing goes?

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Well, Capital improvements I don't think there are any needed, I think the building itself is new enough and pristine enough that it could open tomorrow as a fully operating precinct. Staffing, we -- it's our feeling that the staffing is -- it's there, we could do a staffing of the precinct based on the class that's just been graduated. The major issue is the issue of the financing of promotions that regarding -- you know, in order to create a supervisory staff there would have to be promotions made within the ranks, especially the two ranks of Lieutenant and Sergeant. But as you know, we did -- we tried to alleviate the condition in one part of the new precinct or what will be one part of the precinct and that's the 5th precinct with the addition of a sector. We have to -- oh yeah, we do have to -- the Chief just reminded me, in order to open the building up we have been housing some Detective squads in there, you know, as guests in the building because of space problems we have all over the place. And we'd have to make sure we have a place for them to go, too, if we open the building they're going to have to vacate their space. That will help with the Quartermaster Building that's going up, you know, it will open some space up.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

As I started to say, the alleviation of some of the problems in the east end of the 5th Precinct is evident by the creation of a new sector car which you kindly helped us to formally dedicate. The Chief

just tells me that after that ceremony, the officer that was there to get in the car and start his tour, he took 19 calls on the first tour,

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so within the first eight hours of operation they were fully up and going.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

That's great to hear; not great to hear that we're getting 19 calls, but it's great to hear that we're able to respond to them.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

No, it's a sign of how busy that sector is going to be.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

So how many promotions would you have to move forward with; how many SCINS, Commissioner?

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

That's a function of the number of -- you know, in other words, to do the staffing that we think we want to do, the promotion, in other words trying a minimalist approach, Sergeants would be approximately 12 is it?

CHIEF ROBILOTTO:

Twelve or 13.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Twelve or 13 Sergeants and three Lieutenants.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

So 15 promotions.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Yes.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

I'd ask the County Executive representative, you came in unfortunately at the tail end of the conversation, we were talking about the 7th Police Precinct possibly opening.

MR. KNAPPE:

I heard it.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

I'm going to ask the Commissioner to send over those SCINS to the County Executive's Office, and I'll obviously put a call in to Deputy County Executive Michaels. There's no reason that we are not moving

forward with opening that facility, that's only going to alleviate some of the problems that we're facing in all our precincts. That was the whole premise behind this and to continue to operate the facility at half speed makes no sense to me after the number of years that we've been --

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

The personnel issue is always one that dogged us. I think -- I'm saying this with my fingers crossed, that we do have sufficient personnel at this point.

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CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Legislator Bishop.

LEG. BISHOP:

I don't have the base --

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

There are some -- the other issue would be with the Superior Officers and the contractual arrangements we have with them for supervision. There would have to be some concessions made to us, as I think I have already mentioned.

LEG. BISHOP:

I'm sorry, may I?

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Legislator Bishop, go ahead.

LEG. BISHOP:

I just want to get more -- pull back and get more of a historic perspective. What year was the precinct built, complete, completed?

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

The 7th Precinct? I believe it was --

LEG. BISHOP:

Like '98?

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Ninety-nine I think, '99, '98 or '99.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

No, '96. Yeah, '96, we dedicated the building in July of '96.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Ninety-six? I thought I was Commissioner when the building was there.

Anyway --

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

I thought it was '96, but I could be wrong.

LEG. BISHOP:

Okay, July of '96. And then we waited for the 6th Precinct, was it, is that what happened? I seem to recall that wasn't -- why didn't we just -- we built something and we just never --

MR. POLLERT:

Right, because of the lack of staffing, it was never used completely as a precinct.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

It was opened with the knowledge that it would not be fully functioning as a precinct. The arrangement at the time was a developer offered to actually put the building up for us and I believe everybody looked at it and everybody agreed it was to the advantage of the County to take the building.

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LEG. BISHOP:

I voted against it then; most of us.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Well, most of us agreed that it was to the advantage to the County.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

There's always one clogging the wheel.

LEG. BISHOP:

Those of you who were wise agreed that it was --

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

And the building has not been without function. We have a COPE Unit in there that's been the COPE Unit for the geographic area covered by the 7th Precinct and the Detective squad that covers the 7th Precinct geographic area now, too. Once the precinct is up and running, those two units will maintain themselves just as they are now, units that really take the calls that would normally go to those two functions, detectives squads and COPE Units, and they are presently functioning as 7th Precinct units. What we don't have is a patrol; the actual day-to-day patrol is still split between the 5th and 6th Precincts.

LEG. BISHOP:

And that's because there are not enough uniformed police officers?

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

In the initial stages of the post building operation, we didn't have enough staffing to transfer people over to the 7th Precinct and to put the hole that would be created by supervisory -- by creating the supervisors that we would have to create.

LEG. BISHOP:

That was the initial.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

We also had an injunction against us from hiring as well, if I'm not mistaken, it wasn't that we weren't willing to hire.

LEG. BISHOP:

Well, we have new classes.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Yeah. Well, we've had, yeah, but they're obviously filling years worth of vacancies. How many years did we not hire?

CHIEF ROBILOTTO:

I believe it was five.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Five years of non-hirings, at 60 people a year, that's 300 officers that we were down, without even talking about adding a responsibilities.

LEG. BISHOP:

I thought we were at 2,700.

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CHIEF ROBILOTTO:

We are now, we're hiring.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

We're hiring now, yeah. We're up at about 2,700 now.

LEG. BISHOP:

All right. You're the Legislator from the area, if you're satisfied that's --

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

No, I'm not satisfied, that's why I'm mentioning --

LEG. BISHOP:

That just didn't make sense to me.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Yeah. I'm not satisfied but obviously our hands were tied. If we were not able to hire Police Officers during the bulk of those years, they were limited to what they could do and not do.

Commissioner, I will say that I stand corrected, you're right, it was '97 because I remember being with you at the dedication actually.

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

Yeah, that's --

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

I'm a year off on that. But the reality is that it is unacceptable to me, but unfortunately, as I said, you know, our hands in many instances were tied. The Police Department has moved forward with I think a reasonable plan to operate and open the facility and that's only going to assist each of the precincts because it's going to, you know, take pressure off of us globally as opposed to just locally.

Thank you, Commissioner. I'm sorry you didn't get the furniture, but I hope everything else was --

COMMISSIONER GALLAGHER:

That's okay, we'll soldier on without it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

We'll call up the District Attorney next. Look at this, Commissioner, they come up with a little folder, they don't need much, they don't come up with bags, boxes.

MR. KEARON:

I just would like the record to reflect that we're the only department asking for less than a million dollars.

LEG. GULDI:

Okay, next.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

If you're looking for any sympathy from this committee, you came to the wrong group.

MR. KEARON:

We just have one project that we'd like you to consider, it's Project No. 1134.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

What page, Bob?

MR. KEARON:

I'm not sure, maybe nine. In any event, what it involves is the renovation, remodeling and refurbishing of four floors located in the Cohalan Court Complex in which we occupy two bureaus. We have approximately 100 people located there and what we're seeking to do is to totally remodel these floors. We had -- the bulk of the expenditure is going to involve the replacement of the computer wiring in order to facilitate and maintain a new computer system that we're about to put on-line next year.

And another major component of the expenditure involves the creation of new work stations and office modules. Right now we have ADA's that are crammed into rooms, four ADA's per room, and it makes it very difficult obviously for them to interview witnesses and prepare their cases for trial. So what this project will do will give them within those same offices or mini-offices so that they can conduct their business privately and professionally. The total cost of the project is \$770,000, the estimated cost.

And I would just like to take a moment to thank Ken Knappe and Roz Gazes who took time from their busy schedules to come over and actually look at the four floors and take a tour and see for themselves what we were asking for. And as far as what Roz and BRO have written, we are in full concurrence and request that you pass this appropriation.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Yeah. It's on page 58 of the Budget Review book.

MR. KEARON:

I'm sorry.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Right now I guess the County Executive is proposing 385 and 385 in '04 and then 385 in '05, I guess.

MR. KEARON:

That's correct.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

So your request is to move everything into '04.

MR. KEARON:

No, no, we're requesting exactly as he's outlined. I'm just telling you what the bottom line was, it was 770,000 spread over two years.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay. Budget Review though recommended a change in the General Fund transfer; you want to just explain that, Fred?

MR. POLLERT:

The source of funding has to be changed to a General Fund transfer just because it doesn't meet the requirements of the 5-25-5 law. A lot of it deals with the computer wiring and stuff which, according to Local Finance Law, doesn't have an estimated use for life of greater than five years. It's part of the whole group of projects that we're making a recommendation that the source of funding be changed on recognizing that because the Operating Budget is going to be tight next year, you're probably going to have to waive the requirements and it probably will wind up as a bond issue. However, to meet the requirements of the law, it does have to be shown as a General Fund transfer.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay. Any questions? I appreciate you coming down today, Bob.

MR. KEARON:

Thank you.

LEG. BISHOP:

You're not sponsoring --

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

We don't have to, the County Executive is doing it in '04 and '05 and they're supportive of that. They just wanted to alert us that they hope --

LEG. GULDI:

Do we need a bill to do the account transfer in the General Fund?

MR. POLLERT:

No. Actually that's what we're going to be doing in general because you do have to conform to the law.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

It's my democratic trend.

MR. POLLERT:

You could waive the law next year but, in fact --

LEG. GULDI:

My question is do you need authorization to prepare an amendment to make that change?

MR. POLLERT:

We have a request I believe by the Omnibus group to make those

changes.

LEG. GULDI:

Okay, fine; it's already been done.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay. Fred, by the way -- we'll call up Probation next since Vinny is already standing, I don't want to make him sit down; come on up, Vinny. And as they're coming up, Fred, the items that we've discussed so far, are any of those items included in the Omnibus Committee's --

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LEG. LINDSAY:

We're still working on it.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay. Legislator Lindsay has informed me we're still working on it. I'm hoping that as a member of this committee he'll carry those things along with you, Fred, to see if we can get the bulk of them included in the Omnibus resolution, particularly if they want Legislator Guldi and I to come on board. How are you today?

DIRECTOR IARIA:

Good. How you doing?

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Good. I'm sorry you're almost batting last here.

DIRECTOR IARIA:

Well, that's okay.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Better than having 27 other groups for tomorrow.

DIRECTOR IARIA:

Right; I'm glad you broke it up.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Yeah, I am, too, but it wasn't a very popular decision; I didn't make any friends really.

LEG. GULDI:

You don't have any friends.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

That's true, I don't.

DIRECTOR IARIA:

We're on page 135 with Residential Juvenile Detention Center --

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Oh boy, you know how to really kill a guy.

DIRECTOR IARIA:

-- 3012 and it's moving forward. We should have an RFP out for building any week now and we should be breaking ground in the fall.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay. Any changes? Well, actually there is nothing I guess that he's recommending for 04, '05 or '06.

DIRECTOR IARIA:

Yeah, no changes.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay.

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DIRECTOR IARIA:

And then the next one is the Probation Officer Remote Access System which is an existing Capital Program as well and, you know, we concur with the BRO report on this.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

And BRO is recommending any changes to the County Executive's recommendation or not?

DIRECTOR IARIA:

They're talking about moving some funding from B to G.

LEG. LINDSAY:

What's the number there, Vinny?

DIRECTOR IARIA:

It's page 139, 3048. Essentially this is very important to us because not only does it give our field officers some increased information, but it's the design that will shut down our mainframe and we'll be going to, you know, a complete new service, new service systems, so it's crucial to us that this gets done on time. And we already have the Case Management Software design in-house that's operational, so the minute we get the lap tops it produces productivity savings for all of our staff.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Vinny, if we were to move the money from 2006 to 2005, that would give

you 182 in '04 and it would give you approximately about 360, 370 in '05; would that put you in better shape or do you realistically think you can spend more in '04 realistically, knowing the constraints?

DIRECTOR IARIA:

No, absolutely, I think we could utilize the money sooner. We should have everything in place.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Fred, why don't you divide up the 217 and do an amendment to increase the amount in 2004 and '05, you know, take the outer year and move it up forward. We'll meet you halfway on that, how does that sound?

DIRECTOR IARIA:

That sounds great.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Just to go back to the detention facility for a second.

DIRECTOR IARIA:

Sure.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

I've received some correspondence in reference to Probation and/or Correction Officers operating the facility.

DIRECTOR IARIA:

Uh-huh.

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CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Not that I expect you to have a different opinion being the Director of Probation, but I'm just curious, what is the thought since obviously the facility is going to fall under your jurisdiction; operated by both, operated just by Probation, operated by CO's, what do you think?

DIRECTOR IARIA:

Well, I --

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Not to put you in a frame.

DIRECTOR IARIA:

You really have to understand the whole juvenile philosophy. There's Federal legislation that basically tells the states you can't mix adults with juveniles. So when we tried to put in the empty detention cells in the 7th Precinct, we tried to put juveniles, all hell broke

loose because it wasn't designed as an adult facility. So they try to keep the separation on the State level. There's a different State oversight agency, the Office of Children and Family Services that oversee juveniles; there's the Commission on Corrections which oversees adult prisoners. So it's really State and Federal policy that guides this.

Now, in terms -- there are also some practical considerations. The probation -- in this County, the Probation Director is in charge of detention, so the Correction Officers would have to work under Probation Director and the Sheriff and there would have to be agreements in transferring staff because people, you know, get tired of one situation over another and, you know, that creates some real logistical problems.

So, you know, when we asked the oversight agency, they told us a couple of years ago absolutely not, because this issue was raised by the Legislature, could this be a possibility and they said no. Now, if they've changed their mind or if they have a different opinion, you know, that was a few years ago. But I think there's some very practical problems with using Correction Officers in the facility. There's also some cost issues.

We're going to be doing this with a system of Probation Assistants and Probation Officers. The Probation Assistant job was upgraded by Civil Service to allow the use of Probation Assistants in these type of facilities. We have already -- we operate some holdover facilities where people have been trained in the use of special juvenile control, special handling, special restraints. All of this, you know, the Correction Officers could be trained to do that, there's no question about it, but the idea is we already have people in place in different functions that will move over when the detention facility is built because they've had some experience with working with juveniles and we will backfill those jobs with newer Probation Assistants hired off the street.

So, you know, we already have a plan in place, if you want to change that, you know, obviously that's the prerogative of the County Exec

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and the Legislature. But I think that you'd have to also check with the State Oversight Agency because they're the ones that ultimately approve what are viable plans in this area.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:
Thank you.

LEG. LINDSAY:

I have a question.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:
Legislator Lindsay.

LEG. LINDSAY:
What's the bottom line; when we open this facility, will it wind up increasing our operating costs for Probation or the same?

DIRECTOR IARIA:
It will be -- it should be close to the same. We're anticipating about a \$2 million operational costs, we now pay Nassau County and New York City to house most of our juvenile detainees. We might be able to also close down one of our non-secured detention facilities because I think the court would be more -- would want to use for -- if we had more secure space in the County they would probably want to use the secure space rather than these non-secured detention group homes. So we might be able to get some savings in that area as well.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:
Vinny, one other issue. Supplies, materials, equipment for your Probation Officers, cars, weapons, body armor, I know that's always been an issue; where are you guys as far as that goes at this point?

DIRECTOR IARIA:
We're in good shape. I mean, we don't have -- we have lost a lot of Probation Officers so we have extra equipment.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:
People aren't sharing as much.

DIRECTOR IARIA:
Right.

LEG. BISHOP:
Do you know how to play the game? You say no, I need lots of it.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:
No, it's actually good to hear that they're able to work within the confines of what they have. Any other --

DIRECTOR IARIA:
We need more staff and then we'd have a problem with equipment, but that's the other --

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:
It's Capital Budget today, we don't usually hire staff out of Capital.

DIRECTOR IARIA:

Okay.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

But it could be a first, I guess. Anything else?

DIRECTOR IARIA:

That's all I have. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN TOWLE:

Okay. Any other groups to appear before the committee? Going once, twice, sold. We stand adjourned at 3:50.

(*The meeting was recessed at 3:50 P.M.*)

Legislator Fred Towle, Chairman
Public Safety Committee

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