

## **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**Of the**

**Suffolk County Legislature**

**Operating Budget Minutes**

A special meeting of the Public Safety Committee 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 22, 2008, to discuss the matter of the 2009 Operating Budget.

### **Members Present:**

Legislator Jack Eddington - Chairman  
Legislator Kate Browning - Vice-Chair  
Legislator Lynne Nowick  
Legislator DuWayne Gregory

### **Members Not Present:**

Legislator Wayne Horsley.  
Legislator Daniel Losquadro

### **Also in Attendance:**

George Nolan - Counsel to the Legislature  
Barbara LoMoriello - Deputy Clerk of the SC Legislature  
Robert Calarco - Aide to Legislator Eddington  
Linda Bay - Aide to Minority Leader Losquadro  
Paul Perillie - Aide to Majority Leader Cooper  
Michael Cavanaugh - Aide to Presiding Officer Lindsay  
Maxvel Rose - Aide to Legislator Gregory  
Catherine Stark - Aide to Legislator Schneiderman  
Lance Reinheimer - Assistant Director/Budget Review Office  
Diane Dono - Senior Budget Analyst/Budget Review Office  
John Ortiz - Senior Budget Analyst/Budget Review Office  
Ben Zwirn - Deputy County Executive  
Tom Vaughn - County Executive Assistant  
Ed Hennessy - County Executive Assistant  
Connie Corso - Budget Director/County Executive's Office  
Allen Kovesdy - Budget-Management/County Executive's Office  
Theresa Lollo - County Executive's Budget Office  
Robert Moore - Chief of Department/Suffolk County Police Department  
John Scharf - Lieutenant/Commissioner's Office/SCPD  
Pat Sitler - Administrative Services/Suffolk County Police Department  
Donna Miles - Budget Division/Suffolk County Police Department  
Joseph Caracappa - Undersheriff/Suffolk County Sheriff's Office  
Michael Sharkey - Chief of Staff/Suffolk County Sheriff's Office  
Joe Rubacka - Deputy Warden/Suffolk County Sheriff's Office  
Joe Williams - Commissioner/Fire, Rescue & Emergency Services  
Warren Horst - Chief Fire Marshall for Suffolk County/FRES  
Richard Stockinger - Director-Suffolk County Fire Academy/FRES  
Robert Holly - Deputy Director-Suffolk County Fire Academy/FRES  
Robert Kearon - Division Bureau Chief/District Attorney's Office  
Lon Kochany - Administration/District Attorney's Office  
John Desmond - Director/Suffolk County Probation Department  
Dr. James Golbin - Chief Planner/Suffolk County Probation Department.

Karlene Maimoni - Director of Program Evaluation/SC Probation Dept  
Noel DiGerolamo - 2nd Vice-President/Police Benevolent Association  
Matt Bogert - 1st Vice-President/Correction Officer's Association  
Debbie McKee - 2nd Vice President/AME.  
Debra Alloncius - Legislative Director/AME  
Suzanne McBride - AME/Unit President-Police Emergency Services-SCPD  
Joseph Congedo - AME/Grievance Board  
Rick Brand - Newsday  
All Other Interested Parties

**Minutes Taken & Transcribed By:**  
Alison Mahoney - Court Stenographer.

*(\*The meeting was called to order at 9:46 a.m. \*)*

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Would everyone rise for the Pledge of Allegiance to be led by Legislator Gregory.

***Salutation***

Thank you very much. Please be seated. Okay, I have -- before I ask the Commissioners to come up and I do have one public portion card. And Debra McKee, if you could come forward, please.

**MS. McKEE:**

Good morning and thank you. Deborah McKee. With me I have Suzanne McBride, Unit President for Police Emergency. We're here on behalf of Cheryl Felice and the entire 8,000 plus members of AME.

For the past year and a half, AME has been coming before you on behalf of the hardworking County employees who serve the public here in Suffolk County each and every day. Consistently we have spoken to the staffing shortages in all departments --

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Excuse me. Could you speak a little closer to the microphone, please?

**MS. McKEE:**

I'm sorry. Consistently we have spoken to the staffing shortages in all departments, especially those with regard to public safety in our County. Thank you once again for giving us this opportunity to work with you to be sure that the services our taxpayers expect when they pay their hard-earned tax dollars are protected and are in place when they are needed; after all, we are taxpayers, too.

One of the most valuable resources this County has is its workers. They have years of training and service to our residents, they are the dedicated men and women who keep things running on a daily basis, round the clock, 24/7, weekends and holidays. Unfortunately, our County Executive fails to see the value in these workers; in fact, he prefers to attack them in radio ads wherein he states they are only out to protect their perks. County 911 operators and dispatchers continue to handle non-emergency 852-COPS calls with no increase in staffing. In 2006, with 133 operators and dispatchers, Suffolk handled 1.24 million calls, an average of 9,323 calls per employee. Nassau County had 193 operators and dispatchers, handled 875,877 calls, an average of 4,538 calls per employee; Suffolk staff seemingly handled twice as many calls.

Despite the above statistics, when Nassau County calls are overloaded, they role into Suffolk County. Because it is difficult to separate emergency calls from non-emergency calls, emergency call response times are increasing. After visiting the Dispatch Center, Legislator Eddington said, "There may still be issues with staffing." Legislator Gregory said, "They're handling 911 calls, 852-COPS, inter-office calls, long distance, they seem more like switchboard operators."

In fact, the new system at Headquarters is really a mini switchboard. Our own members tell us that the unit is so understaffed that employees are forced to wait for designated breaks just to be able to go to the restroom.

Suffolk County's own Efficiency Report in 2004 indicated a recommendation to increase the number of operators and dispatchers by 30%. Given the current working conditions, it is becoming more and more difficult to attract new 911 operators and dispatchers. The understaffing of this critical service is already negatively affecting the quality of the emergency services of our County. 911 staffing affects everyone and can be a life or death event. The Budget Review Office of the Suffolk County Legislature is currently recommending an increase of six additional positions, four Emergency Complaint Operators and two Dispatchers. With the extremely low retention rate of new hires for these positions and also the long background check and hiring process needed, AME strongly suggests that these numbers be re-evaluated and doubled.

Additionally, we recommend that all dispatchers be hired, as they are able to perform boat 911 and dispatch functions within their job scope and are, therefore, the better investment. AME's own outreach report to our members in this unit reveals that the call volume of the department has increased over the years and we believe that the increased number of overflow calls being taken by the supervisors has not been tracked or addressed. This has been used to cover the need for more dispatchers per shift. The excessive workload increased the already stress -- heavy stress load incurred by the job. It also leads to employees rushing through calls to get to the next one, increasing the chances of vital information being missed that can have a negative impact on the health and safety of the caller.

While there are national standards on the number of calls a dispatcher should normally take in an hour and staffing formulas to address these concerns, they have not been used. The current economic climate in our country, New York State and in Suffolk County has all of us deeply concerned. How will we fare here in Suffolk County? Will our County government be prepared to deal with health and safety issues adequately in such troubling times? Many of us have either called or been placed on hold for 911 or we know someone who has. We need to have the peace of mind that this vital service is properly staffed and that when we call we will get through to help right away. No longer can we do more with less while continuing to collect taxpayer monies for budgeted positions that are seemingly never intended to be filled.

In closing, AME would appreciate your consideration with regard to properly updating and staffing this center to fulfill its true purpose, service to the residents of Suffolk County when they need these services the most.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Thank you very much. Any questions? Okay, thank you. Is there anybody else that would like to address the committee during the public portion? Seeing none, I'll go by my list of first come/first plead. If I could have Commissioner Joe Williams from FRES, please.

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

Good morning. I'm pleased to announce this morning that FRES can operate very well with the recommended budget. We were very fortunate, we have no problems with the recommended budget. I appreciate the help from both Budget Offices they extended to us. We've been very fortunate the last couple of years also, with Federal funding we have approximately eleven employees which are 100% Federally funded which has been helping us to a great degree, but we are very capable of getting our mission done with the recommended budget. We are prepared to answer any questions here.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Would you just introduce the gentlemen with you, please?

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

Yes. Next to me is my Chief Fire Marshal, Warren Horst; the Chief of the -- the Director of the Fire

Academy, Dick Stockinger; and the Deputy Director of the Fire Academy is Bob Holly. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Thank you. Do we have any questions? Legislator Browning.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

You mentioned the eleven positions that are Federally-funded; for how many years have those positions been funded and is there a possibility that you could ever lose that?

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

There is a possibility. What happens, we fund them through our Urban Area Work Group funding which has been funding in pretty steady streams since 2001. Those grants are for a two-year period. There's always the possibility that those positions could be ended at one time and when we do hire the people, we let them know that they're hired under Federal money, their benefits are 100%. If that funding ever stopped, we would not anticipate that, we use it on a threat of New York City, we're part of that same group, but if that didn't happen those eleven positions could be gone.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay, thank you.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. Thank you for your -- all you do and I'm glad you're happy.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Thank you.

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

Thank you.

**CHIEF HORST:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. If I could have Bob Kearon from the DA's Office please come forward.

**MR. KEARON:**

Good morning. The gentleman to my right is Lon Kochany, he's our budget guru in our office. I guess keeping with the trend that's been established by FRES, we, too, would like to state for the record that we feel that the County Executive's Recommended Budget will adequately fund us and enable us to continue the services to the people of Suffolk County.

I would like to thank John Ortiz for his diligent efforts in reviewing the budget with us, he spent a lot of time with us. I'd also like to thank Connie Corso of the County Executive's Budget Office because she also spent quite a bit of time. We didn't get everything we asked for, but I guess who does, but what we did get we think we can live with. And so we're not asking for any budget amendment resolutions.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Great. Any questions? Another happy group, okay, great. Thank you very much for coming, Bob.

**MR. KEARON:**

You're welcome.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

All right, keeping with this upbeat theme, let's call Chief of the Department, Robert Anthony Moore.

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen. I'm Robert Anthony Moore, Chief of Department, Suffolk County Police Department. And with me is the Commanding Officer of our Administrative Services Bureau, Patricia Sitler, and she is intimately knowledgeable and involved with our budget.

The Police Department is pleased that the County Executive saw fit, in his recommended budget, to give the Police Department more than it had requested, and for that we are grateful. And as with the other agencies, we feel that we can work within the budget that was given to the Suffolk County Police Department.

**LEG. NOWICK:**

More good news. Huh?

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Yes. The recommended budget was three million higher than the requested budget for 2009.

**LEG. NOWICK:**

Did you hear that?

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

No, I'm sorry.

**LEG. NOWICK:**

His budget was \$3 million higher than the requested budget; is that what you said?

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Yeah, could you say that just last part; you got more than you wanted?

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Yeah. The recommended budget, the County Executive's recommended budget is, oh, about three million and change higher than the 2009 requested budget.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay, so what are you going to do with the money?

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Oh, we'll put it to good use, Sir.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

But I noticed in our budget that there was no appropriation for a new class.

**CHIEF MOORE:**

That's true. There was no request for additional sworn or civilian members.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. I don't know, maybe I'm having a brain freeze. But we all agree we need more Police Officers, you got more money than you need in the budget but we're not putting it that way, is what you're saying.

**CHIEF MOORE:**

I'm -- could you reframe that? I'm not sure.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Yeah. I guess what I'm saying is you're telling me you got like \$3 million extra and you --

**CHIEF MOORE:**

More than we had requested, yes.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

More than you requested. And it seems like everybody on the planet agrees that we could use more Police Officers; I haven't heard anybody saying, "I don't want more." Maybe people aren't verbalizing it. And so you got more money, but we're not going to use it towards staff; what are you going to use the money for?

**CHIEF MOORE:**

I believe that a lot of that money is going to be used for staff and personnel.

**MS. SITLER:**

Yes, the Police Department had anticipated possibly 95 retirements in 2009.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Wait until that gets on.

**MS. SITLER:**

The Police Department had anticipated possibly as many as 95 retirements in two thousand --

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

You've got to bring her with you more often, Chief, so she'll get used to that.

**LEG. NOWICK:**

The other one is the one that's working.

**MS. LOMORIELLO:**

It's on.

**MS. SITLER:**

The Police Department anticipated in our budget approximately 95 retirees in 2009; the Executive's Office and the Budget Review are hoping that that number will be significantly less. Therefore, they increased the salary accounts so that we would have significant funding if that eventuality did not come into play. So we are grateful for the money. You know, certainly if we are not going to have as many retirements, our salaries will go up and if our salaries are not needed because the people should retire, we will still have the money in the account.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay, thank you very much. That clarifies it for me. Legislator?

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Yeah.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Legislator Browning.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Yeah, I'm trying to understand. You're anticipating you possibly could lose 95 retirees in 2009. And what I'm trying to figure out is say they do retire, you have no intent to replace them.

**CHIEF MOORE:**

We expect about 80 retirements. And no, there will be no replacements hired in 2009.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay. How many Police Officers are there total right now?

**MR. ORTIZ:**

In 2007 it was 2,763, that's sworn.

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Two thousand seven hundred sixty-three.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

And you may lose 80 officers next year.

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Well, is that --

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Between 80 to 95.

**MR. ORTIZ:**

(Inaudible).

**MS. MAHONEY:**

Use the microphone, please.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

John, could you give us the numbers?

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Some of those people may already -- you know, that twenty-seven hundred number may not include people who have already retired, we're just going to get clarification on that.

**MR. ORTIZ:**

Yeah, just to correct that number. That was the number in 1996, the current number is 2,508. Two thousand five hundred and eight, and we're anticipating --

**LEG. BROWNING:**

No, hold on a minute. You said 2,763.

**MR. ORTIZ:**

That was in 1996.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Oh, that was in '96, okay. And now the number is?

**MR. ORTIZ:**

Two thousand five hundred and eight, a net decrease of 255.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

A decrease of 255, okay. And we anticipate a loss of 80 next year?

**MR. ORTIZ:**

Eighty-four this year and 80 next year.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay. And -- where was I going with this? So the numbers keep dropping

**MR. ORTIZ:**

Yes. And we haven't had a class since the end of 2007.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

And that includes our -- the Highway Officers that we took off the road and put into precincts, that's everybody?

**MR. ORTIZ:**

Correct.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay. And how many Highway Officers did we take off the highway?

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Eight Sergeants and 36 officers.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

That's 44? Okay, so we're still negative about 40, maybe 50; am I correct? If we have 80 retirements next year, we'll still be short 50?

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Well, the --

**MR. ZWIRN:**

(Inaudible).

**CHIEF MOORE:**

No, the Highway Officers.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

They're counted.

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Yeah, they're counted in that group.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Yeah, I'm just trying to figure out --

**CHIEF MOORE:**

You wouldn't subtract the Highway Patrol Officers from that number.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay, but the 288 -- so, okay. But you're going to lose possibly 80 with retirements in 2009.

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Well, 80 to 84.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay. So then you'd be around 40 short from what you currently are, with retirements; am I correct? Am I doing the math wrong?

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

I can't --

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Am I right.

**MR. NOLAN:**

You're down 40.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Right, we're down 40.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Yeah, we'll be down 40 on the street. Okay, thanks.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

I've got a question on the redeployment of the 35 officers from the Highways, it says it goes to the precincts.

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Yes, sir.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

So, I mean, are we getting five people in each precinct?

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Approximately, yes. I believe six went to the 7th Precinct, but --

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay.

**CHIEF MOORE:**

But six of the precincts received five officers and one received six.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Now, will that help COPE go back to its assigned duties as opposed to filling in every month?

**CHIEF MOORE:**

That -- it should help in that regard, yes. Because the Highway Patrol Officers were assigned to the Patrol Section within the precinct, and that reduces the need to backfill sector cars with COPE officers.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. Of course, the optimal word there is "should".

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Yes, should.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Or "could" or "might".

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Yes.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

I'm hoping that it does, because I see in my area, certainly working with the 5th Precinct as much as I do, the COPE Officers are invaluable. So, just apprise me of the situation in like a month from now and see if it has been able -- if you've been able to do that.

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Absolutely.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Thank you.

**LEG. NOWICK:**

I have a question.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Legislator Nowick.

**LEG. NOWICK:**

I'm sorry, I was just a little confused. You said there were 95 possible retirements, or you said 80 but you said 95.

**MS. SITLER:**

Originally, when we were doing the budget in May and June, we thought there might be an aggressive plan for retirements in 2009; we had estimated 85 for 2008 and we estimated 95 for 2009. Both the County Executive's Office and the Budget Review seem to feel, and we have no reason to dispute that because it's all a projection, that it could be only 80 retiring in 2009.

**LEG. NOWICK:**

How many have retired? It's 2008, we have two more months, how many have retired so far?

**MS. SITLER:**

I believe we're almost at the 80 mark.

**LEG. NOWICK:**

Oh, you're almost at the 80 mark for 2008.

**MS. SITLER:**

We're anticipating that it's going to be 84 or 85. And it's not just retirements, it also could be terminations, if there were someone who was leaving of their own accord or an unfortunate death.

**LEG. NOWICK:**

So you're anticipating about, let's say 85, 80 to 85. But how -- tell me again, that \$ million? You're thinking maybe they're not going to retire because of the economy, is that what's changing your theory here?

**MS. SITLER:**

It's always an estimate of what you think and a lot of people have left that were already planning to leave, but it's, again, an estimate. So if that does not happen, the money would be needed in the salary accounts and that is the logic that the Exec's Office, we believe -- and you could ask them, but we believe that that's the logic for them giving us additional money in the permanent salary accounts.

**LEG. NOWICK:**

So if 85 people did not retire, it would cost about \$3 million, or maybe if 45 people didn't retire it would cost about three million; is that what it would cost?

**MS. SITLER:**

No, the difference is the ten retirements, between what we -- or 10 to 15, between the 80 that they're projecting and the 95 when we did the budget. So that's roughly what the money is. I mean, there's pluses and minus' in other areas; there's overtime that went down in some other areas, there's equipment and supplies that went down. But if you want to look at the amount, predominantly it relates to the difference in how they did the retirements.

**LEG. NOWICK:**

Okay. And --

**CHIEF MOORE:**

This may help.

**LEG. NOWICK:**

Please do.

**CHIEF MOORE:**

The bulk of our retirements happen in January or in July; it's extraordinarily rare that individuals retire other than, you know, those month periods. So right now it looks like there's about 76 who have retired and we don't expect -- you know, in January there may be a group retiring, but we don't really anticipate a large number of people leaving in November or December of this year.

**LEG. NOWICK:**

So then you think the extra \$3 million is put aside in case 10 to 15 don't retire; is that what -- where you think that money is going to go, or you're just assuming?

**MS. SITLER:**

That's -- this is my expectation of why the County Executive's Budget Office increased those accounts, but perhaps you might want to ask the County Executive's Budget Office if that was their logic.

**LEG. NOWICK:**

Okay. I just was trying to figure out what it cost. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Let me ask you a question about -- I understand the Superior Officers are senior officers staying and it would cost more money. And we did have a member of the Superior Officers come forward and talk about some nebulous information about promotions. So it just makes me think, is there money in that budget for the promotions of people that are moving up, too; is that what part of that three million is? Or have you not factored in any promotions or anything?

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Well, in order for there to be a promotion, there would have to be a vacancy, as you know. And strictly from a budgetary perspective, I don't believe -- and correct me if I'm wrong -- that if we were going to promote a Police Officer to Sergeant, we wouldn't have to come up with money for that promotion because the Sergeant's position is already there and available and that position had been already funded for the year.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Oh, okay.

**CHIEF MOORE:**

So it wouldn't be -- if we were to have a number of promotions to Detective or to others, to supervisory ranks, we wouldn't need to suddenly come up with money because that's already been budgeted.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Gotcha. Okay, thank you.

**MS. SITLER:**

The calculations were done by the Police Department assuming that promotions would be filled at some point in time during 2008, if they occurred or during 2009. So that was already in our

calculations.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Oh, okay. So promotions are factored into that whole thing. Okay, great.

**MS. SITLER:**

If we get permission to do that, yes.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Ah, there goes -- see, that last sentence is the one, "If we get permission," that's the whole point.

**MS. SITLER:**

Well, we always -- we always budget with the idea that the money is available, but, of course, we are required to get permission in order to do those.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Right.

**MS. SITLER:**

But we make the money available in our calculations.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Right, the money is available, whether there will be promotions or not is the thing. See, that's the -- that's how I would like it to work, somebody retires, there's a promotion there, boom. But there's like a lag, is what my concern is. But at least I know the money is there, so I appreciate that.

**MS. SITLER:**

And of course, there's always -- the money is in our original calculations. Things do change as the year progresses, but the money was in our calculation and is there at this time.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Thank you. Anybody else?

**LEG. BROWNING:**

John.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

John.

**MR. ORTIZ:**

Just to clear things up a little bit, the Police Department has a \$427 million budget, three percent -- three million represents a very small amount of that. Their budget is actually recommended at 8.1 million less than was adopted last year, so this figure of \$3 million over what they requested is really for step increases for Police Officers that are already there, less retirements. So, you know, it's actually 2% less than last year.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay, thank you. Legislator Gregory.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Good morning. My concern is or I have a question about -- and you may not have this information available right now. But have you seen an increase in crime due to the economy or do you expect an increase in crime in the different districts throughout the County?

**CHIEF MOORE:**

It's always so difficult to forecast crime levels and I've never been a fan of doing so, because once you make that forecast anything that deviates is considered a failure. I can tell you that in those times when the economy has faltered and during -- I've been with the Police Department for 32 years and I've seen it happen a number of times in the 70's in the 80's, this is particularly devastating.

Certain categories of crime absolutely went up. As matter of fact, my first experience was I was a Police Officer, and this was the late 70's, and the price of gold started to skyrocket, it went from 400 to over nearly a thousand dollars per ounce. And that's when street muggings, chain snatchings really came into the sites of the Police; there was an epidemic of those kinds of things. Right now, with the increases in prices of certain metals -- like copper, for example -- I mean, we've been struggling with how to deal with the dramatic increase of the --

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Really?

*(\*Laughter From Audience\*)*

**CHIEF MOORE:**

So certain categories of crime, economic conditions, will have an impact on certain categories of crime. How much of an impact, I just -- I couldn't say.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

But we haven't captured any statistics as of yet?

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Well, we -- I mean, we capture statistics on a monthly basis and we'd be happy to share them with you. As a matter of fact, you know, we do projections month by month, this month as compared to the same month last year, you know, longitudinally over the course of this administration. So whatever measure you'd be comfortable with, you just let us know and I'm sure we can accommodate.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

My next concern is I'm concerned about the level of police that we have now, too. I know in my area, in my district, you know, we've had some shootings, copper is probably one of the highest crimes, at least a few months ago, I haven't seen the most recent statistics. I have a real concern. With the economy the way it's going, our levels of sworn officers, I think, you know, we should really look at and consider placing a Police class.

I know with the County Executive, I know what he's done with the patrol, you know, redeploying them to Police precincts throughout the County, I don't think that's enough. I think we need more officers on the streets. I see it in my community. I mean, I know that there was a press conference that I attended with the County Executive, I don't know, six months ago maybe, you were there, he said crime has gone down I think 11% overall in the past three or four years, whatever the case may be. But I see -- I'm hearing from people that, you know, there are shootings, there are muggings, things going on, you know, that we don't readily read every day in the paper but it's happening, at least in my community, in my district. And I'm concerned that we don't have enough officers to redeploy and to target communities where crime is going to be an increase, or at least a concern. And I think that we're at least projecting -- your projections say maybe 80 this year, maybe 80 next year, we're already down -- well, I don't know if that's a good number to go from, the 1996 number, but at least from that number that's a benchmark to go from. We're at least looking to lose another 160 officers and we have no class scheduled in sight. I think that's -- you know, that's a problem. I mean, you know, we really need to address that.

It's not going to get easier. I know it's expensive, no one wants to pay the costs but, you know, where do you balance cost and public safety? You know, I think that's something that we really -- you know, really has to be addressed.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. Any other questions?

**LEG. BROWNING:**

No.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

I just wanted to commend your airport patrol and the security. It's scary to me to think that people think that carrying a pipe bomb, a gun or a knife is okay on planes. So thank God we have that patrol there and that they're working hand-in-hand with the security agents. So give our compliments to them.

**CHIEF MOORE:**

Thank you. I'm sure they'll appreciate that, sir.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay, thank you very much.

Okay, if I could have the representatives from the Sheriff's Department, Chief Starkey and Under-Sheriff Caracappa.  
So how's things going?

**UNDERSHERIFF CARACAPPA:**

Just peachy, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

That's what we want to hear.

**UNDERSHERIFF CARACAPPA:**

Joe Caracappa, Under-Sheriff, Suffolk County Sheriff's Office. Joining me is Chief Sharkey, I believe Starkey was Ringo Starr's original name.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Oh, I'm sorry. Did I say Starkey?

**UNDERSHERIFF CARACAPPA:**

And Deputy Warden Joe Rubacka. Before we get started -- and I hate to be the one to break the trend of everyone being happy with the budget so far; we are, but we have a few issues that we will discuss with you.

The Sheriff's Office would like to thank John Ortiz and the entire Budget Review Office for working diligently along side of us and the Chief and the Deputy Warden in putting together the Budget Review evaluation. And also we'd like to thank the County Executive's Budget Office, primarily Tricia Saunders, for working closely with us as well. So we're not going to -- we have a presentation, but I'm going to turn that directly over to Chief Sharkey and Deputy Warden Rubacka.

**CHIEF SHARKEY:**

Good morning. I also would like to reiterate Under-Sheriff Caracappa's remarks regarding the Budget Review Office and the County Executive's Budget Office, and especially to Deputy Warden Rubacka for his work on the preparation of our budget request.

Overall, the 2009 Recommended Operating Budget for the Sheriff's Office is \$250,000 less than the

2008 Adopted Budget and is \$3 million less than our requested budget. Of that amount, \$300,000 is in the supplies and equipment lines and 2.7 million is in the personal services accounts.

Just to briefly address the equipment and supply lines, we have to point out that while in the overall scope of our budget, \$300,000 and those items may not seem to be significant, it represents about 5% of those lines. We did make significant internal cuts to those lines prior to submitting. However, in light of the current economic situation in the County, the Sheriff has decided not to seek to have the funding restored for these items.

Having committed to that, we just want to be clear that losing this amount of money in our budget should be viewed as a one-time event, getting the extent of our own internal budget cuts prior to submitting our request. There is no doubt that multi-year reductions of this degree will have a devastating effect on our operations. Therefore, we request that this 2009 reduced level of funding not be viewed as the new baseline to stay within for 2010. While we think we can manage at this reduced level for 2009, we cannot continue into the future with these drastic reductions. We'd further like to note that the Legislature's Budget Review Office agrees with us, stating in their report, "It is questionable as to whether the department can withstand this drastic and sweeping cut for 2009. It is likely that these items will have to be increased in 2010."

To move on to the personal service accounts, and I would also like to touch on overtime and one of the new impacting items on our overtime. The new factor having a direct affect on our overtime and -- is that additional mandated variance posts. As you may be aware, on December 19th of 2007, the New York State Commission of Corrections approved a new variance which provided us with 152 additional variance beds. However, it was stipulated that all cell blocks would have to be staffed by two Correction Officers due to the number of inmates permitted in each cell block. This amounts to four additional variance posts per shift for all three shifts, 12 posts per day. While these additional 152 beds will be saving the County between three and five million a year in substitute jail costs, the savings comes with the additional security costs. The annual price tag for this increased security is between one and \$1.3 million in additional overtime.

However, as stated earlier, as a direct result of other cost savings measures that we've imposed to counter this increase, we've reduced the net cost to 500,000. And I think that everyone can agree that spending \$500,000 to save the County an estimated three to \$5 million in substitute jail costs is still a very good deal.

I would like to address Correction Officer staffing next. Today the Sheriff's Office reached a critical point in its evolution whereby we must have at least one recruit class of Correction Officers each year just to fill the significant number of positions that become vacant due to separation of service, mainly due to retirements. It must be pointed out our Correction Officers have been without a contract since 2004. Due to the provision in recent union contracts whereby you must be on payroll as of the date the contract is signed to receive any retroactive payments and salary increases which would affect final average salaries and retirements, the majority of Correction Officers that could have retired over the last five years have chosen not to do so until the arbitration award is finalized. When that occurs, there could very possibly be a mass exodus of Correction Officers far above our conservative estimates.

In fact, we're basing our 2009 Correction Officer overtime on two assumptions; first, there will be a contract settlement for 2004 and 2005 between now and the first quarter of 2009, and secondly, that an estimated 30 Correction Officers will retire at that time. Notably, this is only one-third of the number that can actually retire in 2009, so we feel we are being very conservative in our estimates. We also based our 2009 overtime in having all Correction Officer vacancies filled in March of 2009. And while BRO has recommended that we hire a class of 30 Correction Officers, filled vacancies, they have recommended a class be scheduled three months later in June. The County Executive's recommended budget also includes the filling of our vacancies between June and July.

Since we based our overtime requests on a March class, if the class of Correction Officers occurs in either June or July instead of March, the officers will become part of the actual workforce three to

four months later and, as a direct result, additional overtime will be incurred to fill the void. Our estimation of the delay would be -- if the class was in June, it would require an additional \$568,000 in overtime and a July start would be \$750,000 in additional overtime.

A second class of Correction Officers has been requested by the Sheriff's Office, as recommended by BRO; this makes the date of hiring the first class even more critical. Hiring the first class of Correction Officers in June not only impacts on the amount of overtime required but also will necessarily delay the hiring of the second class from September until December since the hiring process will take a full six months to complete.

The Sheriff's Office has also requested 42 additional Correction Officers to be hired in September of '09. And while BRO recommends the same hiring date of September '09, they only recommend 25 positions instead of our requested 42. The Budget Office did not recommend any new positions.

The primary reason for the additional staff is to allow a phase-in approach for staffing the new correctional facility which we view is imperative to a smooth transition. These 42 Correction Officer positions being requested represents one-third of the actual number of Correction Officers required for full coverage. As a point of information, if we were to ever achieve full coverage we would virtually eliminate overtime. Consequently, the closer we get to achieving full coverage the less overtime we need. And so until the new facility becomes operational, these 42 additional Correction Officers will make a direct and substantial impact on reducing mandated overtime.

What we must emphasize here is that we simply cannot wait until the last minute to hire the additional staff that would be required to run the new facility. As we said, we've adopted a phased-in approach. We believe that there's going to be in the neighborhood of 120 new Correction Officers needed to staff the new facility in Yaphank. So we've broken that into approximately thirds for 2009, 2010 and 2011. We, therefore, only have two years to fill all of the existing Correction Officer vacancies and make a smooth transition into the facility. If we wait until 2011 to address the staffing shortages, an estimated 150 to 200 Correction Officers, calculating in the new positions needed in vacancies, would have to be hired in one year which is not only a virtual impossibility but is also unsafe. Having that many younger Correction Officers with less experience hired in such a short period of time supervising maximum security inmates who are more violent and less controllable than ever is without question a recipe for disaster.

Notably, the Commission of Correction has stopped the opening of other County Correction Facilities when they determined the existing staffing was insufficient. We cannot allow that to happen in Suffolk County. It has happened prior twice; it happened initially in 1969 when the maximum security facility opened there was insufficient Correction Officers to open the facility, and more recently when we completed construction of the Medium Security Facility in 1991, the opening of that facility was delayed for three years until 1994 before it was totally operational due to short staffing. Today, given the degree of overcrowding we are facing and the fact that Commission of Corrections granted us 511 variance beds, I'm sure that if the new correctional facility is ready to be occupied and we do not have the required amount of Correction Officers fully trained and ready to staff it, the Commissioner would have no choice but to eliminate variance beds as a penalty for inaction. Sending 511 inmates that were being housed in the variance beds to substitute jails carries a cost of \$1.9 million a month or \$23.3 million a year.

Moving on to Deputy Sheriff positions. We understand the future of Suffolk County is uncertain and that scarcity and trade-offs seem inevitable in 2009. That's why even though we needed 12 additional Deputy Sheriff positions in 2009, we only request two in our 2009 Budget request. However, recent events have created a need to reopen an inquiry into the effects of not filling Deputy Sheriff vacancies in the Sheriff's Office in 2009. At the present time we are able to absorb the additional patrol function largely for two reasons. First we have a new variance that provides us with 152 additional beds; and second, for the last six months our inmate population has been lower than last year. Consequently, we are doing less transporting of prisoners to substitute jails throughout the State. Notably, BRO is recommending that a class of at least ten Deputy Sheriffs be

hired in September of next year. We are not requesting additional Deputy Sheriffs, only that our vacancies be filled in 2009.

In summary, we ask the Legislature to continue -- consider the following BRO recommendations. First, hire two classes of Correction Officers in 2009. Second, hire a class of ten Deputy Sheriffs filling a portion of the existing vacancies to coincide with the BRO recommended Police Officer class in 2009. However, there are not Suffolk appropriations for this policy decision. In order to hire a class of 10 Deputy Sheriffs in September of 2009, an additional \$184,344 would have to be included for permanent salaries, holiday pay, uniforms, cleaning allowance, etcetera. It should be pointed out that even with the additional funding, we will still be below the 2008 Adopted Budget.

We also ask the Legislature to consider the following Sheriff's Office recommendations. Hire the first class of 30 Correction Officers to fill existing vacancies, but instead of hiring them in June as BRO recommended, we urge that they be hired in March. By hiring the first class in March, you can hire the second class in September and we will not need to increase our overtime funding. Hire a second class of 42 Correction Officers instead of the 25 recommended by BRO. As we already stated, this class can be scheduled for September only if the first class is scheduled for March.

It should be pointed out that the funding necessary to include these two modifications to BRO's modifications, along with the additional 184,000 needed to fill the ten Deputy Sheriff vacant positions, can be offset by a recent increase in revenue from SCAAP, the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program. The 2008 estimated revenue was \$1 million; however, after the 2009 Recommended Budget was prepared, we were informed that we would receive over \$2 million. Consequently, this additional \$1 million in revenue should be more than enough to fund our modifications to BRO's recommendations.

Finally, if the hiring of the first Correction Officer class remains scheduled for June or later, then we must request the Legislature consider the following recommendation; that is to increase appropriation 3150-1120, overtime for Correction Officers, by 568,000 which represents the amount of overtime that will be necessary to give a three month delay in hiring Correction Officers.

This concludes our presentation. We would be happy to take your questions.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay, let me just start. Thank you for your presentation, and you have stimulated a couple of questions in my mind. I mean, I've heard other Legislators, for as long as I've been here, talk about union this and union that and, you know, I was in the -- I've been in the union since 1963 and I am right now in a union with Dowling, and so that's 45 years. And when you talk to me about the Correction Officers and the need -- and without a doubt, I think everybody can agree with the new jail -- but here's the picture I get, because I'm a visual person, in the New York Times or Newsday saying, "Come join the Suffolk County Correction Officers and work for 2004 wages". That's the ad I see. What's the deal with this contract? I mean, it's six years and we haven't been able to agree on a contract with the Correction Officers? Why would somebody run to join the Correction Officers? I mean, I know you want to get permission to hire them, but why would anybody want to join?

**UNDERSHERIFF CARACAPPA:**

Well, first-off, Mr. Chairman, the contract is in binding arbitration. And we -- just as the Correction Officers, we in the administration are waiting to have that award come down; we hope it comes as soon as today. It's been a lengthy delay and we feel for the Correction Officers deeply because they are still working at those 2004 wages while everything, as you know, has gone up, whether it be oil, gas, food or whatnot.

With relation to people wanting to become Correction Officers, the lists are there. We have a new list and we have plenty of candidates to start filling these positions. But it is vitally important, as the

Chief had mentioned, to start filling these positions as soon as possible because if we can phase them in at the numbers that we're requesting now, it would make it much easier than to do it the much harder way and that is hiring the much higher numbers later on and at the last minute which, again, is unsafe, unpractical by way of budget. And the Commission of Corrections -- and I can tell you, I've met with them on many occasions recently -- they won't stand for it. And they will shut us down before we even open and that's the last thing this County needs.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Absolutely, and I don't think anybody around the horseshoe disagrees with that point. It's just that they're paid a decent wage and respected because, I mean, to me that's the issue. If you're not getting proper pay you're not respected and I think that just is a negative thing. So yeah, I agree, we need more.

**UNDERSHERIFF CARACAPPA:**

Keep in mind, once they -- it's a two -- we're anticipating a two-year decision and then once they have that two year decision they're three years behind again right out of the gate. So hopefully there will be a multi-year decision that the arbitrator rules, but we'll have to wait and see on that.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Right. The Sheriffs; there are, I believe, 15 vacant positions right now. Is that with the new class? I mean, you got 23 new people, didn't you?

**CHIEF SHARKEY:**

We currently have -- with the new class already hired we have 13 vacancies.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

So even with the new officers in there, you're still 13 in the minus.

**CHIEF SHARKEY:**

Yes.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. And now you're doing Highway Patrol. Two questions; how are you doing it? And the other one is I had asked the Sheriff about it doesn't look like, you know, this is changing tomorrow or the next day. I have read the paper about possible Federal aid and I know our Congressmen are working hard to help out; in fact, I think everybody is trying to resolve this issue. But how are you -- I'm confused at -- I've talked to officers that are doing this job and they tell me, "Well, I show up and they tell me what to do." I said, "Are you going to be doing this tomorrow or the next day," "I don't know. I do whatever" -- the consistent word from Sheriffs, Deputy Sheriffs is, "I'll do what I'm told when I show up for my assignment," and that doesn't make me comfortable. I want to know is there plans to start -- and I think there is but I want to have it so everybody understands; is there plans to have a unit within the Sheriff's Department?

**CHIEF SHARKEY:**

We've not moved quite as far as making a decision to create a new unit. This is still an up in the air situation, it does appear that it's going to be more permanent than originally thought. So we do have to move to more of a permanent solution thereby choosing officers to repeatedly do this duty to limit the amount of people that are moved through the assignment and we have begun to do that.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. Because, I mean, the learning curve, obviously -- you know, I know the -- officers are trained, they can do what they're told but they have to be trained, so that's my concern.

I'm hearing on the street that there's like ten new cars that have been assigned to the highway; is this replacement cars or are these new cars working on the highways?

**CHIEF SHARKEY:**

These are part of our standard replacement, annual replacement. The vehicles were just delivered I believe last week.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

So they're not supplementary, you didn't have, you have --

**CHIEF SHARKEY:**

No, there was no additional vehicles --

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

-- you know, seven and now you've got 17?

**CHIEF SHARKEY:**

No, no additional vehicles added to our fleet.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. And my understanding was that the new recruits, the 23 people, were supposed to reduce overtime, that was the whole scope. Because I obviously was going to say there must be a lot of overtime if 23 people were cheaper to have than pay all the overtime. What is your overtime situation now -- excuse me -- with the Highway Patrol?

**CHIEF SHARKEY:**

Well, our overall overtime --

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Is it consistent, down, up?

**CHIEF SHARKEY:**

Other than the overtime that we referred to in our presentation, the half million, that is going to be the net increase from the variance beds, we will be able to remain within our adopted budget amount for 2008. Our last two pay periods, our overall overtime is lower than it was the same period last year.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. Anybody else? Any questions? Legislator Gregory.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Thank you, Mr. Chair. So you just said that the Highway Patrol is looking more permanent than temporary.

**CHIEF SHARKEY:**

It's looking like a longer-term commitment than it was on initial -- on the initial assignment.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Longer-term meaning six months, nine months, a year?

**UNDERSHERIFF CARACAPPA:**

Longer-term meaning that we're still here as opposed to not being. Every day -- tomorrow is a longer-term situation for us, Wednesday -- the weekend will be a longer-term situation for us. Every day that passes it's a longer-term situation.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Okay. Now, I think when we had our special hearing about Highway Patrol you said that your patrols were at, I believe, 34 personnel, is that -- on a daily basis?

**UNDERSHERIFF CARACAPPA:**

Twenty-seven.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Twenty-seven.

**UNDERSHERIFF CARACAPPA:**

That's on all shifts.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Okay.

**UNDERSHERIFF CARACAPPA:**

Twenty-four hours.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Okay. Now, it looks like you're asking for a class of ten? Is that going to -- are you projecting that those officers go to -- would that help you redeploy more officers for Highway or is that for other internal operations?

**CHIEF SHARKEY:**

Well, it's to handle our overall operation. We're not dedicating any particular class and saying it's going to be dedicated to a particular function. Overall, whenever we hire, we're hiring in an effort to reduce overtime.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

So are you stating here today that -- is it fair to say that the redeployment of some of your personnel to Highway has affected your other operations because you need a class of ten now?

**CHIEF SHARKEY:**

I would say that in the early stages of doing our staffing analysis, we believe that we have a significant portion of personnel that we need for Highway available to us. But without filling the existing vacancies in our budget, it would make it much easier to perform that function.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Have you -- I know at the last -- at the special hearing I had questioned you about what projected costs have you calculated to equip your highway vehicles; have you come up with a number yet? Because from what you're stating is from the budget you were I think 300 minus your recommended equipment line; have you made a calculation as to how much that's going to cost you?

**CHIEF SHARKEY:**

Going into next year, our equipment and supply lines was a \$300,000 reduction. We have ordered the supplies that we'll need to outfit the vehicles that Legislator Eddington referred to that are replacement vehicles. The equipment that we'll need to outfit those has been ordered already this year out of this year's budget within our existing budget limitations.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Okay. And what's that cost?

**CHIEF SHARKEY:**

I don't have that cost with me today.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Okay. All right. I have no more questions.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Legislator Browning.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Yeah, talking about the Correction Officers because they're, what, is it five, six years without a contract; six years?

**CHIEF SHARKEY:**

It will be six in January.

**UNDERSHERIFF CARACAPPA:**

Coming up on six.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay. Maybe this is a BRO answer. If they settle their contract some time this year, probably next year, and they get the increases based on the past contracts, so it's only two years that they're going to get, so now we'll be up to the 2006 year. And if you were to base their increases based on what the other unions have received, how much would that -- how much will that cost us? Because now you're doing retroactive pay. How much would that be, do you think?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

That's a difficult question to answer. We've looked at the impact of having contracts in negotiation. Starting effective January 1st, '09, all the contracts have expired with the exception of the -- I think it's the Park -- Probation Officers. So the budget has made provisions for labor agreements. I think that's about as far as we can say on the record. There are appropriations, there are provisions for the settlement of contracts, including the Correction Officers.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

My question is is that if you're two years behind, now two years later say they ratify a contract some time next year and now you have to do the retroactive pay, okay, and -- but now they're still two years behind and now you're going to have to do another two years of retroactive. Is it more cost effective to settle a contract as close to -- you know, the time that the contract expires rather than to have to keep doing these arbitrations and having to pay these retroactive?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

I think --

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Does it cost us more? I'm trying to figure it out. Because it seems to me it is.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

That's hypothetical what it would cost if you agree to a contract on a current basis then letting this period of time go. I think the more important question is it makes it more difficult to budget and to anticipate what you need in appropriations. We've looked at past contract agreements and settlements, the Budget Review has made independent analysis of what we anticipate additional provisions would be needed, but that's a guesstimate because we're not involved in the negotiations. We've talked to the County Executive's Office and looked at their assumptions for their provisions and, you know, the best I can tell you is that the budget makes provisions for contract agreements. They've looked -- both offices have looked at the impact of Correction Officers from 2004 through 2009 and we've looked at all the other collective bargaining units also. So there are appropriations for labor agreements in the 2009 recommended budget.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

But again, it's difficult. We're trying to craft a budget --

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

It's difficult budgeting; yeah, it's difficult budgeting. The cost, whether it's cost-effective to settle or not, it's hard to say.

**UNDERSHERIFF CARACAPPA:**

It is like looking into a crystal ball, Legislator Browning, because you don't know in today's climate what an arbitrator is going to rule. If they're going to rule on a two year and then get back to work on the remaining four years or are they going to do something as they did in Nassau last year and give them I believe it was between a six and an eight year contract. So it's very, very hard to budget when it's in an arbitrator's hands -- when it's been in an arbitrator's hands so long.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

I just think that, you know, we have officers who are sitting and won't retire because they know that they're going to lose that retroactive if they leave, so of course they're going to sit there. You know, they're the highest paid officers and now they're waiting for their retroactive, and so when they get that -- you know, rather than settling the contract, letting them retire and bringing in new officers at a lower wage, it just seems to me that somewhere along the line this is costing us more money.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

That's correct in that regard. And it's also part of the reasoning why the Budget Review Office is recommending classes because we do anticipate also that there will be a significant number of Correction Officers retiring next year, or as soon as the contract is settled.

**UNDERSHERIFF CARACAPPA:**

Remember, that was a March class, right?

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Yeah, you're -- when do you expect the jail to be finished?

**UNDERSHERIFF CARACAPPA:**

In 2011, late 2011.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

And you would need officers hired, trained no later than what date so that they're ready to work?

**UNDERSHERIFF CARACAPPA:**

From what the Commission has told me, at least, *at least* six months prior they would need to -- keep in mind we're moving into a whole different type of corrections which is direct supervision, and we have to train all of our officers in that new type of corrections. Luckily, we are training them in that format through the academy now and that's why it's imperative that we get as many people through the academy and get those bodies into the system on that scaled -- a little bit at a time so that they have the training, it meets the Commission's requirements, and that we can open on time. Because you can't just open the doors and walk in, there's a tremendous amount of training within the building that has prior run-throughs, you have to go through a whole bunch of fail-safe -- fail-test measures. It's a process and you can't just say it's done on a Thursday and be -- move in over the weekend. The Commission will never let that happen.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Like you did with the Sheriffs, putting them on the highway.

**UNDERSHERIFF CARACAPPA:**

Well, yeah.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. Anybody else? Well, thank you very much, gentlemen, for the information and the presentation.

**UNDERSHERIFF CARACAPPA:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Next we have John Desmond from Probation. Whenever you're ready.

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**

Good morning. My name is John Desmond, the Probation Director.

**MS. MAHONEY:**

The mike is not on.

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**

Good morning. My name is John Desmond, I'm Probation Director. With me today, on my left is Dr. James Golbin who's our Chief Planner, and to my right is Ms. Karlene Maimoni who's our Director of Program Evaluation. I do not have a prepared statement today. I would just like to note that this is the Centennial Anniversary of the Probation Department. In 1908, General Motors was founded, the Ford Motor Company began producing their Model-T and Vanderbilt Motor Parkway was constructed; I'd like to say that the Probation Department is in the best shape of all four of those creations. And we'll be happy to take questions.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Any questions? Legislator Gregory.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Hi, John. How are you?

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**

Good. Thank you.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

My concern is -- or my question relates to those that are coming out from being incarcerated. Are there programs that are available? I've had contact with several people that have been incarcerated and it's difficult for them to find employment. I know there's organizations, some organizations out there, I'm not familiar too much with any in Suffolk County that provide counseling and job training opportunities and things like that. I believe there's a program in Riker's Island where organizations, they counsel them as they are about to exit the prisons. Do we have anything similar, any organizations like that in Suffolk County?

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**

We do and I'm going to answer that question on a couple of different levels. For the Probation Department itself, we have a Labor Specialist that we were able to bring on board a year and a half ago and he had a long history with the Department of Labor before we brought him over. He works directly with Probationers coming out of both the jail and those coming into Probation that haven't spent time in jail.

In terms of parole, what we have is a relatively recent development through the CJCC, Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, whereby we're getting roughly \$400,000 a year that the County is able to use in cooperation with State Parole to provide additional services to the individuals coming out from the State Prison System, and part of that is being directed toward employment assistance. Frankly, the largest amount of that money is being used towards substance abuse services, because what we're finding is if we don't address the substance abuse services immediately, we'll lose them back to the State Prison System.

And then the third component is the County Department of Labor which works with us very closely, with Probation, and also has some ongoing involvement with State Division of Parole. So in answer to your question; yes, there are services available.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Okay. Do we -- are there -- do you have any involvement with the schools? I know there's a gentleman with the Wyandanch Weed & Seed Program, he comes there monthly, but do you have any involvement with the schools and kind of -- or anything like that, community outreach? Would that be in your purview?

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**

Yes. All of our juvenile supervision cases, and there are normally about 1,200 of them, all those Probation Officers are required to be in the schools. Basically they're in the schools virtually all the time, working with both the individuals, the children that are on probation and other children that are having problems within the school districts. We have some Probation Officers based in schools.

And in addition, we have a number of diversion programs through either the Probation Department or through Alternatives For Youth which is a multi-department task force. All of those individuals that work with those children that we're attempting to divert out of Family Court also work with the school districts.

In addition, the Probation Officers with the adult caseloads that have individuals that are still in school, also on a monthly basis at a minimum, go to the schools.

And then my final on that is we have ongoing relationships with most of the school districts in the County in terms of trying to keep PINS, Persons In Need of Supervision, out of the Family Court System. The system by which children are referred to Family Court by the school districts runs through the Probation Department and we deal with school districts virtually every day to provide services to the children to keep them from ending up in Family Court.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Have you seen an increase in referrals or diversions to these type to -- the alternative programs for youth?

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**

In 2005, there was a dramatic change in State law which required programs for the first time that mandatorily provided diversion services. Since then we've had really an astounding level of success. We've reduced the number of PINS children that have been placed by 60%. The AFI Program that I referred to before has a more than 90% success rate in keeping children that originally would have been Parent PINS, PINS brought by their parents, from Family Court.

So while the numbers have gone up in terms of our diversion efforts, the number of children actually going to Family Court and being placed thereafter has dramatically decreased. I'd estimate a savings between 2004 and today of, very conservatively, \$4 million a year in placement costs.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Okay. Now, those on Probation or Parole with any type of mental illness, how do we handle those?

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**

The individuals that are on Probation, we have created a Mental Health Unit that works with the most significantly ill. Those Probation Officers have small caseloads and have special training to work with that population.

With Parole, because of the increase in the State funding, we've also been able to provide significant mental health assistance that wasn't available before. In addition, through a couple of not-for-profit

agencies in the County, we identify individuals coming out of the Suffolk County Jail that have very significant mental illness. They are provided with medication to transition them so that they can keep medicated until such time as Medicare, SSI, Social Services assistance kicks in and they can obtain medication through normal channels. This was an area where we used to lose a lot of people.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Okay. Now, is there someone assigned to them to make sure that they're seeking or obtaining the proper counseling, that they're taking the medications?

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**

There are caseworkers assigned to individuals coming out of the County Jail that I referred to. With Parole, you have a combination of Parole Officers and case managers through Task, and through Probation we have the Probation Officers. I'm not going to tell you that everybody is getting assistance, but a lot more are.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

But it's not a temporary thing.

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**

No, this has been an ongoing --

**LEG. GREGORY:**

It's as long as they need -- okay.

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**

-- group of programs. The County Health Department's Office of Mental Health, Mental Hygiene Services has done a fantastic job, both screening people coming out of the State Prison System and working with the Probation Department to provide as many services as we can.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Okay. All right. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Legislator Browning.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Yeah, I'm looking at BRO saying to hire an additional 12 positions; am I correct? For Probation for the GPS, for the electronic monitoring?

**MS. DONO:**

Legislator Browning, those positions are existing positions.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Oh, sorry.

**MS. DONO:**

What we're recommending is restoring sufficient permanent salaries funding so that those positions will be able to be hired next year.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay. But they're not --

**MS. DONO:**

They're not new positions, they're existing positions.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay, but they're not people who are currently working; correct?

**MS. DONO:**

That is correct.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay. So what's the cost of 12 Probation Officers? Maybe --

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**

The -- if I could answer that relatively quickly. To increase the GPS Unit so that we can supervise another 50 or so individuals on active electronic monitoring, it's about a million dollars.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

So the 12 positions is about a million dollars? What I'm trying to figure out, and you're saying that 12 Probation Officers would be monitoring approximately 50 --

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**

Yeah. Again, it's not 12 Probation Officers. It would be somewhere roughly eight to 10 Probation Officers, paraprofessionals and clericals.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay.

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**

There's economies of scale to growth of electronic monitoring so that you can bring in more paraprofessionals.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay. I'm trying to figure out what the savings is. If we had more officers doing the electronic monitoring versus the cost of, you know, keeping somebody out of the jail. You know, it's obviously a better savings for us to do the electronic monitoring versus keeping them in jail, right?

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**

Correct.

**MS. DONO:**

We had calculated the cost of the permanent salaries to be approximately \$384,000 for the eleven positions.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Three hundred and eighty-four thousand?

**MS. DONO:**

That's just the salaries, that's not fringe benefits.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay.

**MS. DONO:**

That was three-quarters of the year.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

And how many Probation Officers again? Sorry.

**MS. DONO:**

It was eleven --

**LEG. BROWNING:**  
Eleven.

**MS. DONO:**  
-- Probation Officers.

**LEG. BROWNING:**  
And how many people can -- does a Probation Officer monitor? Like eleven Probation Officers, how many people would they monitor?

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**  
Well, if you're doing GPS, if you're talking about the active electronic monitoring, what you have is 24-hours a day monitoring, seven days a week, so we do it in groups of 50. So we find that you bring in one group of Probation Officers can effectively monitor somewhere between 50 and 60 individuals. So it would have to -- when you increase it, you have to increase it in groupings. You can't increase it by two and three officers, it's either all or nothing.

**LEG. BROWNING:**  
And how much does it cost to keep a person in jail per day?

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**  
I believe the current total, and I'm probably being conservative here, is about \$230 a day.

**LEG. BROWNING:**  
Okay. That's a big savings. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**  
Okay. You know, didn't we put money -- or didn't we put positions in for the electronic monitoring last year, or two years ago?

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**  
Yeah, those are the positions that they're referring to.

**MS. DONO:**  
Yes.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**  
Okay, all right. But they haven't been filled.

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**  
Correct.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**  
And they haven't been -- there's no money in the budget for them. Oh, there is money, is that what you said?

**MS. DONO:**  
No, there isn't.

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**  
No, there's no money.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

No. Okay, I just want to make sure. Okay. All right, then, if there's no other questions, thank you very much.

**DIRECTOR DESMOND:**

Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

I've gone through my list and we've gotten to everybody.

I thought I would stop -- first of all, I want to thank BRO, Gail's group of Lance, John, Diane, Robert and everybody. But I thought maybe I would just ask you, so how's your budget? Too bad Gail isn't here, but --

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

You mean for Budget Review?

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Yeah. I mean -- you know, are we taking care of you? You're certainly taking care of us.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

The County Executive abolished one position, the Chief Auditor that retired. We had two people take advantage of the Early Retirement Program, our Chief Auditor retired, that was abolished. Along with that, they reduced our permanent salaries by \$100,000. We are requesting that position to be -- to be reestablished because we've had an Auditor, a 32 year history, most of that time without the funds.

The County Executive also reduced technology equipment for the whole Legislature, I think about \$80,000. So the Legislature was also reduced by the County Executive. And the Legislature requested a budget with no increase, the same as 2008, but the County Executive did reduce that.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Hmm. I guess we've got to start saying what certain people want to hear, huh? Well, I appreciate that and we'll see what we can do. Thank you very much.

Okay. If there's no one else that would like to speak -- oh, got one more person. Okay, Debra?

**MS. ALLONCIUS:**

Debbie Alloncius speaking on behalf of AME and Cheryl Felice and all our members.

I just want to speak to our Crossing Guards Unit; we had a couple of the ladies here before. The monies are remaining the same, I do believe. We just want to make sure that they -- that they're all given whatever can possibly be necessary for this dedicated group who are there day-in and day-out watching these children, making sure they're safe, going above and beyond, you know, mediating fights, you know, doing all sorts of things. And they're constantly under attack, constantly by the public who are always in a rush, always doing this, always doing that. And we do appreciate all that can ever possibly be done for this group, because they are -- they're part of the backbone of the entire system involving the Police, involving the schools. They're there all the time.

And I just want you to keep that in mind. If anything ever comes across, you're reducing a budget in there; you can't. All that money needs to be there and possibly more.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Yes. Debbie, do me a favor, because I see them all the time and I wave and smile, and just let them know it's me, that it's not some weird guy hanging out by schools.

**MS. ALLONCIUS:**

Well, they'd have to put me in the same class because I'm always waving at them, too.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. All right. Thank you very much.

**MS. ALLONCIUS:**

Okay.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

If there's nothing else, we'll end the committee. Thank you.

*(\*The meeting was adjourned at 11:08 a.m. \*)*