

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE  
OF THE  
SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE**

**Minutes**

A regular meeting of the Public Safety 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 Thursday, April 23, 2009 at 9:30 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Legislator Jack Eddington, Chairperson  
Legislator DuWayne Gregory  
Legislator Steven Stern  
Legislator Thomas Barraga  
Legislator Daniel Losquadro

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Legislator Ed Romaine  
George Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature  
Sara Sampson, Legislative Counsel's Office  
Robert Calarco, Aide to Legislator Eddington  
Marcus Povinelli, Aide to Legislator Losquadro  
Renee Ortiz, Chief Deputy Clerk of the Legislature  
Alicia Howard, Legislative Aide  
Gail Vizzini, Director of Budget Review Office  
John Ortiz, Budget Review Office  
Linda Bay, Aide to Minority Caucus  
Kara Hahn, Director of Communications/P.O. Lindsay's Office  
Michael Cavanagh, Legislative Aide/P.O. Lindsay's Office  
Michael Pitcher, Legislative Aide/P.O. Lindsay's Office  
Bobby Knight, Legislative Aide/Presiding Officer Lindsay's Office  
Ben Zwirn, Deputy County Executive  
Ed Hennessy, County Executive's Office  
Brendan Chamberlain, County Executive's Office  
Allen Kovesdy, County Executive's Office  
Michael Sharkey, Chief of Staff/Suffolk County Sheriff's Office  
Joseph Caracappa, Undersheriff/Suffolk County Sheriff's Office  
Noel DeGerolamo, 2nd Vice President/Police Benevolent Association  
Thomas Tatarian, Suffolk County Police Benevolent Association  
Vito Dagnello, President/Correction Officer's Association  
Tedd Davis, 1st Vice Present/Correction Officer's Association  
Robert Kearon, Bureau Chief/District Attorney's Office  
Raymond Dean, Chief of Police/Westhampton Beach Police Department  
Gail D'Ambrosio, President/Probation Officer's Association  
Peter Dykeman, Suffolk County Probation Officer  
Stephen Jones, CEO/Suffolk County Water Authority  
Paddy South, Director of Public Relations/SC Water Authority  
Herman Miller, Suffolk County Water Authority  
Richard Kniff, Suffolk County Water Authority  
Warren Horst, Suffolk County Fire Marshall  
Debra Alloncius, AME Legislative Director  
Deborah McKee, AME

Roger Clayman, Long Island Federation of Labor  
Nick LaMorte, CSEA  
Angie Morton, Community Service  
Bill Welsh, Town of Riverhead  
Other Interested Parties

**MEETING TAKEN BY:**

Lucia Braaten, Court Stenographer

**[THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 9:44 A.M.]**

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. If I could get you to rise, we're going to start the Public Safety Committee meeting, and Legislator Gregory will do the Pledge of Allegiance.

**(\*Salutation\*)**

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Please remain standing for a moment of silence for all those that serve our country and provide public safety.

**(\*Moment of Silence\*)**

Thank you very much. Okay. I'd like to start with the public portion. Roger Clayman.

**MR. CLAYMAN:**

Good morning. My name is Roger Clayman and I'm the Executive Director of the Long Island Federation of Labor. I'm here to address I.R. 2207-2008, which is the law to prevent double-taxation for police services in certain Towns and Villages. I think you're familiar with the issues, so I won't explain to you what I think you've all come to know fairly well, but I want to explain that our motivation is about saving jobs. We've -- we're involved very directly in supporting CSEA and the employees who work in -- as dispatchers and other public safety personnel in the Town of Riverhead. And this issue came up as a budgetary matter and it became clear to us as we learned more and more about the cause of this, that it was a question of double-taxation, that they're paying for the services that they have in Riverhead, but also paying once again to Suffolk County, and I think most of you are familiar with it.

I wanted to compliment Legislator Romaine for his efforts to bring this issue to the body and to suggest a solution. We think it's necessary, because in this economic climate the most significant thing we can do is to protect jobs. We've got to do what it takes to keep people working, or this terrible recession we're in will spiral downward. So I urge you to look at that taxation question to bring it forward and give that option. If a community is paying for services already, don't make them pay again. Don't make the taxpayers pay again for the same service. In that way, if a community is doing a good job and has loyal personnel doing a great job with the dispatching and public services, let's keep them on the job and not risk the Town losing that possibility and losing those jobs. So I want to thank you for your attention.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Thank you. Next speaker, William Welsh.

**MR. WELSH:**

Good morning. My name is William Welsh. I'm the Deputy Supervisor for the Town of Riverhead. I'm representing Supervisor Cardinale, who is out of State for the week, and I would just like to read a statement that the Supervisor has on this issue.

"I strongly support Legislator Romaine's Resolution 2207-2008, which seeks to amend the County Charter to stop double-taxation for 911 response and dispatch services. I request that the proposed amendment be expanded to address all Police services for which a County tax is paid and services not delivered, and that it include full reimbursement of 911 surcharge monies to those Towns and Villages which operate their own 911 response and dispatch services.

In early 2008, the Town of Riverhead, in an effort to reduce the tax burden on its residents, analyzed costs for its Police services. Investigation revealed that Riverhead residents were being taxed by the County for 911 response and dispatch services which were not received from the County. I contacted then Chief Deputy County Executive Jim Morgo, Chief of Staff Jeff Szabo, and

representatives of the County Legislature requesting that the Town of Riverhead be credited with monies collected by the County for such undelivered services. I even offered to accept less than full credit. The County refused my request and, instead, placed the Town in the difficult position of either transferring the 911 response and dispatch function to the County, or continuing to allow Riverhead residents to endure this double-taxation.

Financial realities constrain the Town Board to make a difficult decision to transfer the dispatch function to the County rather than pay again for these services. The question the County refused to answer remains why should Riverhead residents, or any other residents in similar situations, be charged for services not received? This is double taxation. Riverhead operates its own 911 response and dispatch services, and Riverhead residents should be allowed to continue to do this locally without having to pay twice for such service. The Town of Riverhead is simply asking the County to do the right thing and pass this proposed amendment to the County Charter." Thank you very much.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Thank you. Next speaker is Stephen M. Jones.

**MR. JONES:**

Thank you very much. My name is Stephen Jones, I'm CEO of Suffolk County Water Authority, and we are here today to support your proposed Local Law as I.R. 1122, to strengthen reporting and testing for -- in relation to private fire hydrants. We're very much in support of what you are trying to do here to help -- to help the situation out. It was unfortunate situations that occurred over the wintertime.

Our comments are put into a piece of paper that I think you should all have copies of. Just to hit the highlights of that, these plumbing systems, when they're charged up, are very dynamic systems. The pressure and the flow can change dramatically and swing dramatically based on what's happening in the system, so that a pressure test is more static and does not necessarily reflect what's always going on in the system.

In March, our Board -- the members of the Suffolk County Water Authority passed a new amendment to our rules and regulations and requirements to allow for private distribution systems to come over to the Suffolk County Water Authority without the heavy financial burden of upfront costs for the Water Authority to take the systems over, to allow for some time periods of five to ten years for them to pay the Water Authority to take over these existing systems.

We remain concerned about a number of things which are not covered by the law, and these have to do principally with upfront notification. The law contemplates notification on the back end after the testing is done, and filed, and such. We're concerned about upfront notification, because any time flow tests are done or the system is turned off and on with heavy flows from fire hydrants, you can kick up iron sediments, sand sediments in the system.

Also, if somebody doesn't know what they're doing, they can actually cause a pressure spike, which can break the system and cause water main breaks or valves to leak or such. So we're working also with our Board to ensure that people who are out there doing hydrant and flow testing can get us notified of that, so that we can, in turn, notify our customers, so that if they have a shot of iron in the system, or something else occurs and they don't know what it's about, at least we do know what it's about. And we continue to work closely with the Fire Departments. We'll be going to the Fire Chiefs Council in May with an extensive presentation. We look forward to working with you and with the Town Fire Departments and with the Town Fire Marshals to maximize our ability to work together for the protection of the citizenry. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Thank you very much. Okay. Anybody else who would like to address the Public Safety Committee during the public portion? No? Okay. Then I would ask -- oh, I have somebody. I'm sorry. What's

his name? Who is that?

(\*Laughter\*)

**MR. LAMORTE:**

I thought I signed in, Jack.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Go ahead, Nick.

**MR. LAMORTE:**

Good morning. My name is Nick LaMorte. I'm the Long Island President for CSEA. We represent some 50,000 CSEA families on Long Island.

I came before the Legislature last month to speak on I.R. 2207-2008 submitted by Legislator Romaine. But before I make my remarks, I would like to apologize to the County Executive, because, in the tone of the moment, I made some maybe remarks or comments that were inappropriate towards our County Executive, Steve Levy, so I want to publicly apologize to him for that. But I will not apologize for the stance that CSEA takes in support of Legislator Romaine's resolution and amendment, and it is about saving jobs, it is about double-taxation.

And the only other comment I might have is that we would be willing to compromise if the County would, in fact, take those jobs and make them County employees. Now, I don't believe that that is what's going to happen, so I do believe that it would be fair and just for the five East End Towns to either get reimbursed or not have to pay a double-tax, since those are good CSEA hardworking families that are doing those jobs. And a majority of the members that do this work don't make more than \$40,000 a year, and that's not really a lot of money to be making, especially when you're living out on the eastern end. CSEA does represent Southold, Riverhead, East Hampton, Southampton, and we're very much involved in trying to save those jobs.

We applaud Supervisor Cardinale. I did see a letter to an editor that he is supportive of the Romaine legislation. And I want to thank him for working with us to try to resolve and save those jobs, so thank you very much.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Thank you, Nick. Is there anybody else that would like to address the Committee? Okay. Then I'd like to call up Mr. Vito Dagnello, Suffolk County Correction Officers Association President, who I think is smiling. I think I see a --

**MR. DAGNELLO:**

That's right.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

I think I see a smile.

**MR. DAGNELLO:**

Yes. I'm here on a positive note. And I want to thank the Committee for letting me come and speak this morning; also, all the help you've given to my offices that have called your offices with problems over the last few years.

I'm happy to say we have an agreement with the County Executive. It was ratified by the membership yesterday with an 85% approval. We sat, we negotiated, we worked out our problems and some of the County's problems, and we came up with this agreement. And I'm happy to say, also, the issue where officers had to pay back money because of the old award, that was resolved and that is not being gone after at this time. So I want to thank the Committee for their support on that issue, and, hopefully, next Tuesday the Legislature will approve this agreement. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Thank you, and congratulations.

**MR. DAGNELLO:**

Thanks.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. What -- I'd like to take the opportunity to allow Legislator Romaine, before we start the agenda, to speak on the bill, 2207.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not a member of this Committee, and I appreciate your indulgence. I'll be very brief. I introduced this resolution as a result of the Town of Riverhead, but it affects all five East End Towns and a number of Villages.

The Police Department was created in 1960, but, at that time, each of the Police Departments within Suffolk County ran their own 911 dispatching services. They dispatched not only police, but, you should understand, they dispatched ambulance and fire as well. Riverhead has, I think, nine dispatchers, nine or ten dispatchers that were working for them. An analysis of the budget sometime in the 1990's, under the past administration, the previous administration, there was a decision to expand that tax to every Suffolk County resident. The problem is there are several villages, I think Legislator Gregory may represent one of them, in fact, and five East End Towns that do provide their own dispatching service for police, fire and ambulance, and, yet, in the 1990's, there was a decision to tax all residents.

The County, for the taxes that they impose on the residents of those villages and towns, do not provide any services, they only provide taxes. When Riverhead analyzed this, they said, "Our residents are being double-taxed," and they suggested dropping the 911 dispatchers. There are 70 of them in the five East End Towns alone. There's probably more if you add the villages. If that happened, I think that would create a number of problems, because many of the dispatchers are very familiar with the locales that they're dispatching to. They're very familiar with their local police officers and the local police departments. And while I believe that our Suffolk County dispatchers do an excellent job, I don't believe the County Executive, in the current situation, would hire any of the town dispatchers, and would simply increase the burden on the current 911 dispatchers.

I believe there's been testimony before this committee in the past by members of AME that, in fact, the dispatchers are overstressed as it is, and there aren't sufficient dispatchers at the County operation, from what I've read of past testimony. My concern is for the dispatching and for the cost of the East End residents. No one should be taxed twice for the same service, particularly when that service is not being provided by the County. It's a fundamental right that you do not get taxed for services that don't get provided. It also has the ancillary benefit of allowing the East End Towns to continue to have that relationship between their dispatchers, their police departments, their fire departments, and their ambulance companies, which would be severed if that wasn't there. The East End Towns prefer to keep their dispatchers if they could, which would employ all of these members, usually CSEA members, keep these people employed. If they're forced by economics, they're going to say, "Why should we pay twice? We'll give up our dispatchers." Seventy people will be out of work. New people in the County will be asked to take over and establish relationships with East End police departments, ambulance companies, fire departments. And I'm not saying they won't do it, but I don't believe they'll be given additional staff personnel, and the 911 system will be definitely stressed in Suffolk.

I ask you to pass this, because this establishes a very specific principle. You should not be taxed by the County for services that the County does not provide. Thank you very much. I'll answer any questions that my colleagues might have.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Why don't we have Mr. Zwirn respond for the County, and then we'll dialogue.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

I didn't know this was a debate.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Well, I wanted to hear --

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Oh.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

-- both sides of the issue.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

As you wish, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Well, I don't think it's a debate. I think everybody would agree with most of what Legislator Romaine says. Nobody wants to get taxed for services that they don't receive.

The only thing that I'm concerned about, and we don't want to see anybody lose their job in this economy, there's no question. Even in the debates we've had with I.R. 1205, we're all trying to come up with ways that we don't have to have anybody lose a job, and that would include the operators, the 911 operators out in the Town of Riverhead. What I think we're concerned about is that when you talk about the services that are paid for out of the General Fund by Towns on the East End, you know, and I live out on the East End as well, is do we put up a menu now of services that are to be provided? How do you break out the cost of the helicopters that are at Gabreski Airport that are available to get to the East End in an emergency situation? They were in East Hampton just the other day bringing a young man, you know, to Stony Brook Hospital who was in a car accident. Those are 14 million dollars worth of, you know, assets that the County has stationed out at Gabreski primarily -- even though they're County-wide and they can respond anywhere, they're primarily out there --

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

They're paid out of Fund 1.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

But they're paid out of the General Fund. The District Attorneys that now staff the Courts out in the Justice Courts on the five East End Towns. There's no revenue that comes back to the D.A.'s Office from the expense that they have staffing these D.A.'s out there. You have Sheriffs that transport prisoners all out of the General Fund. You're talking about the Police Department fund. What you're going to have to do is try to break down the cost of all these different services and maybe it can be done. But I don't know if that's what we want to do at this point, because what you do is then you're going to pay for -- everybody's going to start to say, "Well, I don't pay for this," and "I don't pay for that," and it's going to become very difficult to wade through all this.

I just caution, because there are a lot of services that are provided that, you know, the people probably on the West End probably said, "Well, why" -- you know, "We've got open space acquisitions." I mean, we've had this debate as to what services are provided to what parts of the County, and I think to put a dollar amount on each particular one, while it may be able to be done, I think it's a slippery slope. And I know we have a situation here in the Town of Riverhead in particular with these 911 operators, but we have -- we have withdrawn. I think it's our bill that would deal with that today, because the Town of Riverhead is putting this up to a referendum, I think, whether it would be done at all in the Town of Riverhead, and we would wait the outcome of

that referendum.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Yes, Legislator.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Just a brief comment. Obviously, and I'm sure Ben knows about East End Supervisors or Supervisors-to-be, they have to look at their budget. And if their residents are being taxed, they will, one by one, starting with Riverhead, eliminate the 911, because that's a service that they're being taxed for by the County, and they will expect the County to pick up that service. And my concern, and your concern, I'm sure, as public -- members of the Public Safety Committee, will the County, if the East End Towns stop that service, and they should, because in Riverhead, by the way, a small town of 34,000, the cost is a million dollars. So, understand, any East End Supervisor, now or in the future, has to seriously look at that. And if they abandon that, will the County step in and provide adequate service?

The people that do the job for the County do a great job, but is there enough of them to continue to provide adequate service, or we will be stretched too thin? Those are the type of policy decisions we make. This is not something that we bring in, things that are funded by the General Fund. Everyone pays for the General Fund, from Montauk to Amityville. This is something that is very specific that we're taxing them twice for, that they don't have to provide, and if they choose not to and save their local taxpayers, then the burden will be on us. So it's something to think about.

And I appreciate -- I appreciate Mr. Zwirn's comments, and I certainly appreciate the other gentlemen speaking today on this issue, but this is an issue that is before us, and I think there's also a greater principle, and the principle is do we tax twice? Do we tax for services that we don't provide? Is it the right thing to do? Thank you very much.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

I mean, if I understand --

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. Mr. Zwirn, I'll give you the last word.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

And I -- and this is a debate that I don't think we really are that far apart. My question is, maybe Legislator Romaine can answer this, if I'm an East End Town Board and Supervisor and I say, "Look, we don't use the helicopter service, we haven't used the helicopter service, we've had one call out in our Town in the last three years, we don't want the helicopter service anymore, we could take care of our own," what happens then? Do we add the cost of having those helicopters to the other nine Towns? What if two Towns say, "We don't want that service"?

The County is willing to pick up the 911 operators, we'll handle those calls. I don't know of any other Town on the East End that is even contemplating eliminating their 911 operators, certainly not in the Town East Hampton where I live. I've had no discussion of that and I think they would be in absolute --

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

That record may come back to haunt you.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Well, that -- that would never happen. I mean, that just would never happen, because one of the things that Legislator Romaine says is that you have local people dealing with a relatively rural area, with roads that may not even appear on certain maps, that people know -- they know people -- they know names of people. They know -- you get a 911 call out on the East End, they may know a

medical condition, because the person that they're responding to is the neighbor that everybody knows. So I don't think that's ever going to -- they're going to lose local control out there. So I think this is going to be specific to Riverhead.

And I think you just have to look at it in the grand scheme. I mean, it's not just the 911 operators, it's any other service that is in that fund that's provided, and you may want to look at them all together and, say, "Look, let's examine all of them." Maybe you can come up with a cost for all the different services and give the Towns an option of saying, "We want this, we don't want that," and figure out how it's all going to be sorted out.

But I respect everything that Legislator Romaine says, and I understand the purpose of the Legislation, but I just point out that we've also removed and withdrawn our bill that would have moved forward on the Riverhead situation.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Thank you very much. Are there any questions for --

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Yeah.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

-- Mr. Zwirn. Yes, Legislator Browning.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

I think probably Ed can answer these questions. You know, I'm trying to understand it. I agree that nobody should be double-taxed. You know, has the County been paying Riverhead for that 911 service ever?

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Not one -- no, not one penny.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay. But Riverhead is charging a tax to pay for the 911 operators?

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

They have to, it's a Town service.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

And it has always been a Town service. The County, even when the Police Departments were set up in 1960, the Suffolk County Police, they did not do this. This came about about ten --

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

-- twelve years ago where they decided to impose the tax County-wide, but not the service.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

But back in 1960 the offer was made to Riverhead to go with the County 911 service --

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

No.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

-- or to choose to go with their own.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

No.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

No?

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

None of that was done. It was a decision in the '90's --

**LEG. BROWNING:**

The '90's, sorry.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

-- long after the Police Department was formed, that they would simply impose a tax County-wide for 911 services, despite the fact several Towns and several Villages were on their own 911 ambulance and fire dispatching.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

And how many dispatchers are there? Did you -- you said nine?

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

There were nine or ten in Riverhead, there's seventy in the five East End Towns, and if you throw in the Villages, you're probably getting up near eighty or ninety dispatches overall. But I've got to tell you, should this bill not pass, Riverhead residents would be, in this economy, very stressed to not -- to continue to pay twice for the same service, and then put the service back on the County, and then each East End Town respectively would be under budgetary pressure to do the same. I mean, East Hampton, for example, is facing a huge deficit. That's one of the pressures that they'll be put under. And if they say, "We're already paying for this service, why should we pay twice," and then there'll be people taken out.

Now, Mr. LaMorte has made a very generous offer. All of these problems would go away if the County would absorb the 911 dispatchers from the East End; they will not. Our Executive has a very limited hiring policy. All these people will be out of work, and the people that do the 911 dispatching for the County, which do an excellent job, will be further stressed by covering a larger area and a larger populus, and new fire departments, new police departments, and new ambulance companies. And there is a concern about that, that we have an adequate response, which I'm sure is a concern of every member of this Committee and the Association of Municipal Employees, that their employees don't have a workload that is beyond possibility of handling.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Well, that's my next question, is for Ben, and I don't know if anybody's here from FRES today. No? You know, if we are going to take over -- if we were to take over Riverhead, I know Nick LaMorte said that he would be receptive to them becoming AME members and working for the County, is there a commitment on the part of the County Executive to take on those 9 operators, because you're taking on a whole -- the Town of Riverhead, so it's more work for 911 operators. Contrary to what some people want to say, 911 operators are pretty much working to excess, and, you know, could probably use more. So, if you are going to -- like Ed said, if you're going to add more work and we're going to have to cover Riverhead, are you going to hire more people, and will you bring in those nine or ten dispatchers from Riverhead?

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Well, Legislator Browning, I think the thought was to put them -- not to hire them right way. They

would go on a list, a preferred list because of the training that they've already had, but they would not be absorbed right away. No, that was not the thought, that the 911 operators -- and as hard as they work, and I know Legislator Eddington has been out there, Legislator Gregory has been out there and seen how they perform their duties out there and have listened in on the calls, and they do a great job? They do a great job in Riverhead, they do a great job across the County. They are one of the most stressful jobs. That and Child Protective Service workers, probably two jobs that have a stress level that is off the charts. But the thought was to do it with the staff they presently have and, through attrition, add them on, but they weren't going to be absorbed right away.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay. That's a problem. And as far as you mentioned the referendum, if Ed or yourself, there's a referendum for this November?

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Yes, I believe --

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

There's a planned referendum. Those details haven't been worked out. The ballot certainly hasn't been set, but there's been a discussion about that, because so many people were concerned that if the County took over the dispatching, they would not receive the same level of service. I've tried to assure them of the excellent service the County has provided, but many of these dispatchers are known locally, live locally, understand the local fire departments, ambulance companies, and the local police officers. So there was that concern and someone suggested a referendum, but the ballot certainly has not been set, and there has been -- there's no definite plans for a referendum. Those may be firmed later this year.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay. And I think the last question -- I'm sorry.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Go for it.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

I'm trying to understand this, I really am. And, again, if we were to pass this and the East End, like Riverhead, is to continue having 911 operators, I don't know that I see anything here that explains, you know, what the rate is that you're going to start charging and --

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Right. The bill is very simple. What the bill does is allows Villages and Towns that do their own dispatching to notify the County at a certain time during the year that they will continue to provide their own dispatching. The County then will make a calculation of how much they've collected from those taxpayers and refund it at the end of the year or the following year to the Towns or Villages. And that would be a way for the Towns to say, "Look, this isn't going to cover our costs," and it won't, "but we are getting something back and we aren't getting taxed twice for the same service by both the Town and the County," and that's the way it would work. So the Town and Villages have to proactively indicate to the County, "No, we'll keep our own dispatching service." At that point, the County, at the end of the year, calculates how much has been collected for that tax for that purpose and then refunds it, hopefully, in the first quarter of the following year, to the Town or Village. The amount is rather minuscule. It will not cover the total cost, I can guarantee you that, but at least it will uphold the principle that you should not be taxed for services that you are not being provided with.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Because my concern is, is that they have the opportunity. And, to be honest with you, I think if we are going to take over the 911 service for Riverhead, personally, I'd like to see that those nine people be absorbed into the County and not be put on a waiting list. I mean, we don't want to see

people out of jobs, you said it yourself.

And, you know, one of my other concerns is while I think this is not such a bad idea, the other side of me says at what point do we stop, because we always hear about the East End and, you know, how they're not getting their fair share, and, you know, cost-sharing on things. At what point are we going to stop? When we go to the 911 operators, what comes next?

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

You'll have an opportunity to judge this resolution on its merits. If another resolution comes by and you feel the cumulative effect is too much, you have an opportunity to judge that and vote against it.

This does not come from me. And I appreciate you talking about my quality of representation, because it's the squeaky wheel that gets the grease, and I appreciate that. However, this came as a result of something that does threaten jobs, does affect public safety, deals with the issue of double-taxation. And I think Supervisor Cardinale raised this issue, but I've got to say this is just not Riverhead, because should this bill fail, and I'm an East End Supervisor under fiscal pressures, such as the current Supervisor in East Hampton, then there will be tremendous pressure to say, "Let's jettison this service, this is something we can cut from our budget," and then the County is left holding the bag on figuring out how they're going to provide the coverage, and that's something that you have to weigh. I prefer it to be done locally, and I can tell you now, whatever is rebated to the Towns or Villages from what the County collects will never come even close to covering the cost, but it will demonstrate that the County isn't going to tax these residents for services that it doesn't provide.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Mr. Chair, if I could just ask one question.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Yes.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

And, Legislator, let me ask you. And the County now gives back to the Towns and Villages for public safety a share of the sales tax revenue; and would you see that being affected? Would the Towns, you think, give up that revenue? I mean, because the --

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

I pray every day, when the sales tax comes up for a vote in the Assembly and the State Senate, they put a provision in based on population, because sales tax is collected County-wide from the ten Towns. And I pray that when it's distributed for public safety purposes, that it is distributed based on population.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

I'm just saying right now, for example, the Town of Riverhead, because the County Executive worked out an arrangement that has been in place for the last five to six years with your predecessor, Legislator Caracciolo, and he has kept his word on giving that money in his budget every year, even as sales tax revenue has declined, the sales tax revenue portion for public safety money has increased to the Villages and the five East End Towns, including in 2009. So you wouldn't -- you don't see that that should not be impacted at all?

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

As I said, when this comes up for renewal, I will drive up to Albany and try to convince our leaders that it should be distributed on a per-population basis, which is the fairest basis. The East End only comprises 10% of the population of Suffolk County. But public safety revenue should be distributed on a population basis, unless you have another fairer formula, because even the formula with the County Executive, until recently, doesn't even approach the population basis.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Thank you, Legislator. I have Legislator Gregory that wanted to ask a question.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Okay. I have a question for you, Ben. I do represent the Village of Amityville, but this is not an issue for us, because our services are provided through Central Fire in the Town of Babylon. But I'm concerned, of course, for -- and I think Legislator Romaine brings up an appropriate issue, it's something that should be addressed, and you had mentioned, and then Legislator Browning had mentioned possibly hiring those emergency operators at our center. You said that they would be put on a lift. And from when we went out there, I remember that there were a significant number of vacancies, so I wouldn't see why we couldn't absorb them. We have vacancies. We can -- if my recollection recalls correctly, I think it was 11 or 13, so we could easily absorb those vacancies and we can kind of resolve this issue. But I am concerned and cognizant of what you had mention about a slippery slope. I know that there's services that the Villages, and there was a big fight last year about providing a menu of services, and I think that would complicate things to a level that we don't want it to be, so this is a difficult issue for me.

I would like some more information. I think, you know, I would like to talk to my Village, my Mayor, and see. I'm sympathetic to Legislator Romaine's situation and the residents out in Riverhead, but I think there is one question particularly in the bill, because it mentions public safety, but this issue is specific to emergency operators. And there's a tax, as far as I understand, that funds this, and this is kind of the crux of the argument, so maybe you can explain that. Would you be willing to amend your bill, because it's more broad than I think it should be.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Well this just deals with the 911 operators, but I will tell you, you are asking all the right questions. And what I'd be happy to do with you is meet with you and possible look at either another bill that would authorize a complete study of police expenses in Suffolk County of all police jurisdictions. Maybe that Budget Review, if we could give them a staff person, because they're stressed out now as it is, to take a look at this and we would have a better feeling for this. This is a very specific narrow issue that just deals with the 911 tax, which was imposed about 12 years ago County-wide, but no services are provided for the East End or certain Villages that do their own fire, ambulance and police dispatching.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Certainly. And I would be willing to work -- my office would be willing to work with you in any way we can.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

We'll be in touch with you and maybe we can work something out.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Okay, certainly.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Okay.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Legislator Losquadro.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Thank you. I think some very good points have been raised, and I'll be interested to see how this -- how this works out. Obviously, none of my District is affected, but it's -- I think it's an important issue. There's just one thing that I -- a point I want to make, and it's sort of analogous to paying for insurance. You don't just pay your insurance bill when something goes wrong. Insurance is there to

allow you to live your day-to-day life without the fear of financial ruin, and we provide services on a County-wide basis in case something happens. I think your -- the analogy you made about East Hampton, you know, what if they didn't use service for two years, well, I think the County obligates itself to provide those services if something happens, and that's the point. We have to maintain a readiness, and maintenance, and staffing, and all the other associated portions of that.

So I think this issue becomes a bit more complex there, and I think we have to really look at what services we're providing, not necessarily based on use, but based on our willingness to make ready those services at a moment's notice for the people all across this County. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Legislator Browning.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Yeah, and my question's more for George. It says Towns and Villages which exercise their option to decline public safety. I mean, is that -- is that broad? I mean, I know this is specifically to 911 operators, and is it leaving us open to that slippery slope?

**MR. NOLAN:**

Well, the original version of the bill, I believe, if I recall correctly, was limited to 911 services, emergency response. The bill was amended to be broader to include public safety services, and that's the term in the bill now.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay.

**MR. NOLAN:**

All public safety services provided by the County.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Which leaves us open to police services, which leaves us open to a number of issues.

**MR. NOLAN:**

Well, it goes beyond emergency response, 911.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. Well, then, if we've had enough discussion, I'm going to bring up the agenda.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Could we -- could we take this out of order, so a vote could be had while --

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Well, it's the first one.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

It is the first.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

It's the first one, so --

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Second.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Okay, the second one.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

It is the second one?

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Yeah, whatever.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

No, it's the first one. Okay. Thank God I could still count.

### **TABLED RESOLUTIONS**

We have tabled resolution, *I.R. 2207-08, a Charter Law to prevent double-taxation for police services in certain Towns and Villages*. And I'm going to make a motion to table.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

I'd like to second it. And, you know, I understand what you're doing, but, again --

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Second by Legislator Browning.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

I would prefer to see more specific to 911 than leaving it very broad with public safety.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Yeah.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

If we could have that done. Also, is there a possibility that BRO could maybe come up with some numbers for us, if we were to pass this, and how much it would cost us?

**MR. ORTIZ:**

We've looked at this issue in the past. There would have to be a pretty comprehensive study. It would probably take quite awhile and quite -- many man-hours of our department, because there are issues with the Police District Fund 115 that provides services to the East End that aren't charged for, and then there are services like the 911 that are being paid for out of the General Fund. So there is taxation issues back and forth, multiple, you know, concerns, so it would be a very comprehensive study, and perhaps the idea of having an outside consultant come in and an RFP. So I don't want to commit to saying that we could just come out with a memo next week.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Okay.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Yeah, I would also like to comment. And I think -- I thought Legislator Romaine made a very clear statement. I kind of thought you would be dressed as Patrick Henry, you know, no taxation without representation, but you made your point very well. But I am concerned about the unintended consequences on both sides of this issue, and I think it's an issue that we have to look at further.

I appreciate what you said, John, and, you know, we're going to have to try to somehow work to start looking at this, because this is an issue that's going to continue to come around, and I think in not just Public Safety, but maybe in Health Services and all around, so I think we're going to have to start looking at that.

And I -- what I heard today was already a possible compromise where there was a suggestion that maybe they could be hired by the County. And you hear two unions cooperating, and so that there's no ego involved, it's only a concern for people. So I think we need to have more discussion with the County Executive to see if we can have some type of compromise. I think -- I think it -- I want to believe it can be done without legislation. But, either way, we're going to look at this continuously. I made the motion to table, and Legislator Browning seconded that. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Okay. **(Vote: Table 5-0-0-0)**

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Thank you. ***I.R. 1028 - Establishing new procedures for housing homeless sex offenders.***

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Motion to table.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Motion to table by Legislator Gregory.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

I'll second.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Second by Legislator Browning. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Opposed.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

One opposed, no abstentions. **(Vote: Tabled 4-1-0-0 - Opposed: Leg. Losquadro)**

***I.R. 1122 - A Local Law to ensure fire hydrant operability and safe water pressure levels in Suffolk County.*** I'll make a motion to approve.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Second, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Second by Legislator Losquadro.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Just on the motion.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

On the motion.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Well, first, I just want to double-check with the Clerk. I'm 99% sure I'm already a cosponsor on this, but I just want to make sure that I'm on there.

The area that the money collected penalties would go to, could we just have a -- if you're the sponsor, if we would just talk about that a little bit, instead of going to FRES or towards other areas involving -- you know, directly involving public safety.

**MR. NOLAN:**

The law doesn't direct the money to any particular department or agency, so it would go to the General Fund, the civil penalties collected.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Okay. All right. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

All right. Thank you. So we have a motion and a second. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? *(Vote: Approved 5-0-0-0).*

Introductory Resolution 1235, amending --

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Thirty-seven.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Did I miss something?

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Thirty-seven.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Thirty-seven. Sorry. *1237 - Amending the 2009 Capital Budget and Program and appropriating funds in connection with the rehabilitation of the Suffolk County Fire - Rescue Communications Center.* Motion to approve by Legislator Gregory, I'll second that it.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

On the motion.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

On the motion, Legislator Barraga.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

I was taking a look at the budgetary allocations for this and I noted you've got 26,600 for planning, construction, 266,000, and furniture and equipment, \$3,702,000. Can someone detail for me exactly what that means, furniture and equipment?

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

George, could you? Oh, okay.

**MR. HORST:**

Good morning. Warren Horst, Chief Fire Marshal, the Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services. And, yes, it does look quite out of whack when you think of the total budget request for this particular capital project. However, the basis for the renovation and rehabilitation of the communications center is primarily for the infrastructure and the equipment, the radio equipment, the computer equipment that the communication center relies on to have the ability to dispatch fire and EMS services throughout the County. So the money has to do with the 19 work positions or consoles that are in the radio room, have to be replaced. That's not only the -- that's the telephone side that is -- well, actually, in the telephone side, it's an enhancement upon what's already been done. On the radio side, it's replacing every computer and every -- all the backbone or backroom equipment that allows the computers to interface with the communications equipment that's out at the eight remote tower sites.

It also involves a fair amount of money for transitioning the fire services onto the 800 megahertz trunk system that exists in the County that currently is not available to the fire service, that is somewhat dependent on the action that's occurring at the Federal level to open up 746 to 806

spectrum for -- and taking a slice of that for public service purposes. In order to do that, we would have to buy all new equipment that's currently not in place and put it out there.

It also speaks to the need for the communication center to be able to communicate on the UHF spectrum, which we do not have at this moment. At the last count, if I remember correctly, it was 96 agencies, fire and EMS agencies that are operating on their own UHF frequencies. We do not have the ability to communicate with them at this point in time.

Our communications are primarily in three areas, low band, which is dispatch for fire, VHF, which is dispatch for EMS agencies, and we do have the ability, a limited ability to operate on the 800 megahertz system for the EMS side, and that's something that's being built out as well.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

When was the last time you replaced your infrastructure system?

**MR. HORST:**

That communication center was occupied in January of 1998. That was basically the last time it was -- it wasn't even a replacement of the communication center, it was just a new communication center to connect to the existing infrastructure that was out there. Obviously, the backroom equipment supporting the console room itself was all brand new at that point in time, so we're talking 11 years ago at this --

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

So you want the replacement, because, from a technological perspective, these units are now archaic, or are they breaking down, or are you having service problems with them?

**MR. HORST:**

Well, it's a combination. There's -- obviously, just the furniture itself is breaking down, it's falling apart. It cannot accommodate some of the new technologies that are out there. As an example, the radio control side only is a Motorola system, commuter based. It runs on DOS, which is something that is -- an operating system that is pretty much passe at this point in time. It's not like we can take those computers and upgrade them to the new operating software, because they obviously wouldn't work on Windows, or whatever other operating system might be appropriate for the current technology.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

Okay. Thank you.

**MR. HORST:**

You're welcome.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Legislator Losquadro.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Two questions. One, what would be the time frame of getting -- if we approve this, getting this in place, getting the new equipment in place?

**MR. HORST:**

We would hope that in the last quarter of this year, we should be able to begin looking at the planning and design aspect, actually, look at planning and design before the last quarter and start implementation at that point in time. It is somewhat dependent on the finishing of the backup radio communication center that's --

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Right.

**MR. HORST:**

-- currently being done under 3230 in Coram, which, hopefully, will be operational by August.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Right. I was hoping that one was going to be operational in advance of the next storm season. That's what I hope.

**MR. HORST:**

We are planning for that as well.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Okay, good. The other question is, being that some of these changes in technology are necessitated by changes in the allowable frequency spectrum, or available frequency spectrum made by the Federal Government, I know that the Federal Government made some money available through Homeland Security when they necessitated some changes post 9/11. Are any monies available now through DHS for any of these upgrades?

**MR. HORST:**

We actually have in the past accessed some of those funding -- some of the funding from DHS in a sense of building out the communications, interoperable communications, not the infrastructure, but the ability for different user groups out in the field to operate on the 800 system. As an example, each fire department and ambulance company was provided with a single portable 800 megahertz radio, so everybody would have a common talk group that they could go to. In the sense of the infrastructure, there are other grant programs that are being accessed at this point in time. The County collectively, between the police, fire and EMS, have applications in for funding to build out some of the existing 800 -- portions of the 800 system. It's not specific, though, to the 746-806 spectrum that actually has not become available at this very point in time, but is expected.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Okay. Thank you.

**MR. HORST:**

You're welcome.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. I believe we have a motion and a second. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

Opposed.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

One opposed. *(Vote: Approved 4-1-0-0 - Opposed: Leg. Barraga)* Thank you, sir.

**MR. HORST:**

You're welcome.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

*I.R. 1249 - Accepting and appropriating grant funds in the amount of \$505,740 from the new York State Department of Transportation for provision of dedicated traffic enforcement in the vicinity of certain highway construction projects with 100% support and making a correction to Resolution No. 1239-2008.* I'll make a motion to approve and put on the Consent Calendar.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Second, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Second by Legislator Losquadro. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? *(Vote: Approved 5-0-0-0)*

*I.R. 1250 - Approving and increase in the fleet for the Suffolk County Department -- Police Department.* I'll make a motion to approve.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Second by Legislator Gregory. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? *(Vote: Approved 5-0-0-0)*

*I.R. 1257 - Appropriating funds in connection with the replacement of GPS receivers at various 800 megahertz tower site locations for the Police Department.* I'll make a motion to approve.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Second by Legislator Losquadro. All those in favor? Opposed?

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

On the motion.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

On the motion, Legislator Barraga.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

Is there anybody here who can answer a question with reference to this particular bill? Good morning.

**CHIEF WEBBER:**

Good morning. Ed Webber, Suffolk County Police Department.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

You have GPS receivers in place right now?

**CHIEF WEBBER:**

Yes.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

Why do they have to be replaced? Are they old, are they not functioning?

**CHIEF WEBBER:**

Yes, they're over 15 years -- they're over 15 years old and becoming inoperable. This is not global positioning, this is frequency regulators. Very simplistically, to make an analogy, if we -- you turn Channel 12 on on the T.V., you receive Channel 12. This enables the receiver and the dispatching going out on the same line. We would lose the entire synchronization of the system and it would become inoperable if we didn't upgrade.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

So, some of these receivers, based on what you're saying, are breaking down.

**CHIEF WEBBER:**

Yes. There's no replacement parts for these, by the way, so we couldn't even repair them if they go down.

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

All right. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. Thank you, sir. We have a motion and a second. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?  
*(Vote: Approved 5-0-0-0)*

Okay. *I.R. 1277 - Donating decommissioned body armor vests to the United States Department of Defense to protect our citizens-soldiers.*

**LEG. BARRAGA:**

Motion.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Motion.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Motion by Legislator Barraga to approve, second --

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

-- by Legislator Browning. All those in favor?

**LEG. BROWNING:**

On the motion.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

On the motion, Legislator Browning.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

I'd like -- I know John Jex was supposed to -- was hoping to be here. He's with the Suffolk County Police Veterans. And this bill came about through -- I'm sure some of us know Matthew Bjelobrk. He's currently a Lieutenant General in the 69th, and he's also a Sergeant with the Suffolk County Police Department. This is something that he's requested. I know I talked to Ben. There's some time -- time-sensitive. They have -- the military is ready and willing to do free transportation on these, so I'd like to see that we can expedite this as soon as possible. I guess it's to do with the poppy season is coming up in Afghanistan, so they definitely -- they want to get these vests as soon as possible.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Thank you. Legislator Losquadro.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Thank you. Yeah. This is not the first time we've done this. There should be no problem. We have a track record with this. We can get this done very quickly and get these over, so the guys can use these on the vehicles to supplant the -- or to augment the armor that's currently on the vehicles they're driving. So I think we can get this moved very quickly.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Yeah, I hope so.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. We've got a motion and a second. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **(Vote: Approved 5-0-0-0)** Great.

***Home Rule Message Number 4 - Requesting the State of New York amend the Vehicle and Traffic Law and State Finance Law, in relationship to the creation of an ignition interlock and mandatory Probation Pilot Program for all persons convicted of drinking while intoxicated -- driving while intoxicated, making an appropriation therefor; and providing for the repeal of such provisions upon expiration thereof, Bill -- Senate Bill Number 27.*** I'll make a motion to approve.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

On the motion.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

On the motion. Well, do we have -- do I have a second?

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Second by Legislator Gregory. On the motion, Legislator Losquadro.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

You know, on it's face it seems fine, but the ignition interlocks are a little bit -- I don't -- I hate to say antiquated, but there are certainly better technologies like the SCRAM bracelets that are available. I just don't know why we're looking -- the State would be looking back instead of looking forward in terms of, you know, mandating that, you know, a certain technology be used. I just see our success, and I know Probation can speak to it. You know, we want to see the SCRAM Program expanded. You know, Nassau, Nassau County jumped on board after they saw what we did in starting this program. You know, District Attorney Rice there certainly got a lot of press over something that we started here on Long Island, but I just don't know really that this is the best course of action. I don't know if it limits our judicial system in some way. You know, I think there are better technologies available than interlock, that's for certain.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Legislator Gregory.

**LEG. GREGORY:**

Mr. Chairman, I just received information that this bill has been amended. It was initially a pilot program in five counties. There's another bill put in by Senator Fuschillo that's going to apply State-wide. But I still have some of the same concerns that I originally had who's going to bear the cost, who's going to bear the -- is this something that's going to be put on the local municipalities, is it going to be another unfunded mandate? So I would like to make a motion to table.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

I'll second that.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. I have a motion to table by Legislator Gregory, and second by Legislator Losquadro. That takes precedence. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Okay. Home Rule 4 is tabled. **(Vote: Tabled 5-0-0-0).**

Okay. Seeing nothing else, I just wanted to mention that --

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Can I --

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Oh, yes.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Point of personal privilege, Mr. Chairman, or not really personal privilege. I know I had mentioned to you briefly, and I know the members of this Committee have made a request for information, I certainly know none has been forthcoming to my office, regarding the Probation's firearm training. Have any members of this Committee received any information on the discussions we had or what we requested?

**LEG. BROWNING:**

No.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

No, that's in the negative.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

No? I see a lot of head-shaking. Is there -- maybe somebody from the County Exec's Office, or somebody from -- could we get some information on that?

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Yeah, the last thing I had heard, that BRO was going to work up some numbers for us. I know they're overworked, so I didn't push them on it. Have you heard anything about this?

**MR. ZWIRN:**

No, but we can't -- I know that during the debate the other day in Budget and Finance with respect to 1205 the Probation Officers were here, and one of the things that they said is that, you know, they're overworked, and nobody quarrels with that. But that was one of the arguments that we made in order to have the Police Department continue the firearms training, not to take them away from their caseloads. So they were making -- and I was sitting here listening, saying, "Well, that's the case I was trying to make at the Public Safety meeting," you know, that we had at the prior committee meeting. But whatever information, and specific -- was it the budgetary information?

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Yeah. You know, you've gone back to the -- your statement, and, at that time, I said, "Well, there's obviously no Police Officers just sitting around." So, you know, no matter who does the training, it's -- it will need to be done. The Probation Department is not dropping cases to do the training, it fits in with what they're doing, so --

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

I think that's a key point that was raised --

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

And you kept --

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

-- is they maintain full-time field assignments.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Let me just finish this thought. And that I left you with -- you were saying Probation Officers get

paid less than Police Officers. And the last statement I made is, "Well, if you" -- "if this is a cost-effective thing, you would have Probation Officers doing all the peace officer training." So -- and, at that point, we said that we'd like to see some numbers to validate that this is, in fact, a cost-saving issue. And we have -- and I think that's what the Legislator is saying, we have not been given that, yet, the training has begun.

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Okay.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Yeah. You know, another directive, yeah.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

There were a number of anomalies there. I mean, you know, the Sheriff's Department conducts training for the Sheriff's Department. Is that because it's specific to their job function?

**MR. ZWIRN:**

Some of them may be contractual, yeah, but I'd have to double-check.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

You know, we had a lot of discussion on this, that's why I just sort of -- well, I can't say surprised, but disappointed that no information was forthcoming. You know, it was stated on the record, you know, they maintain full-time field assignments, you know, in addition to their, you know, assigned instructor and range duties, their salaries. There were a number of issues brought up, and we can certainly pull up the record. We're not going to go back through it all here, but we had a lengthy discussion on this. So I would like, you know, some sort of answer. I think we all had a lot of questions as to how this was about, you know, really playing out in terms of the finances involved in this, and, you know, whether or not there were, at least to my mind, I think some of my colleagues would agree with me, that there were certain differences in the training that was provided, you know, by the P.D. or versus by the fellow Probation Officers, certainly not in terms of the nuts and bolts, you know, firearms training itself, but some of the situational training. So I would like to get some information on that.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

John?

**MR. ORTIZ:**

Yeah. Our office has done some research on this, and with the cooperation of Probation, the Police Department, and the Sheriff's Office, we're putting something together on the quantitative costs and the hours that go into it, and who's getting trained by whom, and we should have a memo issued by the next Public Safety Committee.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Great.

**LEG. LOSQUADRO:**

Thank you, John.

**CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:**

Okay. Thank you, Legislator Losquadro, for reminding us. Thank you. Before I close, I want to just say, I don't see him now, but the President of the Superior Officers, Jerry Gilmore, is "Irishman of the Year". I think he walked out, but I wanted to congratulate him. So, okay, we're going to -- there he is. Yeah, all right. So congratulations, Jerry, on that.

Okay. Then I'm going to adjourn the meeting. Thank you very much.

*[THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:49 A.M.]*