

**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, September 10, 2009, at 9:30 a.m.

Members Present:

Legislator Jack Eddington - Chairperson
Legislator DuWayne Gregory - Vice Chair
Legislator Thomas Barraga
Legislator Kate Browning
Legislator Daniel Losquadro

Also in Attendance:

Legislator Lynne Nowick, Legislative District No. 13
George Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature
Sarah Simpson, Assitant Counsel
Barbara LoMoriello, Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
John Ortiz, Budget Review office
Linda Bay, Aide to Minority Leader
Paul Perillie, Aide to Majority Leader
Greg Moran, Aide to Legislator Nowick
Robert Calarco, Aide to Legislator Eddington
Bobby Knight, Aide to Presiding Officer Lindsay
Ben Zwirn, Deputy County Executive
Ed Hennessey, County Executive's office
Debra Alloncius, AME Legislative Director
Cheryl Felice, President, AME
Robert Moore, Chief, SC Police Department
Michael Finland, SC Police Department
Tracy Pollak, SC Police Department - HQ
Barbara Allen, SC Police Department, Senior Operations Aide
Deborah Grundstrom, SC Police Department, Senior Operations Aide
Ed Weber, SD Police Department
Michael Sharkey, Suffolk County Sheriffs Office
Joe Caracappa, Suffolk County Sheriffs Office
Joe Rubacka, Suffolk County Sheriffs Office
Laura Ahearn, PFML/CVC
Hope Collazo, ARC/CSP
John M. Searing, SC FRES

Frank J. Thornhill, SC FRES Commission
John J. Carney, SC Fire Chief's/Town of Islip
Russ McCormick, Suffolk Detectives Association
Noel DiGerolamo, Suffolk County PBA
Dennis Kelly, Appointee
Louis Molinari, SCPBA - Treasurer
Other Interested Parties

Minutes Taken By:

Lucia Braaten, Court Stenographer.

Minutes Transcribed By:

Lucia Braaten, Court Stenographer.
Kim Castiglione, Legislative Secretary

[THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 9:38 A.M.]

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

We're going to start the Public Safety Committee meeting, and Legislator Gregory will lead us in the Pledge.

(Salutation)

If I could ask everybody to remain standing for a moment of silence and dedicate this moment to Rich Holst, Fire Department Chaplain of Huntington Manor, and of the New York State Association of Fire Chaplains, who passed away from a heart attack on the job yesterday.

(Moment of Silence)

And I'm going to ask you to also remain standing for John J. Foley, who passed away the other day, who was my mentor, a friend, and whose seat I sit in today, who represented Suffolk County for 18 years.

(Moment of Silence)

Thank you. Be seated. Okay. I'm going to start with the public portion. I have one card, and then we're going to have a presentation from AME. Okay. Dennis Kelly.

MR. KELLY:

Good morning. My name is Dennis Kelly.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

You have to hold the button down on the microphone, sir.

MR. KELLY:

Good morning. My name is Dennis Kelly. I'm EMS Chief of Community Ambulance in Sayville. I'm here in support of adopting the bill to add two EMS seats on the FRES Commission. I'm also here to represent the Islip Town Ambulance Association. And I had a little short notice to come here this morning, so I have a letter from Jamie Atkinson that was written to Bill Lindsay. I'd like to read that, and it pretty much gives our stand on this.

Okay. "Dear Mr. Lindsay: First, I would like to provide you with some background of Islip Ambulance Chiefs Association. This Association is comprised of motivated Chiefs of Bay Shore-Brightwaters Rescue, Brentwood Legion, Community Ambulance of Sayville, Central Islip, and the Exchange Islips -- Ambulance of the Islips. The above five departments represent all the volunteer ambulance companies in the Town of Islip. These EMS agencies protect over 200,000 people in the Town of Islip.

In 2008, the five departments responded to 20,915 calls, which is the highest amount of calls represented from any township within Suffolk County. This jurisdiction of these agencies spans over 100 square miles. Please accept this correspondence as our wholehearted support of the two additional seats to the FRES Commission.

Additionally, I would like to address the lack of Emergency Medical Service representation on the current FRES Commission. As you're aware, there are 18 seats on the FRES Commission and only one seat is held by a Suffolk County Ambulance Chiefs Association. Nine of these seats are held by town Fire Councils, and none to EMS Councils, such as ours. At this time, we would respectfully request to be granted one of these added seats to the FRES Commission.

The following statistics outline the dramatic increase in emergency medical calls as compared to fire service in Suffolk County. In 2004 the FRES Commission Bureau activated 45,044 calls, fire calls,

and 100 -- 110,000 emergency medical calls. In 2008, the FRES Communications Bureau activated 32,385 fire calls and 122,622 EMS calls. From 2004 to 2008, there has been a decrease of 12,659 fire calls, and an increase of 12,260 EMS calls. It is obvious that one representative out of 18 is clearly not a fair and equal EMS representation held by -- on the FRES Commission. Although having three seats out of 20 is better, it's still not equally representative, the amount of calls that are handled by FRES.

This topic has been discussed at length at our Association meeting and agreed upon by all five ambulance companies, that the current EMS Suffolk County representation on the FRES Commission does not truly reflect EMS issues, goals, objectives, and concerns of the volunteers of our agencies and in our communities we serve. Having a seat for the Islip Volunteer Ambulance Companies on this Commission would give better representation to our communities.

With the increase in call volume, call type and addition of the federally mandated NIMS system, it would be -- it might be time to modify the Fire, Rescue and Emergency Service Commission to reflect these changes. These changes are clearly visible in the increase in medical calls and the decrease in fire calls.

Our Association feels these additional two seats are much needed in this County and should be utilized to represent the increasingly growing emergency medical service agencies and call volume."

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

You let that go.

MR. KELLY:

Oh, I'm sorry. "Especially with the response of EMS" -- and he just goes on, just, please, don't hesitate to call him. But, basically, what we're saying is our organization was formed about two years ago, and in that time we've started TAC Ambulance Program or TAC Medic Program. That meant mutual aid, increased response times, you know, made our response times better. We've been actively doing stuff and we'd just like to have a seat on there, because some of the things that we're doing really could benefit the whole County. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Thank you very much. Is there anybody else who would like to address the Committee? Okay. Seeing none, then I would ask Cheryl Felice, the President of AME, and her staff to come forward. Just as a prologue, I had asked Cheryl to make a presentation, because the Suffolk County Police Department arrest processing procedure had been changed, or was going to be changed, and it seemed counterintuitive. They were expanding the duties of the Police Officers and cutting civilianized workers, so I really wanted to hear a little bit more about that.

MS. FELICE:

Thank you very much. We hold the button down each time?

MS. LOMORIELLO:

Yeah, all the time.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

For the duration.

MS. LOMORIELLO:

Continuously, as we say.

MS. FELICE:

So much for efficiency, but I need two hands here.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

It is for us, because when your finger gets tired, you can't talk anymore.

MS. FELICE:

Okay. Good morning, Legislator Eddington, Chairman Eddington. And thank you very much for this opportunity to speak before you. I would also -- AME would just also like to acknowledge your condolences of former Legislator John J. Foley, who certainly was an integral part of this organization, and whose name is seated, you know, across the facility that we hold near and dear to our hearts. And, you know, we appreciate that you acknowledged him accordingly. And you carry on in a fine tradition, by the way.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Thank you.

MS. FELICE:

So we're here -- I haven't been here in a little while. AME's been a little busy. I don't know if you've heard everything we've been up to. But, nevertheless, we wanted to start this, you know, as we begin to start the budget season, with a chance to come before you with some of the issues that our members have raised as cautionary measures that we'd like to make you aware of. And, certainly, while this union is proud of its civilian support staff, and we in no way want to convey a message that we are interested in replacing Police Officers. We have always stated that we believe in well-managed civilianization, and that civilians should be a partner to the Police Officers in any way that they can to improve the efficiency of the Department, not only for the Department members, but for the constituency at large.

And so we have -- this issue actually came up probably about a year-and-a-half ago when the Department made a decision to change the operations of arrest processing. And our members there have been very patient and very diligent, and while we did file an improper labor practice on the County for this move, that still remains in litigation, and perhaps we needed to have this conversation sooner.

So we have a number of members who have contributed to this analysis, I am just a spokesperson, but we have -- we have good staff members there. And I would just like to acknowledge that Debbie Alloncius, our Legislative Director, is with us today, and also Mike Finland, who's an Administrator for the Police Department in the Second Precinct. He contributed to this analysis as well, and did a fine job, and is here to answer any questions. So, as we -- as we begin, this analysis of the civilian staffing within the Suffolk County Arrest Processing Unit, the former Unit of Arrest Processing.

We'd like to begin by saying that on January 1st, 2010, the Suffolk County Police Department will mark its 50th Anniversary as a Police entity. Over the course of the past five decades, the Suffolk County Police Department has experienced tremendous growth in diverse areas, and under Police Commissioner Richard Dormer, the Police Department has expanded most notably in its civilian staffing in a variety of units.

Once again, we'd like to stress well-managed civilianization and acknowledge that the Police Department has kept pace with the outside sector in order to meet the demands of a police jurisdiction whose population is increasing at a steady rate, yet a recent decision to abandon the Reporting Division of the Arrest Processing Unit needs some redress if well-managed civilianization is to benefit both Department and the 1.5 million residents of Suffolk County.

The Suffolk County Police Department units in the late '70's began an earnest effort which marked certain key positions to be potentially civilianized. The purpose of this was to redeploy uniform staff and to look out at the means of cost-saving measures, and two notable units were -- that were civilianized were the Communications Bureau and the Records Unit.

The new civilian titles in 1980 began with a program in which civilians who met certain criteria were

able to obtain employment working for the Police Department. The job titles for these employees were Community Service Aides, and in the latter part of the '80's was changed to Police Service Aide. Community Service Aides had many duties and were responsible to assist Police Officers in the preparation of arrest paperwork.

Milestone programs linked law enforcement in the Fall of 1988 when Community Service Aides and Police Operation Aides generating the paperwork now linked the Suffolk County Police Department, the District Attorney's Office, and the Suffolk County Sheriff's Office all by computer. This long-term computer program was in operation from '76 until 1992, and it was the civilian POA titles who were at the forefront of the lines of the commencement of this program.

Civilian staff credited with the success were innotably the POAs, who diligently and meticulously worked on this project to its success and it became a productive and viable system of operation. This was a watershed moment in Suffolk County Police history, and the civilian staffing were an integral part of this process.

In 1996, the Department began exploring other options for obtaining even more sophisticated software which would enhance operations. But concurrent to this exploration, the Department also began to consider the possibility of returning to the previous methodology of arrest paperwork generation by Police Officers. Perhaps the Department felt that Police Officers could generate the arrest paperwork themselves without the assistance -- assistance of civilian. And, again, the concept was originally initiated in 1996, but finally came to fruition in 2008.

In 2007, a new arrest system computer software was in place, and the Department trained the POAs on this program to work out the bugs so there could be a transition from civilian responsibility to Police Officer's function. Again, perhaps it was sought that the arrest paperwork left in the hands of the officer who made the arrest would be more cost efficient; our members are indicating otherwise. This new system was implemented in increments precinct by precinct, and eventually the arrest paperwork generation returned to being a police -- solely a Police Officer function.

The operations of the former Arrest Processing Unit, again, AME has seen the mission of the Department and its focus on progressively continuing the path of civilianization. The aforementioned duty is one in which civilians have been effectively doing for the last thirty years. In the past, the civilian staffing were compelled to request written correspondence whenever there was a request to change an arrest package. The purpose of this was to enable the Central Records Unit to have documentation on hand in the event they were questioned in the future regarding the specific change. Essentially, fifteen civilians worked three shifts completing the arrest paperwork.

When you talk about efficiency, and whenever arrest is completed by an officer, the civilian staffing remains responsible to notify the Division of Criminal Justice Services so that an arrest can be added to the defendant's rap sheet. Suffolk County DCJS -- I'm sorry, New York State DCJS is the main repository of arrest information for New York State. AME suggests maximum efficiency would be maintained when the process is completed by the same individual when it comes to arrests.

Arrest processing since the 1970's again shows that the computer system in place is user friendly to process the paperwork. Since the late '70's, which represented the first wave of civilianization in the department, civilians have successfully been doing that job. And the statistics show, 15 POAs handled, in 2004, 43,000 arrests, and it goes up from there to the present, 2007 numbers, which is at 54,072 arrests.

Suffolk County Police Department initiatives. There have been other civilianization initiatives over the years in which civilians have enhanced the Department. In 1991, the Precinct Administration Sergeant was replaced by a Head Clerk. These Head Clerks later became Administrators, and Administrative Officers were replaced by Clerk Typists, Senior Clerk Typists, Principal Clerks, and POAs. In 1991, the Communication Bureau civilianized its staff with Public Safety Dispatchers.

Suffolk County Police Department initiatives, in conclusion, again prove that it's evident on the value of civilians, since the Commissioner himself has awarded a number of awards to the civilian staff over the past years. Civilians in the Police Department take pride in their work, and it is our hope that the Police Department will reconsider this staffing reassignment and return this task to the civilian staff for arrest processing, which was handled -- where it was handled well for approximately 30 years.

And that's the conclusion of our report, but I do have Mike Finland here to answer any questions, if you have them. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

All right. Yeah, I'd like to start off with a question, and I'll pass it over to my Committee. Okay. So the civilians aren't doing a police -- I guess the patrol officers are doing this; is that correct?

MS. FELICE:

That -- I'll pass that to Mike.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Yeah.

MS. FELICE:

I'll pass that to Mike to answer it.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Who's doing the paperwork now?

MR. FINLAND:

The officer who effects an arrest, essentially they're doing the electronic entry on the arrest information that was previously done by civilians.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. Are they doing this -- and if you don't, I'll ask the police to come up. Are they doing this after their patrol is done and on overtime, or when are they doing this paperwork?

MR. FINLAND:

Well, it would depend upon when the arrest was effected. So, if an officer, for instance, is working a 7-to-3 shift and effects an arrest at 9 a.m., it will be done on regular time. If an arrest, for whatever the circumstances were that came to pass, was effected at, let's say, 2:15 in the afternoon, then it could conceivably run into an overtime situation.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Well, I guess that's what I'm wondering, or would they have to fill it in -- fill it up when they come in the next day? I mean, does it have to be done before they leave, is that the kind of procedure?

MR. FINLAND:

If a defendant is arrested for a crime and they have to have arraignment the very next day, if they're being lodged at a police precinct, the computer information would have to be electronically inputted on that day so that a Court Information could be drafted, Court Information being a document which legally charges a defendant with a crime and it goes with that defendant to a court of law.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. So I guess what I'm hearing, then, is the opportunity cost is what I'm interested in. We're saying that either the patrol officer is off patrol for a period of time now. I don't know how long paperwork takes, but it can't be ten minutes. How long -- how long would you estimate that filling out this paperwork takes?

MR. FINLAND:

Okay. As far as followup, they would bring a defendant into a precinct, would interview the defendant with regard to the charges that they were leveling against the defendant. Just to give you an example, like let's say a DWI arrest, let's say someone's been arrested for that offense. In the past, when it was POAs who were performing this function, if it was a relatively problem-free DWI arrest, it could conceivably be completed within, let's say, a 20-minute time frame. But my feedback in interviewing and speaking to the employees, the civilian employees who worked in the former Arrest Processing Unit, it's taking a longer period of time for that DWI paperwork to be completed.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. So I guess what you're saying is that the patrol officer will be off patrol now for a minimum of 20 minutes, it could be an hour.

MR. FINLAND:

For a standard cite arrest, like let's say a Harassment Second charge or a Criminal Mischief Fourth charge, the feedback that I had gotten from the civilians in this former unit, they said it could take anywhere from an hour plus to complete a regular cite arrest.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay.

MR. FINLAND:

For a DWI arrest --

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. So that -- basically, what you're saying is this goes against what we've been trying to do in getting more people on the streets on patrol. So now let's talk about the finance thing. It doesn't, from what you're saying, seem to be cheaper to have Police Officers based on what the County Executive tells how much the Police Officers make and what you tell me AME workers make, so it doesn't seem to be cost effective. So, in your estimation, is this just a policy that we're going to do less with less?

MR. FINLAND:

I feel that in terms of the Police Department reaching its decision to do this transition and this changeover, they were looking at something, at software that would be user-friendly. And I think the Department's long-term goal was something that would be timesaving, as far as a programming implementation.

And I want to stress that the individuals who were doing it previously, they were civilian employees. They're not paralegals and they're not attorneys. But the job that they were involved in that they were doing involved a degree of discernment as far as assessment and analysis when they would receive arrest paperwork information transmitted to them via fax machine to Police Headquarters. So there was a degree of discernment and analysis when they would process these arrests. So I just want to stress it's not strictly a data entry position. And there's a lot of caveats and a lot of parameters that, in essence, these civilians, these POAs, were the eyes and ears for the officers in terms of picking up on key and vital things such as certain charges in New York State Penal Code or Vehicle and Traffic Code, they have subsections that are attached to them. If a defendant goes to a court of law for arraignment and a Court Information is defective because it is missing a subsection or it has an incorrect subsection, that can be problematic, you know, subsequent to that arraignment.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. I get what you're saying, yeah. They seem like they're highly trained and do a good job. Legislator Losquadro.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

I just did the quick math. In 2007, you said you had 15 individuals working in this capacity, correct?

MR. FINLAND:

That's correct.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Quick math, that's 3600 per person per year, approximately.

MR. FINLAND:

That's correct.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

So, obviously, there's a great deal of expertise and a great deal of efficiency on the part of the people who are doing this. Like anything else, repetition breeds speed and breeds efficiency. Now, I understand when you said that things were sent over via fax. I understand, obviously, there is always room to improve technology and maybe transmit things electronically. That's something that myself and I know other members of the committee have been trying to push the Department towards implementing some of that new technology, especially in the police cars, with license scanners, and being able to print tickets. And we do a lot of things manually in this Department that just do not breed efficiency at all. And when we have a particular unit that processes so much of this manual work, I have to agree with the Chairman, it doesn't seem to make much sense to me from an efficiency standpoint to move that work back to the officer that we're trying to keep on patrol, which has been the stated mission by the department heads over and over to us.

Could you explain a little bit how -- what this new system is, because you said your employees were trained on it in order to help with the transition to the -- to the Police Officers. How does it differ? Obviously, things would -- even if your employees were doing it again or you were doing it again, it would not be transmitted via fax anymore. Obviously, there's some efficiency to be gained with this new software. Could you explain it to us, please?

MR. FINLAND:

I will explain. And if you don't mind, Legislator, I just want to call forward one of the employees in the unit who would be able to --

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Obviously, the person with the most experience, sure.

MR. FINLAND:

Okay.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Mr. Chairman, is that okay?

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Fine with me, absolutely.

MS. ALLEN:

My name is Barbara Allen, and I'm the Day Supervisor of what used to be the Arrest Processing Unit in Suffolk County Police. I have been an employee for twenty years --

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Move the mike a little closer, please.

MS. ALLEN:

Okay. And with that Unit, about thirteen years. I was on the committee to design the new software

program. What happened, basically, is there were representatives from the District Attorney's Office that wanted certain information included in the new system to help them, the Sheriff's Office was represented. It was originally going to streamline the process, but with all of these different agencies having their own agendas in the new system, it actually made it a longer system, but a lot of other things were covered in that were not in the old system. So that's how the new system was designed, was to -- the District Attorney's Office wanted things to say whether things were informations or complaints, what the basis for the charge was, whether it was on the complainant's personal knowledge or information and belief with a witness and a sworn statement. A lot of things were included in the new system that were not touched on in the old system.

The problem is most officers do a handful of arrests a year so they never get very fast at it, and there are a lot of things you have to learn. When I have someone coming on staff in Arrest Processing, it takes about six months full-time for them to really get good at what they're doing and know that with different laws you have to state different things to get it to be a solid arrest. All larcenies need values in it. A DWI, the officer has to state that he saw him driving, or with the keys in his hand and the ignition on. Certain things have to be stated. When you work in Arrest Processing and you're doing so many a day, you know what each charge has to say to make it good.

There's also a lot of things you can't put in arrests that the officers -- and the officers who are doing this have gotten about an hour's worth of training. What you cannot say is you cannot use a co-defendant's name in your other person's arrest. If John Jones and Thomas Smith were arrested together, one of their cases may be sealed somewhere down the road. If the sealed person's name appears in the other person's arrest, that's a lawsuit waiting to happen. So my people were also trained not only on what to say, but on what to make sure they did not say. And we would often call officers and say, "I can say he did this in concert with another, but I cannot use the other person's name in for legal reasons." So a lot of what has been entered in the last year are lawsuits waiting to happen.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Legislator Barraga.

LEG. BARRAGA:

Good morning. The former Arresting Processing system, it's my understanding that the officers would fill out a six-page paper arrest worksheet, which was then faxed to the Arrest Processing Unit with the data, would then be typed into the arrest processing system. The system, according to the Police Department, presented numerous challenges. Transcription errors were frequent, as it was dependent upon employees reading a faxed handwritten document. The six-page arrest report was blank and was not pre-populated with information from prior arrests. This inefficiency had the potential to cause inaccurate conflicting data to be entered and required data, which was already in the arrest processing system, to have -- to be manually reentered. The former arrest processing system was dependent on Central Records staff being available to process the arrests. As a result, Police Officers were often, quote, off the street, unquote, and forced to wait often hours on end, and often on overtime, for an Arrest Processing staff member to become available to process the arrest. Mr. Finland, do you want to make a comment on this?

MR. FINLAND:

Yes, I do. The reason there were situations or scenarios where an officer would have to wait an inordinate amount of time is that for varying degrees over the years there's been, because of fiscal matters, budgetary restrictions in terms of hiring staff. So I can recollect, just to give an example, there was a time in 1997 when on the four-to-midnight shift in this unit, there were three civilians assigned to do the arrest processing function for the entire Suffolk County Police Department, and there was a hiring freeze going on at the time. So my reason for citing that one particular example is that because of budgetary restraints, we haven't been up to speed staff-wise. It's not inefficiency on the civilian's behalf that the officers had to wait periods of time, rather, it was a budgetary hiring freeze issue instead.

LEG. BARRAGA:

So under the current system, the officer enters the data directly into the arrest processing system, as opposed to having to handwrite a six-page paper arrest worksheet and having to fax it over. So that, supposedly, is the area where there's dramatic streamlining from a technological perspective. Let me ask you a question. It's my understanding there are presently 22 employees assigned to the Arrest Records Unit; eight POAs, three Senior POAs, eight Senior Clerk Typists, one Clerk Typist, one Head Clerk, one Principal Clerk. One POA was moved to fill a critical vacancy in Teletype, one POA was moved to fill a critical vacancy in Child Protective Service Unit, the Reports, Control and Maintenance Unit. But when we take a look at the overtime for arrest records and arrest processing in 2008, it amounted to approximately \$359,000 overtime for arrest records, and arrest processing year-to-date in 2009, \$166,000. It seems to me that this new system is saving a lot in overtime.

MR. FINLAND:

It could be looked upon and viewed in that fashion, but I beg to differ as far as you are true and correct to put the titles that you mentioned that are assigned to that unit, but you have to be aware of the fact that this is now a newly combined unit. In the past, you had an Arrest Records Unit, which was comprised of the Principal Clerks, the Senior Clerks, the Clerk Typists and the Head Clerk.

LEG. BARRAGA:

Based on the streamlining, has any of these people lost their jobs; anybody been laid off?

MR. FINLAND:

No one has been laid off.

LEG. BARRAGA:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Legislator Gregory.

MS. FELICE:

Mr. Chair, I would just ask if, through the Chair, if Mr. Barraga has the overtime for the Police Officers with the statistics that he just stated?

LEG. BARRAGA:

No, I don't, but I can get it.

MS. FELICE:

Just if we -- you know, to compare apples to apples.

LEG. BARRAGA:

If there's a break out, I can find out what it is.

MS. FELICE:

That's the only thing that I saw that was missing from your --

LEG. BARRAGA:

Well, I know, on the face of it, what I'm looking at is that there seems to be a dramatic reduction in overtime this year versus last year in this particular unit, and one could sort of extend that and say this is a result of this new process going in place.

MS. FELICE:

But what this -- and again, this analysis is brought to this Committee because you oversee public safety issues. And we merely bring it to your attention because it appears from what -- from the people who've performed the operation, and are still performing it in some degree, that the work has been shifted now to employees who have a higher salary. And the overtime accordingly of course

would be reduced, because they're no longer doing the -- doing the job. But that overtime that you stated of 359,000 was on civilian titles, not Police Officer titles.

LEG. BARRAGA:

That's correct. But the point is it was 359 down to 166. Obviously, that's -- there's a saving taking place here.

MS. FELICE:

We're merely --

LEG. BARRAGA:

And we can attribute to that to this whole process being implemented.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

You know what, let's --

MS. FELICE:

But perhaps not, because the comparison -- the comparison overtime wasn't there.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Rather than have the debate, I will ask for a copy of the -- for everybody here at the Committee, a copy of what Legislator Barraga has --

MS. FELICE:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

-- and a copy of the overtime for the Police Officers.

MS. FELICE:

Thank you. And we have another comment here, if we could.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. I just wanted to say that, you know, I'm familiar with the term "blaming the victim", and, you know, when you cut staff and then you have less people, and now you have to pay them overtime, and then you blame them for having too much overtime, it's kind of like circular reasoning; you know what I mean, and I think we've seen that with the Police. So this is just another example of that type of thing, unless we can get both pieces of information and look at them side by side. That's what I've been trying to do in this committee for four years, to get the facts, get both sides clearly, but not one piece at a time. So we'll do that and have that for the next meeting.

MS. FELICE:

Thank you. Thank you very much.

P.O. LINDSAY:

Legislator Gregory.

LEG. GREGORY:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just so that I understand your concern, your concern is not the new system, your concern is the Police Officers taking more -- playing a more active role in processing of the paperwork?

MS. FELICE:

Well, AME -- AME had an obligation to protect the titles that it believed were exclusively their bargaining unit titles, and that's why the improper labor practice was filed. It's been sitting on the court -- you know, the court docket for quite some time. The County has asked the -- you know, for certain settlements from AME, but nothing was to our satisfaction, which is why we met

with the group to discuss with them the next step that we could take and the next step that we felt would perhaps be helpful, since it was a step that we hadn't tried before, was to bring it to the committee and let the committee look at it and see if we can get like an open dialogue with the Department and with your committee to see if there was -- that there was something to the statements and the beliefs of the workers in that particular unit, and that's why they took the time. And I have to compliment them for the time that they took to put these statistics together for you, and we're merely bringing it for you -- you know, before you so that it can be properly analyzed.

LEG. GREGORY:

Okay. Thank you. Also, Mr. Finlay, is it?

MR. FINLAND:

Finland.

LEG. GREGORY:

Finland? I'm sorry. So that I understand, civilian staff, are there two shifts I think you eluded to, or are there three?

MR. FINLAND:

We have three shifts.

LEG. GREGORY:

Okay. So every time there -- every shift or -- every shift there is an officer who makes an arrest, there's a civilian that can process the paperwork if the civilian's going to do it. If not, the officer will do it. So I guess my real question is, if an officer makes an arrest, he's not waiting around until a civilian can come in to do it, to do the paperwork, even though they're doing more of it now.

MR. FINLAND:

It's a 24/7 operation.

LEG. GREGORY:

Right. Okay, that's --

MR. FINLAND:

So it's fully staffed seven days a week --

LEG. GREGORY:

Okay.

MR. FINLAND:

-- 24 hours a day.

LEG. GREGORY:

And you -- and you had eluded to with Mr. Barraga that the staffing level was an issue and the later shifts, I guess.

MR. FINLAND:

Quite frequently, over the course of the years, there were problems as far as staffing levels, which, of course, that would drive up overtime costs, unfortunately, and there were different times where there were hiring freezes in effect because of budgetary issues and concerns. Four to twelve, four to midnight, that's probably your busiest shift in the Police Department. And there was a situation going back to 1997 when we just had three civilian staff members processing arrests for all of Suffolk County Police Department. So it was a big responsibility, but they rose to the challenge and they were able to keep operations going and functioning.

LEG. GREGORY:

Okay. Now, I noticed that you had numbers into 2007. You weren't able to get any numbers for

2008?

MR. FINLAND:

Unfortunately, no, I don't have numbers available for 2008.

LEG. GREGORY:

Okay. All right. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

And I just wanted to add clarification, that I don't -- I don't subscribe to the opinion that nobody was laid off so you should be happy. I've heard that a number of times and I want to make clear that the whole history of the labor movement and unions was to fight against that very belief, that you got a job, be happy you got a job. I know we're in tough economic times, but I'm not going back 100 years in the labor movement. So, you know, I think you need to -- we need to look at both sides of this issue to make sure that it's cost-effective and efficient and I think getting both pieces of information will do that. When we only get one, we don't have a good sense here, and that's what I think we tried to do. And so I just wanted to make that clear.

LEG. BARRAGA:

Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Legislator Browning and then Legislator Barraga.

LEG. BROWNING:

Okay. I just want to go back to the timing issue. You know, I spoke to an officer in my district, and in one shift, on his shift, he made thirty-one calls. And, you know, it was obviously a busy night. So, again, a Police Officer makes an arrest and he brings him in to process him. What is the time it takes him to do all that paperwork, if you guys are not doing the paperwork, versus what you guys do?

MR. FINLAND:

In terms of time statistics, and I retrieved this information based upon my interviews with the staff who worked in the former -- worked in the former Arrest Processing Unit. For let's say a warrant arrest, which is a fairly simple arrest, civilian staffing performing that kind of a function, doing electronic entry on a warrant arrest, it would take them about five minutes. Now, we're looking at situations where it could be a half hour interval for an officer doing the same function. Now, I'm not critiquing or saying that one individual or one staff member is smarter, more capable than the other, but you have to realize that these folks in that unit, they do it continuously on a continuous basis. If you have an officer who effects many arrests during the course of a year, he would be more adept and more efficient at doing a warrant entry process and it wouldn't take him or her a half hour, you know, it could conceivably take them less as they become more familiar with the program.

But in speaking to those in the units, I've discovered with warrant arrests, with civilians in the past, a five-minute duration; for the officers, a half hour. For a standard cite arrest, like let's say a Criminal Mischief Fourth Degree charge or Harassment Second charge, for the civilian staff, they could get that done within about 15 minutes; with the officers, it's at least an hour or greater period of time. And for DWI arrests, you know, we could even go well beyond the hour parameter. And based upon the complexity of the charges involved, the officers have to have familiarity with subsections and how this program and this system works. However, what was brought to my attention was situations where subsections were not included and people were -- the officers were missing vital information that could be included that could result in defective Court Information being presented to a court of law.

So there's also issues that have arisen with regard to changes that were made to an arrest. Let's say John Smith is arrested on Monday for an offense, and subsequent to his arraignment in court,

maybe based upon further review, the officer who was involved in that arrest may have made a decision that a different subsection perhaps could have been used. There was a safety mechanism in place in the past and that safety mechanism was that we had a paper trail to justify or explain why a certain change was to be made on arrest. We had written documentation. We notified the appropriate authorities when a change was made, those authorities being the District Attorney's Office and also DCJS up in Albany, so that anywhere within the State where they'd have official records of someone's arrest, those individuals, those authorities, would be notified of the changes.

And, unfortunately, it's been brought to my attention that the civilian staffing is not being notified in certain instances when charges are being amended or changed, and this could conceivably result in a lawsuit situation down the road if our records are not correct and up to date. In the past we needed written documentation and we also had to by -- through channels notify the D.A.'s Office and Albany, DCJS, when charges were changed, and in some cases that has not happened with this transition going from a civilian function to a Police Officer function.

LEG. BROWNING:

It's just I think what's most important to me is the time that a Police Officer is not on the street, when he's doing paperwork. I know that DuWayne probably shares the same thing. I want to see the Police Officer on the street more than sitting in an office doing paperwork. And so I'm trying to find out, are we saving -- you know, we're saving time having the civilian personnel doing the paperwork? The Police Officer is going to come in, he does his arrest, he does his necessary paperwork, and let's get him back out on the street, and that's what I want to see. Like I say, thirty-one calls for a Police Officer in one day I know is a lot of work. And I'm sure there probably wasn't an arrest in there, but what if he did get an arrest that night? You know, he probably -- and I know he actually did tell me he went into overtime based on the number of calls he had that day. I just want to see that we're saving money, but we're also putting cops on the street, rather than having them sitting and doing paperwork, so thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Legislator Barraga.

(The following was transcribed by Kim Castiglione, Legislative Secretary)

LEG. BARRAGA:

I just wanted to make one or two comments with reference to -- and I have very high respect for the Chairman. This is not about bringing the labor movement back a hundred years. This is dealing with the stark reality of an economic situation, which we have not seen in 50 years. This County is in tough fiscal shape. Sales tax right now as I speak is down nine or ten percent, and we're looking at deficits of 125 to 150 million dollars as we go forward. Our whole point here from the very beginning was to avoid two things, to avoid layoffs, avoid layoffs and not increase taxes, and that's what we've accomplished, and it's not easy to accomplish that, Ladies and Gentlemen. You make enemies when you do that, because you have to make some very difficult decisions. And yes, be happy you have a job. I come from a Town, and in a couple of days, and it's the easy thing to do, but the inevitable thing to do, they are going to lay off maybe 90 people in the Town of Islip. That could have been done here. That was not done here, because this Legislature and this County Executive took other action to avoid that.

If all of you were replaced by my constituents, about 10% of you would stand up because you don't have jobs, and you don't have good health benefits, and you're worried about how you're paying your mortgage, because I see these people as I walk door to door. That's not the case for any employee in Suffolk County. You may not be happy with some of the decisions made, but the reality is no one has lost their job. And when a job is vacated, yes, it's not filled, but it's better than turning around to hundreds of employees and saying, "Okay, effective October 1, you're all fired, you're out." We've seen this in history. You know, we've seen where people come along in power and have made the decision to fire people. That has not been the case with this Legislature or this County Executive. We've done everything possible, and it's not easy, because you do, like I say,

make political enemies; they're not happy. People get -- are very unhappy, but at least they have a job.

I remember something like 28, 29 years ago when a new President took office, he turned around to a bunch of people, the air traffic controllers, and said, "Hey, look, these negotiations have been going on for a long time, nothing is really happening here. You've got 48 hours to come back to work or I'm going to fire every single one of you." And you know something, they just laughed at him, the controllers laughed at him. They said it was impossible to do this, the planes wouldn't fly. And in 48 hours, in ten minutes, Reagan fired every controller. And those people, those individuals, never got their jobs back. That has not been the case in Suffolk County. We're doing everything we possibly can to hit those two primary objectives, avoid layoffs, avoid firings, and don't increase taxes, and so far we've accomplished that, and we've asked for your cooperation. It is not easy dealing with any of these issues, believe me. But you know something, you're all lucky; you all have a job.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Thank you, Legislator Barraga.

MS. FELICE:

Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

We hear you loud and clear.

MS. FELICE:

Mr. Chairman, if I may. As the President of the largest union in Suffolk County, this membership did give during that fiscal crisis. We're well aware of what has happened in Suffolk County, and we also feel it's our duty and our obligation to merely report to you where efficiencies could perhaps be improved. I don't think the hardworking individuals who are sitting with me today deserve that lecture. They are well aware of their role and responsibility and have -- Mike here has been with the Department over 30 years and started from the bottom up and has worked his way all the way up. And these individuals don't need a lecture. They already gave up two weeks pay to help this County. We're well aware of what took place. We're here as not only members of the Department and the County, but as constituents to say we see where there may be inefficiency that could be improved upon and reporting it to you, and I think they are owed the respect of this process.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Thank you. I just want to comment that I, for one, though, appreciate Legislator Barraga's statements, because he does force another perspective, and I mean, like I said, loud and clear. I need to hear that. We may not like it sometimes, but I need to hear it, and I appreciate it and I respect the Legislator for saying it when people may not appreciate it; I do. And when I talk to the other members of the Committee we all feel that, you know, we have to voice what we really believe, and I think that's the best part of the Legislature. We tell you what we really believe privately and publicly, and I admire the people that do that. And we're going to get the information and look at them both ways, and I think that -- we have to attribute that to the people that speak one side and then we need to look at the other side. And so I thank Legislator Barraga for bringing that information forward, because now we are going to get the other piece to it and I think that will help our argument. Legislator Losquadro.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Thank you. I know we went off the other questions. I didn't want to monopolize time earlier, and I got some of the answers that I was looking for, but I was really looking for the distinct difference between the way the old system operated and the way the new system now operates. And I got part of that in the discussion you had with Legislator Browning and Legislator Barraga, that, obviously, there was a paper system and that was -- and you referenced that when I spoke to you about faxing that information over, which seemed very antiquated to me, and now a new

electronified system.

The information that was sent over in the old paper system, did that include all of the information that the officers now had to enter, or was some of that filled in by your unit?

MR. FINLAND:

The old system, which they employed the fax system for that, paperwork was completed, and anything that essentially would be contained within an arrest package would be in that paperwork and the civilian staffing would electronically enter it into the computer system.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

You can see how that could be viewed as a duplication of duties.

MR. FINLAND:

It could be viewed in that fashion, but, at the same time, as I mentioned a little earlier in my presentation, the civilians were the eyes and ears for the officers. So, yes, they were drafting paperwork, they were sending it over by fax, which may, for all intents and purposes, appear to be an antiquated means of doing things, but the bottom line is the civilian staffing were assessors, analyzers, checkers, reviewers, however you want to put it, as far as the preliminary documentation that was presented to them.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

That was what I was getting to, is it could be perceived that way, but to get the officers back on the street, and maybe we could have somebody from the Police Department maybe confirm this, if they were out on tour, would those officers go back out on patrol and then come back to verify and sign that completed paperwork to get them back out on the street?

MR. FINLAND:

Legislator, I'm going to defer to Deborah Grundstrom, who works in the unit. She'll address your question.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Thank you.

MS. GRUNDSTROM:

Hi. My name is Debbie Grundstrom. I work the midnight shift. I'm the Supervisor of the midnight shift.

Usually, when we used to process the arrest, the officer was fingerprinting while we were processing the arrest. Now, they process the arrest, then the fingerprints come, then -- it's just an extended situation now. I feel it takes longer. They have to -- they submit the paper -- they submit it on the computer. It goes to a Sergeant for review, they print it, the Sergeant reviews it, there's something wrong, it gets printed. It could be printed multiple times before it's finally finalized. Then they call the Arrest Records Unit to tell us that it's completed.

This could take anywhere -- and we've kept records of -- not for any reason other than when we used to get the paperwork, if we couldn't read the arrest time, we needed the arrest time, it was easier to get the arrest time when someone -- when the officer called the arrest in, we had the arrest time in front of us, we didn't have to take the time to call. So we would have the times of when the arrest was actually made, when they actually called the arrest in, when they sent the paperwork over, when the arrest has been completed. So now you cut out the paperwork where it was sent over. So we have -- the arrest was called in -- the arrest was made, the arrest was called in, and by the time of the finalization of the arrest completed, could be anywhere up to five hours later.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Well, this is what I'm trying to get to the bottom of, and we've been sort of going around and around

a little bit here, and I apologize, because we want to understand this. Again, on its face, it does sound like a little bit of duplication of duties, but I'm trying to get to how the process did operate. Obviously, if we can electronify certain records, transmit things securely, but electronically, it's always more efficient than having someone writing something out and faxing something. You know, like what was mentioned before, you could have transcription errors, things might be illegible. But if things can be done concurrently with another unit performing one portion of the task, as you said, while another portion of the task is being done at the same time, that is certainly more efficient, and that's what I'm trying to figure out, how the system did operate versus where we are right now. And it sounds to me like we could certainly take some of the benefits of electronifying these records and incorporate that into having work done concurrently by that unit. I think it would speed the process up even more from where you were, which seemed like a fairly efficient system, given the somewhat antiquated technology you were working with.

So I think there may be a way to achieve both ends here, which is streamlining and improving the system by the implementation of new technology, and having the officers back out on the street quicker, and being able to process these arrests even that much faster. And, obviously, you were very efficient, given the number of arrests you were processing previously. So I think we can make this system even better it sounds like, by having both units work together with the new technology, but that's just what I'm hearing, and I'm trying to process all the information you've been giving us. But I know the Chairman has requested some additional information. We'll be looking through that, so thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. Thank you very much for your presentation today.

MS. FELICE:

Thank you very much.

TABLED RESOLUTIONS

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. I'd like to start with the agenda. Tabled resolution, ***I.R. 1312 - Amending the 2009 Capital Program and Budget and appropriating funds for the purchase of furniture and equipment for the New Fourth Precinct (CP 3184) (Nowick)***. Motion to table by Legislator Gregory.. I'll second that. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? ***(Vote: Tabled 5-0-0-0)***

I.R. 1314 - Adopting Local Law No. -2009, A Local Law to authorize a County Registry for Domestic Violence Offenders (Gregory).

LEG. GREGORY:

We need to table for Public Hearing.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. Motion to table for public hearing. I'll second that. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? ***(Vote: Tabled 5-0-0-0)***

I.R. 1485 - Adopting Local Law No. -2009, A Charter Law to prevent double taxation for public safety services in certain towns and villages (Romaine). I'll make a motion to table.

LEG. GREGORY:

Second.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

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

I.R. 1589 - A Local Law to ensure the timely filling of vacancies on the Human Rights Commission (Montano). I'll make a motion to table.

LEG. GREGORY:

Second.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

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

The next resolution is ***I.R. 1590 - Preventing registered sex offenders from maintaining accounts on social networking websites. (Montano).*** And I'm going to -- before we even do this, I asked Laura Ahearn to go to Nassau County to research this for this committee, and I would like to give her the opportunity to just give us feedback on that before we even bring it up to the table.

MS. AHEARN:

Good morning. Before I give you an overview of what my findings were in Nassau, I just wanted to remind you of something that had happened in Suffolk County in Legislator Browning's District.

In 2007, this is Michael Bradley, a convicted sex offender. He had sexually abused a boy for a number of years and was convicted and registered and on probation in Suffolk County. One of his conditions of probation was that he was not to develop or to use his computer to develop online relationships. We got a tip to our help line that Michael Bradley was on Match.com and he was obviously looking for love, because that was his name, "Alone and Looking". He enjoys conversation, gardening and watching Law and Order. So we reported him, of course, to Probation because, obviously, as a condition of his probation, we would want to be responsible and ensure that Probation does have tools to monitor that condition. But, at the time they did not have monitoring software that is currently being used in Nassau County.

So what ended up happening with him is he was instructed by Probation to not be on Match.com. And the agency set up a profile of a single woman with two boys, and this was fictitious, and responded to him, and he responded back very quickly that he wanted to meet this fictitious woman for coffee or ice cream. She -- this fictitious woman had two sons around the age of the individual that he had targeted. That's a good example of how if Probation Officers have the tools that they need, that they can actually monitor the condition of probation that they're putting on an offender.

Last -- at the last Public Safety meeting, Director Desmond had said that had he spoken with his counterpart in Nassau County. The Director of the Nassau County Department of Probation is Gerry Cook, and the Probation Department is run by Susan Vinci. The agency has relationships, ongoing relationships, with many Departments of Probation because that's important when we get tips to our hotline we want to communicate with those Probation or Parole Officers or U.S. Probation and Patrol quickly to try to take action to mitigate any potential danger.

Gerry Cook had informed me at our meeting on September 8th, which was Tuesday, that he not, indeed, spoken with Director Desmond, and that Director Desmond had also said that the software that they were using for monitoring, which the company has asked me not to say the same of the software publicly because it becomes problematic, but I'll just call them at this point the monitoring company, that they were unhappy and that that software, Director Desmond said that that software, according to the feedback he got from his counterpart, they weren't happy with it and it wasn't all that it was made to be.

That's actually not the finding that I discovered. They had reported to me, the Director had reported to me, that they were happy with the software and it's a very effective supervision tool. The Probation Officers themselves have reported that they save significant time using this software. They've been using the monitoring software since May of 2008. Maybe the confusion here was that

there is a problem in Nassau County with the -- with their desktops, so their equipment, in Nassau County their desktop equipment, the Probation Officers that actually have their desktops, the software is loaded on their desktops, they're old and they're slow. They would love to have more updated equipment as would most Probation Officers, because you're viewing images and different -- you go into different links.

Another issue is that the County has an intranet, Nassau and Suffolk, and there has to be -- IT has to give them permission to go out. So when they get a flag that an offender is on a social networking site or looking at an image, if the County is blocking or using filtering software, they need to have IT make changes. Those were the only complaints, but they are very happy with the software.

Prior to sentencing -- Probation does what is called a presentence investigation and it's at that point that in Nassau County, and in Suffolk, they make determinations of what conditions of probation they will recommend to the sentencing court. In Nassau County they pay the monitoring fee, meaning the offenders pay the monitoring fee, and that's set in one of their conditions of probation. It's \$24 a month and there is very, very minor expense to the County. It's \$450 for a set up fee. That's it. There's no ongoing expense. All those expenses are paid by the offender being monitored. There's 24/7 technical support available to the offenders who's being monitored in case they're having difficulties on their computer. They don't want to hinder their potential if they're looking for employment or hinder their potential to be productive, so they make that technical support available through the monitoring company and there's no additional charge. The monitoring company also provides training at no cost.

Once conditions of probation are recommended to the sentencing court the judge is really the one who is going to make the final determination whether or not that condition is going to be appropriate.

Something -- just to explain the software, and I'm not sure what level of expertise each of you have with monitoring software, but I'll try to keep it as simple as possible. It's very easy to install this software. The Probation Officer can do it remotely even, so they don't even have to go to the computer, but of course if they're doing visits, you don't want to restrict or limit the number of visits, but the software can actually be loaded remotely to the offender. The offender just has to log on to the computer monitoring company's site and they download it.

The software comes with preloaded key word libraries by crime. So if your -- if your caseload, this is outside of sex offenses. But if your caseload is somebody who has committed gang offenses or identity theft or hate crimes or computer hacking, there's a library that the Probation Officer can select, and in this case it would be social networking, a guy who is using social networking or attempting to develop relationships, and it's a sex offense. There's key words preloaded plus the Probation Officer can enter in any additional key words and normally that would be customized to that offender. It might include even the Probation Officer's name, the victim's name, and they've had flags on probationers who are looking up a name that is similar to their Probation Officer's name. So it flags the P.O. in case the offender is planning on trying to get getting personal information on their Probation Officer.

The use of computer monitoring software is a tremendous benefit to Suffolk County Probation Officers with such a minimal cost. It's \$450.

The Bradley case is a really good example of why you don't want that to be discretionary. I understand there's discussion about this being changed to discretionary and here's why. Because when a Probation Officer needs a tool, such as computer monitoring software, there might be pressure placed to try to prevent that discretion from actually being used as often as they might want it used. Now, we would hope that that wouldn't happen, but sometimes budget becomes first priority and the Jaycee Dugard case in California clearly demonstrates how a systematic failure can affect the life of a child, a family, a generation and a country, because of all of the different failures.

So a recommendation of a requirement, and I understand the D.A.'s in there, why not instead of making it discretionary, why don't we instead do something else? Why don't we give discretion to the Probation Officer or to the District Attorney's Office to not have that software placed on the offender's computers? So in other words, make it a requirement, but give discretion to waive that requirement. That way this Public Safety Committee, who's task is, of course, to ensure the community is kept safe, you're not making that decision. The decision is being made by that Probation Officer. "This person does not need this monitoring." Make it a requirement, and let them then waive the requirement.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Thank you. Legislator Browning.

LEG. BROWNING:

Yeah, Laura, you know, I know this guy. I know his case, I know where he lives, I know where he works, and I know he uses a computer at his job. He has his own business. And what boggles me is why this man is not in jail. That's what really angers me. So now, you know, he has a computer at his job right now. Is anybody monitoring his computer? And I know that there's forensic checking of his computer, maybe, is that correct, they do do that at this time?

MS. AHEARN:

That's a really good point that you bring up, because there are a couple of Probation Officers that are really highly skilled and trained and certified to do forensics, and this software does something else. When they have to do a forensic evaluation, the P.O.'s have to go there and grab the computer, or they have to go there and work on the computer and that takes a lot of time. There are situations where you're going to want to do that when you're building a case.

However, what you're doing when you're installing this monitoring software, what happens is you select this library of key words, so you've installed the software on the offender's computer, laptop, desktop. You've installed it and then the software does the work and the monitoring company does the work for the Probation Officer. So it's sifting -- in one case I saw one offender, the profile of what the filtering software had picked up in one week. He had visited over 13,000 website's in one week, had received 2,000 E-mails and viewed 577 images. That is incredible. And out of that, because of the filtering software, it picks up key words, looks through images, it only picked up eight potential violations. Eight violations in the thousands and thousands of places that this offender went.

Now, then it's up to the P.O. to take a look at what those violations are and they took me through that. So it flags those, okay this might be a problem. The P.O. clicks on it and views it. If it's problematic, then obviously it's going to lead to a potential arrest and incarceration for the offender. But in that case, the violation was a hit on LimeWire. LimeWire is a music downloading software program that it's peer to peer technology, which means that when somebody downloads this LimeWire, if 10,000 people, 100,000, a million people across the country have the same software, it goes into your computer. And what child pornographers do is they attach child pornography to music downloading software in peer to peer environments. So when an offender goes to LimeWire and clicks on a particular artist to download music, there's a potential that an image is going through, so there was a flag. The Probation Officer looked at it and it was not a potential violation.

So the point is that, to answer your question, the long and short of it is, is that what it does is it does the monitoring. It's looking over the shoulder of the offender while they're completing their sentence, this is part of their sentence, to ensure that they're not grooming potential victims using the internet. Nobody else can do that. Probation can go and grab the computer, they can go during their site visit and look, but nobody is doing that monitoring. For \$24 a month and a \$450 set up fee, I don't understand why we didn't do it in 2007.

LEG. BROWNING:

So then the forensic checking isn't -- wouldn't be necessary if we have them on this.

MS. AHEARN:

Well, I'm confident that the forensic checks are absolutely necessary when they're preparing a case, so I don't think that we're going to have no need for that. In fact, the Probation Officers that do the forensic evaluations are very highly skilled on use of software and computers, so the expertise that they have garnered from the forensics and what they'll use for building a case is only going to enhance the whole department's use of the monitoring software.

LEG. BROWNING:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Legislator Gregory.

LEG. GREGORY:

Thank you, Laura, for explaining the software. So the software only monitors websites that they go to?

MS. AHEARN:

The software monitors everywhere they are on their computer, everything, even if they -- even if they put a -- it's applications as well, so if they try to download a program, if they try to put a USB, a thumbnail drive in, if they put a disc in; it monitors everything. It's actually a lot less for the software. It's about \$200 set up fee with this company, but it's -- we had to go with the 450 because when you have the 450 set up fee it includes special software that allows you to partition a computer. So if somebody is -- has other people in the house and they only have one computer, they're not going to be monitoring everybody else's use. They will only be monitoring that offender's use. There's also safeguards in place for that as well, because when the offender stops using the internet the way that they normally do, there are flags.

To answer your question, what ends up happening is you with a larger amount, with the higher cost, the 450, you're able to do a lot more in terms of set up. You can even do a biometric, which is a fingerprint, for somebody who is a real high profile offender, meaning they had many victims, is released for reason, maybe because of some problem, if that offender used the internet to access victims, and also the only way if that offender can be working and earning a productive living is using the internet, Probation has to deal with that and so does Parole. So what they can do is they set up certain safeguards like a biometric. That offender has to put in their fingerprint in order to access the internet.

So to answer your question, it's websites, applications, E-mails, any word processing programs, any additional equipment added, CD drives, hard drives, anything that happens on that computer. Of course, the most obvious vulnerability here is outside of the realm of we can't have a monitoring software program on the offender to ensure that the offender is not going to go to a library. But you can do what you can with what the offender has on premise.

LEG. GREGORY:

All right. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Just so I can get it in my head, you -- you were happy with the way the bill was where it was mandated and now it is at the discretion and you believe that it should go back to the other way.

MS. AHEARN:

I believe it should go back to the other way, and to be fair, it should also give an opportunity for that discretion or for that mandatory application of that condition to be waived upon the approval of the Probation Officer, or if you're going to keep the District Attorney language in there, with that as

well. But that should be -- it should be required, and it should only be waived when the Probation Officer truly feels that it should be waived.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

All right. Well -- is anyone privy to why the sponsor changed the language? No. I guess, then, we'll have to reach out to him. Mr. Zwirn, if this was passed, could be it be staffed and implemented?

MR. ZWIRN:

I'd have to ask the Director of Probation. I don't know the answer to that.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

All right. Then what I'm going to do is recommend that we table this and maybe we can have you reach out and I'll reach out to him, because I think we need some clarification on did he talk to somebody in Suffolk or did somebody else talk to him or.

MR. ZWIRN:

I don't know how many individuals would be -- maybe Laura knows, how many individuals in Suffolk County this would apply to at the current time. That would tell you what the cost might be.

MS. AHEARN:

It's 24 -- \$24 dollars a month per offender, but the offender pays for it, so there is no cost. The only cost to Suffolk that Suffolk will have is a \$450 set up fee. I'm not -- I'm not privy to the staffing to the level, obviously, the Director and the Supervisors are in the Probation Unit, but based on what I've seen, there's a potential application if they shift caseloads around. You have a couple of people in Probation that are already highly trained in the use of monitoring software, so if they could reduce their caseloads, shift caseloads to other individuals in the unit, there's a really, really, really hopeful chance here that this could work without ten more Probation Officers. All it's doing is adding another tool for those Probation Officers. Of course, they're going to have to look at where the offender's been. If there's a flagged violation they have to look.

Nassau Probation told me that on average they have about one flag a week per offender, and that's not -- the eight I talked about they said was unusual, so a one flag week. If you were to consider a worse case, ten flags a week, they do have to look at it. Realistically there's going to be time spent looking at those potential violations, but to not do it because you might find a violation is wrongheaded. If we need an extra person in Probation to be shifted over, is that possible to be done, Ben, if they needed one more person moved over?

MR. ZWIRN:

Well, that I can't tell you, but it sounds like it would be reasonable. But is the \$450 per unit or -- it's not a global license, it's per individual who would be on the program?

MS. AHEARN:

It's a \$450 flat fee, one time fee. That's it. Forever that's it.

MR. ZWIRN:

If it was a thousand people, the \$450 would be one program that could be applied to all of them.

MS. AHEARN:

Exactly. What I'm not 100 percent on is if it's annual, but I'm pretty sure it's 450 once.

MR. ZWIRN:

It wouldn't make a difference, I don't think. Even in this economy I don't think that would make a difference.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. Well, you know what? We'll check that out. I'm going to withdraw my suggestion to table. And Legislator Browning, you want to make a motion?

LEG. BROWNING:

Yeah. I'd like to make a motion to approve.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. Legislator Browning makes a motion to approve.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Second.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Second by Legislator Losquadro. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **(Vote: Approved 5-0-0-0)**. We will reach out to Legislator Montano. He may want to readjust it.

MS. AHEARN:

Is this now with the requirement or is it --

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Yeah.

MS. AHEARN:

It's the requirement.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

It's for discretion right now, but I don't want to hold it up any longer, because like you're saying, this is something that could be used to help. So we will reach out to him and see if he's interested in putting it back or adding those words.

MS. AHEARN:

Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Thank you very much. ***I.R. 1597 - To maintain the integrity, continuity and independence of Suffolk County's Community Oriented Police Enforcement (COPE) Units of the Suffolk County Police Department. (Kennedy)***. I'll make a motion to table.

LEG. GREGORY:

Second.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

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

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Opposed.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

One opposed. **(Vote: Tabled 4-1-0-0 Opposed: Legislator Losquadro)**

I.R. 1638 - A Local Law authorizing a wireless communications surcharge. (Horsley).

LEG. BROWNING:

Motion to table.

CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:

Motion to table by Legislator Browning.

LEG. BARRAGA:

Second.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

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

I.R. 1708 - A Local Law imposing a surcharge on wireless communications service in the County of Suffolk. (Co. Exec.)

LEG. GREGORY:

Motion to table.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Motion to table by Legislator Gregory. Second by Legislator Browning. All those favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **(Vote: Tabled 5-0-0-0).**

I.R. 1727 - A Local Law to amend the Suffolk County Emergency Telephone System Surcharge Program. (Co. Exec.). Could I just have Mr. Nolan comment on that?

MR. NOLAN:

This actually amends the existing law having to do with the surcharge on land lines. The State changed definition so to include internet based telephone services. So this change, this reflects what the State has authorized us to do to collect that 35 cent surcharge on those telephone services.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Thank you very much. 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).**

INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS

I.R. 1740 - Appoint member to Suffolk County Citizens Corps Council (Thomas Donnelly). (D'Amaro)

I'll make a motion -- is the gentleman Thomas Donnelly present? Would you mind just coming up real quick?

MR. DONNELLY:

Good morning, Chairman Eddington and members of the Public Safety Committee.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Hold it down.

MR. DONNELLY:

Good morning, Chairman Eddington and members of the Public Safety Committee. My name is Tom Donnelly. I'm a 25 year fire service veteran, currently a Commissioner with the Deer Park Fire District, as well as an instructor for the last 18 years with the Suffolk County Fire Academy. I've

participated in a number of County sponsored operations. Most notably I was one of the main coordinators of the recent bombing exercise that was conducted in 2008. I'm also a member of the Town of Babylon Planning Committee, and I also currently am employed by the New York City Fire Department, where I'm a Lieutenant assigned to a Rescue Company. I have 21 years of service with the New York City Fire Department.

That's just a brief overview of my background. My name was put forth by my Legislator, Lou D'Amaro, to serve on the Suffolk County Citizens Corps Council.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Thank you very much. And I'll make a motion to approve.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Second.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

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

MR. DONNELLY:

Thank you, Legislator Eddington.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Does he need to come back?

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Tom, you don't need to come to the General Meeting.

MR. DONNELLY:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Thank you. *I.R. 1772 - To amend Resolution No. 31-2009, "Establishing a Task Force on Hate Crimes in Suffolk County. (Gregory)*

LEG. GREGORY:

Motion.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Motion to approve by Legislator Gregory.

LEG. BARRAGA:

Second.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Second by Legislator Barraga.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

On the motion.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

On the motion, Legislator Losquadro.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Through the Chair to the sponsor. I see that this deletes the representative from the D.A.'s Office. Have you spoken to the District Attorney's Office about that?

LEG. GREGORY:

Yes. When we established the bill they had asked to be recused, so we're substituting that with a member from the Hispanic community.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

That was the other language I wanted to discuss. Of course I always want to be sensitive to, you know, issues in the County. I think that the language saying that a person who is familiar with immigration issues, I don't think that language is really necessary. Someone active in the Hispanic community I feel would have been sufficient, because sort of unstated there, I mean, immigration is sort of a generic term nowadays, and I think that in a piece of legislation before a lawmaking body, to have something that is an acknowledgment of an illegal immigration problem here in this County I just don't think is appropriate.

I think having it say -- someone from the Hispanic community I think is perfectly responsible and I think it's necessary, but I just didn't think that language was necessary to put in the bill. Because immigration issues, I mean, that could be somebody who's familiar with the genealogy or, you know, history of Italian immigration through Ellis Island at the late 19th century and early 20th century. I think it's just a generic term and I didn't think it was necessary in this piece of legislation.

LEG. GREGORY:

Okay. Your comments are well noted. I had gotten asked by several members from several different immigration advocate -- advocacy organizations. They felt, to be quite honest, a little slighted that they weren't represented in the original makeup of the Task Force, considering, you know, recent events with the immigration -- the immigrant community, you know, attacked and hate crimes. They felt they should have at least a voice and be able to sit at the table and play a part in the Task Force, so I felt that it was appropriate.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

I don't think the language is necessarily a deal breaker. I just think it was superfluous. I think a person active in a Hispanic community group or organization would have been sufficient. I just wanted to point that out. I will be supporting the bill, though.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

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

I have I.R. 1775 - Amending the 2009 Capital Budget and Program and appropriating funds in connection with upgrading the New Police Dispatch Consoles (CP 3509). (Co. Exec.)

And before I put this on the table I would like to ask Chief Sharkey and Undersheriff Caracappa if they could just come forward to answer a question.

UNDER-SHERIFF CARACAPPA:

Good morning, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Good morning, gentlemen. My question is I want to make sure that we're not stealing from Peter to pay Paul, and that's what I'm hearing through informal channels. I want to make sure I hear clarification from you.

CHIEF SHARKEY:

In actuality, we would be. This money will be needed for 3008 project in the new jail. If, in fact, this money was used now for this project we would have to find an offset in an equal amount in 2010's capital project to cover it, because the earliest we'd be able to ask for new money would be

for the 2011 capital, which would be too late, because this is scheduled to open -- the new facility is scheduled to open in late 2011.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. Well, then, how about Mr. Zwirn? Can we get a guarantee that if we pass this that they will get an offset?

MR. ZWIRN:

Well, together with BRO the County Exec's Budget Office and BRO will look for an additional offset. The reason we're doing this now is because this is a -- we have a situation that has developed out at the 911 Center and I think Legislator Eddington was --

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

We're well aware of it.

MR. ZWIRN:

Brought it to our attention and then the amount of money that was necessary and we're trying to act very quickly to make sure that that runs without any interference or any problems.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

We commend you on that and the County Executive for dealing with this.

MR. ZWIRN:

We have a little more time with the, you know, putting together an offset for the jail, which we will actively do. I mean, we're not trying to -- under the rules of the Legislature in the County, we have to use offsets, and in this particular case we're acting where we can find the money. As you know, the Capital Program has gotten smaller with the times that we're facing financially. But this is a high priority. We want to get this done right away, and then we'll work with the Sheriff's Office to get the other additional funds.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

That last sentence made me feel better, "we'll work with them to get the funds", because when you say we'll look for, it's kind of like hopefully it will happen. But you're saying it will happen.

MR. ZWIRN:

We'll go through the present Capital Budget and we'll try to prioritize and see where we can, you know, sometimes we have to put a couple of projects together to come up with that size of amount of money. We'll actively, positively, constructively move forward trying to do that.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. Gentlemen, how do you feel?

UNDER-SHERIFF CARACAPPA:

We certainly appreciate those -- the words being put on the record, and the Sheriff is comfortable with that at this time. But the thing that is the scariest part about it is the timeline, as the Chief was saying. We're trying to move into this new facility, which is really going gangbusters now, and you're all welcome to come out and take a look at it, in '11, end of '11, and getting the money in time and then procuring all of the equipment and everything associated with that dollar amount, which is \$4.5 million, will take some time. And the State has got a very close eye on us, the Commission of Corrections, as you are all well aware of. We have to move into that building much sooner than our intended opening date. We have to have a soft opening. We have to get all the guards in there and trained and the new direct supervision on the facility on the new -- on the new way they'll be doing business. So time is of the essence, and we're just fearful that we're not going to have it when the time comes.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. Well, I mean, I'm willing to take the word of the Deputy County Executive that it will happen,

as long as you're willing to take that chance.

UNDER-SHERIFF CARACAPPA:
(Nodding)

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:
So this is the international sign for yes.

UNDER-SHERIFF CARACAPPA:
Mr. Chair, do we have an option here? Options are good, but I don't see one.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:
I don't know another option and you've been here. You know it's usually either this or that. So, I mean, I'll make a motion to approve, but I am -- I want to make sure that this does happen, that you do get reimbursed or reallocated. So you will need it to have you guys communicate directly with us. Legislator Losquadro.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:
Mr. Chairman, I don't know if -- is there any chance that we could see maybe a CN with an updated offset? I mean, could we discharge this without recommendation and give the two sides, so to speak, an opportunity to come up with an agreeable offset and then have a CN presented to us?

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:
I'm okay with that. What do you think?

MR. ZWIRN:
I would ask that you move this forward. This is a high priority and, in fact, as the Chairman of the committee who brought it to our attention, as just a couple of weeks ago, the Sheriff and the County Executive have a very good working relationship. And you guys, the Legislature, also has access to Budget Review Office asking them to look at offsets as well. And you may have recommendations that you can make to the Budget Review Office and then they'll talk to the County Exec's Office.

As I say, in a very tight Capital Program we may have to bundle some projects together to come up with that money, but we've always been able to do it in the past. I don't see why we wouldn't be able to do it this time. I don't think a CN is necessary, but you can certainly ask me for an update at the, you know, at the general session next week and we can talk about it again.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:
All right. So long as there is a -- even if it's a shaky confidence level, so long as there --

MR. ZWIRN:
Shaky? Hey, nice.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:
-- is some degree of confidence here that this will get worked out. I guess, at least for me, and I guess for the members of the committee, we'll go on faith.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:
I made a motion. Would you like to --

UNDER-SHERIFF CARACAPPA:
Mr. Chairman, just one last point.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:
Yes, sure.

UNDER-SHERIFF CARACAPPA:

We would just appreciate you reaching out to us, at least the County Executive's Office and the Budget Office, because we weren't informed that this offset was being taken from us and it came as quite a shock for us to see it buried in a resolution that was put in a late-starter. One last point Chief Sharkey has that's related to this bill that's before you.

CHIEF SHARKEY:

Just a small concern that we had had that unofficially we straightened out by looking through the project and speaking to people in the Police Department. Last time all the consoles were replaced it included the two consoles at the Sheriff's Office. I'm told that again that is the case with this project. It's not in the resolution, I don't believe, but it is in the project.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. Then I have a motion.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Second.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Legislator Losquadro seconds the motion. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Thank you, gentlemen. *(Vote: Approved 5-0-0-0)*.

J.R. 1777 - A Charter Law increasing the Ambulance Chiefs' representation on the County Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services Commission. (Pres. Off)

This has to be tabled for Public Hearing. I'll make that motion. Second by Legislator Browning. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? *(Vote: Tabled 5-0-0-0)*.

HOME RULE MESSAGES

Okay. ***HR 13 - Home Rule Message requesting the State of New York to amend the Tax Law, in relation to requiring a revenue distribution agreement for equitable allocation within Suffolk County for Public Safety purposes of sales and compensating use tax (Senate Bill S.2272 and Assembly Bill A.4789). (Schneiderman)***

I'll make a motion. Do you want me to say that again?

LEG. GREGORY:

No.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

I'll make a motion to table.

LEG. BARRAGA:

Second.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Second by Legislator Barraga. All those in -- Ben?

MR. ZWIRN:

No, when you were done I was going to ask if I could --

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? *(Vote: Tabled 5-0-0-0)*. Okay. Mr. Zwirn.

MR. ZWIRN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just -- I don't want to go into a lengthy discussion, but I know we heard a presentation today about the arrest procedure in Suffolk County. And I think, as I listened to the debate, I think Legislator Barraga and Legislator Losquadro actually when you were reaching to try to find out, it sounds like it's a better system if the Police Officer is now entering the arrest information directly electronically. That's the reason they do it. It saves time and it also leaves less opportunity for error.

One of the -- Debbie, I believe her name was, was saying that sometimes they can't read the arrest time. Well, that's part of the reason why that system isn't in place anymore. The Police Officer now puts in his own information. And as you heard from the testimony that that information is reviewed by a desk Sergeant, by another Police Officer. Police Officers today can do a lot of different tasks. Maybe 15, 20 years ago very few people were computer literate as they are today, but now when people come out of the academy their education levels are higher. They are computer literate, and they can put this information in directly.

The intention was never to, you know, eliminate jobs for the purpose of eliminating personnel. They were given other positions. Nobody lost a job over this, which was, I think, critically important. But the system was done to make it better and with less opportunities for any errors. When the Police Officer puts it in he gets training on the Penal Law, on the Criminal Procedure Law, and again, there is a review. And Chief Weber is here, if you have any questions he can tell you how the system actually works. But that's why it was done, and the Police Officer, they put that information in directly and it is transferred electronically immediately, and there is no reason anymore for the older system where you had to write it out, and then it had to be read, and if there was something that was not legible they might make a mistake. This way the Police Officer puts that in. There doesn't have to be a change by a civilian employee and then it goes right into the system. We think it's a better system, especially when we're looking for efficiencies and also, to be, you know, to be honest, to just make sure there are no errors in the process.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Well, I mean, I share the County Executive's concern on putting more people on patrol, so that my concern was that I don't want to take officers off patrol for a longer period of time, and that's what I think we have to find out.

MR. ZWIRN:

But they're putting that information in directly now. They had to either give that information to somebody else and then go over it with that individual, or put it in directly and then go off to patrol. It would have to be quicker today than to have somebody else then have to review it and go through another process if the Police Officer is doing it directly.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Could be. I'll find out for sure. Legislator Losquadro.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

I just wanted to point out, I mean, that was what I was trying to get at. But the point I raised at the end there was, is there a hybrid that's possible that could actually even make what we have now better? You know, is there information that could still be input by a civilian in the department that would free up some of that task for the officer on the street? And that's something we'll try to get some of the details of that. Thank you. Did you have anything else?

MR. ZWIRN:

I was going to say, you know, my comments are not to disparage anybody who works as a civilian employee in the Police Department. We're looking to civilianize and I think some of the comments that Cheryl Felice made, I think, you know, support what the County Executive has tried to do. But in this particular case we're just saying that we think it's more efficient and less chance for errors the way it is being done at the present time.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

And, you know, I appreciate that. I guess the only piece that I think is missing right now is asking the Police Officers. You know, often we make decisions for other people, and I think maybe that's the person. We had the civilian workers, I think maybe we need to ask the Police Officers is this saving you time, and then we'll find out for sure I guess. So I appreciate that and I will pursue that avenue. Legislator Losquadro.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

With the indulgence of the Chair. Being that this is the Public Safety Committee, I just wanted to point out that at 1:00 today across the street, the September 11th Memorial for Suffolk County is being dedicated. I just wanted to officially put into our record the name of my neighbor, Kevin Michael Williams, who passed away and the anniversary of his death is tomorrow and he's on one of those plaques across the street. So anybody who can find the time to come over, it should be a very nice ceremony. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. I'll make a motion to adjourn. Second by Legislator Gregory. Thank you for coming.

[THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 11:17 AM].