

**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, October 8, 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 Wayne Horsley, Legislative District No. 14
George Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature
Barbara LoMoriello, Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
John Ortiz, Budget Review office
Linda Bay, Aide to Minority Leader
Paul Perillie, Aide to Majority Leader
Robert Calarco, Aide to Legislator Eddington
Ed Hennessey, County Executive's Office
Brendan Chamberlain, County Executive's Office
Dennis Brown, County Attorney's Office
Skip Heaney, Commissioner, Department of Economic Development
John Desmond, Director, Probation Department
Robert Moore, Chief, Suffolk County Police Department
Thaddeus Nieves, Captian, SCPD/Chief of Department
Mark Sitzmann, Sergeant, SCPD/Community Outreach Bureau
Nancy Ward, Police Officer, SCPD/Community Outreach Bureau
Wendy Verlotte, Police Officer, SCPD/Community Outreach Bureau
Dave Fuentes, Police Officer, SCPD, First Precinct
Pat Russel, Police Officer, SCPD, First Precinct
Kevin Ibanez, Sergeant, SCPD/First Precinct
Suzanne Janes, Detective, SCPD
Bill Burke, Detective Lieutenant, SCPD
Fred Hom, Detective, SCPD
Richard Dougherty, SCPD

Tarcy Pollak, SCPD
Michael Sharkey, Suffolk County Sheriffs Office
Noel DiGerolamo, Suffolk County PBA
Gail D'Ambrosio, Suffolk County PBA
Fred Sales, Suffolk County PBA
Timothy Morris, SCSOA/First VP
Hank Mulligan, SCSOA/Second VP
Matt Rossano, Police Officer, Suffolk County Policy Academy
Bruce Talmage, President, Suffolk County Ambulance Chiefs Association
Gail D'Ambrosio, Suffolk County Probation Officers Association
Russ McCormick, Suffolk Detectives Association
Dot Kerrigan, AME/Fourth VP
Anthony LaFerrera, FRES/Babylon Central Fire Alarm
Ruth Alvalle
Maribeth R. Siskind
Other Interested Parties

Minutes Taken By:

Lucia Braaten, Court Stenographer

[THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 9:42 A.M.]

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

If I could get everybody to rise, please, for the National -- for the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Legislator Gregory.

(*Salutation*)

Please remain standing for a moment of silence for all our troops overseas and those that defend us at home.

(*Moment of Silence*)

Thank you. Be seated. Okay. We're going to start with the public portion. And I'm just going to mention that because of some requests from Legislators that have pressing engagements, we're going to do the agenda preceding the reports. Okay. If I could have the first speaker, Bruce Talmage.

MR. TALMAGE:

Good morning. My name is Bruce Talmage. I'm currently the President of the Suffolk County Ambulance Chiefs Association. I'd just like to speak with you in regards to the legislation requesting additional seats on the FRES Commission.

As an organization we'd received a letter from the Charter Revision Committee about a year-and-a-half ago and at that point our organization had requested and sent a letter to the Committee requesting three additional seats on the FRES Commission. We currently have one. I inquired through my local Legislator, Ed Romaine, he followed up on it, and out of the Charter Revision Committee came legislation, proposed legislation to give us two additional seats on the FRES Commission.

We are the only organization, volunteer ambulance in Suffolk County. We do not have two or three other organizations similar to the fire service. Currently, we have one seat on the FRES Commission out of 18 seats. Our organization felt that there should be more representation of the EMS services on the FRES Commission and that was part of the reason why we put in the request for the additional seats.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

We don't have any dialogue during this period, it's your turn to talk.

MR. TALMAGE:

Thank you. Currently, the other County-wide organizations represented by the fire services, the Fire Chiefs, the vollies, the fire -- Suffolk County Volunteer Firemen's, the Chiefs and the Districts, there is -- they have three County-wide organizations, each of which is represented by two members of the -- on the FRES Commission. We feel that as the only County-wide volunteer ambulance organization, two seats is deserved, three would be better, again, giving us more of a representation. We would still be in the minority as far as, you know, Fire versus EMS, not that there is any Fire versus EMS. We do work together very well and are not looking to cause any further or any disparity between the two.

At this time, you know, we are endorsing the three seats, but are willing to table this to go back and talk with the other organizations in furthering the progress -- forward progress in getting these three seats. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Thank you very much. Gail D'Ambrosio.

MS. D'AMBROSIO:

Good morning. My name is Gail D'Ambrosio.

MS. LOMORIELLO:

Hold down the button.

MS. D'AMBROSIO:

Hold it while I'm talking?

MS. LOMORIELLO:

Yep.

MS. D'AMBROSIO:

Okay, thanks. Good morning again. My name is Gail D'Ambrosio and I'm the President of the Suffolk County Probation Officers Association and Senior Probation Officer for the Suffolk County Probation Department.

I'd like to address the committee today regarding two items in the 2010 Executive budget recommendations for Probation. The first recommendation is to transfer the five technology positions in the Probation Department to the Department of Information Technology, the I.T. Department. There are many reasons why this would not be in the best interest of the Probation Department as a whole. But my concern is the impact this will have on the safety of our Probation Officers if this transfer occurs.

The Probation Department's Automation Unit has been in existence for over 25 years. To date, 279 Probation Officers, Peace Officers, have their own department-issued laptop or computer. To maximize a Probation Officer's safety in the office, but especially in the field, Probation Officers need to have access to information about their probationers that is crucial to their safety. For example, gang affiliation, violent behavior, prior criminal activity, weapons possession, drug use, warrant status, and so on. There are times when there is an unforeseen and immediate need for updated realtime information. Other times our equipment breaks down. If there are any delays in correcting system malfunctions, both the Probation Officer and the community are at risk.

Most people do not know what Probation Officers do or the influence it has on public safety. The personnel in the Probation Department's Automation Unit are criminal justice specialists who have firsthand probation experience. It's not just about hardware and software, we use technology for offender control. We all use communications -- we use all communications, GPS, SCRAM, geogrid, the offender mapping, drug testing, etcetera. I.T. personnel are not criminal justice experts. I would think that this is why other law enforcement agencies have their own automation units. Our automation personnel are also under a chain of command and respond to the direction of someone who works for and understands Probation Officers' specific needs.

This transfer also doesn't make fiscal sense. The Probation Department receives reimbursement from the State DPCA, the Department of Probation and Correctional Alternatives, for the services that this Automation Unit provides. Further, the Automation Unit has received grants to test

emerging technology and evaluate how it applies to criminal justice. If transferred to the I.T. Department, it may jeopardize or eliminate this reimbursement. Consultant costs are also saved by having departmental experts on staff. Why change something that's worked well for all these years, especially when in the long run it might not save the County money?

The second budget item of concern is the recommendation to abolish three Senior Probation Officer positions. We're still not adequately staffed. Our caseloads are not going down and neither is crime. We continue to lose staff due to retirements and anticipate an even larger amount of retirements in 2010. We need as many Probation Officers as we can get. We are asking that these positions not be abolished. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Thank you. Tim Morris.

MR. MORRIS:

Good morning. I'm Tim Morris. I'm First Vice President of the Suffolk County Police Superior Officers. I'm here today to speak to you about supervision levels in the Police Department. We have been here before to speak about low staffing levels of Police Officers in the Department. We are currently also facing low staffing levels of supervisors in the Department that is unprecedented. The SOA ranks are currently down 44 positions from our budgeted position. This number will continue to grow with upcoming retirements after the first of the year.

The current Civil Service list for the rank of Sergeant is due to expire on November 12th. As of this date, not one person off that list, which was established in November 2007, has been promoted. There has never been a similar situation in the Police Department's history. Currently, there are some 29 actual open Sergeant positions that have gone unfilled. There are an additional 15 vacant Supervisor's positions above the rank of Sergeant. Although the ranks of Police Officers have dwindled in the Precincts and other commands, the structures that require a Supervisor have not diminished, so we are left with a situation where our Supervisors, especially first line Supervisors, are being spread dangerously thin. We are seeing more and more tours covered by the minimum level of supervision. This is not good for the Police Officers, the Supervisors, the Department or the public we serve. First line supervision is paramount to running a Police Department. Those sergeants in the streets are there where the job gets done. It is their job to see that the job gets done properly and safely. Sergeants direct the Police Officers in the street and coordinate their response so the Police Department can be the most effective it can be.

You should know that in the Precinct Patrol Command that we call the Ten Command there are currently 27 vacant Sergeant spots. The tremendous shortage is even more dramatic when you consider that the largest compliment of Sergeants that we would have in any one Precinct's Ten Command is 23. So we have more than a whole precinct of Patrol Sergeants missing and then some change. Also, with the recent change in the structure of the Precinct COPE Units, we have one squad of COPE officers working without an assigned Sergeant in each of six precincts, and two squads in one other precinct. We understand that you as a committee, nor the Legislature as a whole, have the power to make these promotions, but we ask that you continue to advocate and do whatever you can to correct this situation. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Thank you very much. Next speaker is Anthony LaFerrera.

MR. LAFERRERA:

Good morning. Good morning.

MS. LOMORIELLO:

Press down the button and hold it.

MR. KNIGHT:

Press it down.

MR. LAFARRERRA:

Thanks, Bob. Good morning. I'm here representing Babylon Central Fire Alarm, PSAP, in Suffolk County. As in the past several months, I've been speaking on the PSAPs and the funding on the wireless surcharge, 1638, the bill introduced by Mr. Horsley. Just to keep it short and sweet, to keep our PSAPs going and our 911 system alive over the future, I just ask for your support of 1638.

I'd also like to speak on 1777 as Co-Chairman of the FRES Commission. I just don't understand how we were never notified about this bill that was introduced, or even asked about. It asks for the increase on the Suffolk County Volunteer Ambulance Chiefs Association representation to the FRES Commission to three members with three alternates. In fairness to the other organizations of the FRES Commission, Suffolk County Fire Chiefs Council, the Volunteer Firefighters Association, and the Suffolk County Fire District Association, they're represented by two members and two alternates. The townships are also represented by one member and one alternate. And also, the Suffolk County Fire Marshals Association are represented with one member and one alternate. It would only be fair to the other organizations to have the Ambulance Chiefs Association be represented on the FRES Commission with two members and two alternates.

Also, on Paragraph 6 of 1777, it talks about the representation and the fairness to the Commission with representation of the Ambulance Chiefs Association. I Just want to make you aware of how fair and balanced the FRES Commission is. It's approximately 90 combined village, fire departments, districts and fire companies, which are represented by one person and an alternate that throughout the County are staffed by professional volunteer firefighters, EMTs, CCs and paramedics who also provide emergency medical ambulance service to their respective districts, as well as the ambulance corps throughout the County. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Excuse me. If you could just hang out for one second, Legislator Browning had a question.

LEG. BROWNING:

One quick question. There's a couple of fire departments in my district and they have combined ambulance and fire department. Do you know how many there are in Suffolk County?

MR. LAFERRERA:

There's approximately 109 fire companies through the villages, districts, throughout the County. Ninety provide ambulance service to their respective communities out of the 109, along with the 27 ambulance corps throughout the County.

LEG. BROWNING:

So you have ninety that the fire department and ambulance company are merged where they work together?

MR. LAFERRERA:

Correct.

LEG. BROWNING:

Okay. So when you have a representative from, say -- like Yaphank Fire Department has their own ambulances and their Fire Department together, so they have a representative from Yaphank that represents both the fire and the ambulance.

MR. LAFERRERA:

From their township there's one representative. Each township, out of each of the ten townships, I'm sorry, they have one rep. The organizations, the Chiefs, the volunteer firefighters, the districts have two. The Ambulance Association does have one, so we're just asking, since we were never approached, that we just bring them up to two, like everybody else, to be fair and balanced. But the 90 fire companies throughout the County provide ambulance service as well as the ambulance corps.

LEG. BROWNING:

Okay. Thanks.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Thank you very much. Maribeth Siskind.

MS. SISKIND:

Good morning, members of the Public Safety Commission. I'm Maribeth Siskind. I am a citizen, concerned citizen from Smithtown. I've been involved with traffic safety issues for about 15 years. I'm very concerned that I live on a cut-through that connects Jericho and Route 25A. I have a lot of problems with blowing stop signs along this cut-through, and also a lot of trash being thrown. Now there's an additional problem which brings me to you. Since the end of February, I'm now finding syringes and little white plastic packets with white powder, so I have gotten the police involved with this. But I really want to make a pitch for COPE. We really need them. We really need a police presence. So I'm asking for COPE to be strengthened, brought back, whatever its exact status is.

Also, my concern is that the worst problem we have with cut-through traffic is during the rush hour, especially the evening rush hour, 4:30 to 7. But, unfortunately, the police is 8 to 4 and then 4 to 12, so that they're -- just when we need them, one tour is finishing up and the other tour is beginning. So I would like -- I know it's a contractual problem, but I would like that looked at, that, you know, we need them when we need them, not exactly when they're on duty, when their tour is on duty. So if you come at 11, you'll see nothing at 11 a.m.

Okay. The other thing I'm coming about is can the County help pressure other levels of government? I have been -- part of the problem with our traffic is the lack of completion of a State DOT project. I tried in the beginning of this year to write to Representative Bishop to see -- oh, is that the end of my three minutes?

LEG. GREGORY:

No.

MS. SISKIND:

Oh, okay. I tried to write to get a stimulus -- stimulus package to help get a long overdue project done, but I have not been able to get -- even get a response from him. So I have two letters that I would like to hand so that you could see more details. And that's it. I would like more help, more presence from the police. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Thank you very much. Ruth Alvalle.

MS. ALVALLE:

Hello, everyone.

MS. LOMORIELLO:

Press down the button and keep it down. You've got to hold it down.

MS. ALVALLE:

Hello. My name is Ruth Alvalle and I'm here to support the registry for domestic violence. I am a survivor after 12 years.

I just want everyone to just think for a moment of your mothers and your daughters and your sisters who, after a divorce or a breakup, go on the internet on eHarmony to find the perfect male and they find my ex on eHarmony, the one man who used to lock me in a closet with my daughter, the one man who used to punch me, slap me, spit on me. This is the man who's still on eHarmony, who's still dating, who's dating your mother, who's dating your sisters, who's dating your daughters. This is a man who doesn't fit the profile of a domestic violence perpetrator, nice white man who is posted on the internet as a physician, but he's a physician assistant. His profile looks pretty attractive, but this is the man who's still out there hurting other women. His ex-girlfriend, who lives in Lido Beach, just sent me an E-mail after he broke up with her and now she understands what I went through. She used to sit in court while I was trying to get my order of protection; she was trying to protect him. She found out too late about this man.

I urge everyone to please support this bill. I am here and I'm still running. My address is confidential. I have a 12-year-old daughter who I still try to protect. And I urge everyone to please listen. This is very difficult for me to stand here, especially because I'm still on the run. He's still here in Long Island. So, please, think of your mothers, your daughters, and your sisters, or your ex-wives who live with your children and are looking for a date on the internet. The registry will help us, will help these women identify those men that they're going out and putting their life at risk, because on the internet they look very attractive. And what they post on the internet is not true.

I thank you for your time and I hope you consider the bill. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Thank you very much. Is there anybody who wanted to address the Committee? Okay. Seeing none, I'm going to go right to the agenda.

TABLED RESOLUTIONS

Tabled Resolutions: ***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).***

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Yes.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

I have a feeling we're probably going to table this again; correct?

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Correct.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

I just would like to ask, though, as we come in every day, we see the status of that building moving

along. What is the -- one, the anticipated move-in date; and two, do we have the furniture and equipment for that building? And at what point will we need to make an appropriation? I know that this isn't what we're going to be doing, but I'd just like a little update on that. Thanks, Chief.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Chief Moore.

CHIEF MOORE:

Good morning. Robert Anthony Moore, Chief of Department, Suffolk County Police Department. We expect that the Precinct will be open for use sometime in February or March of next year. So just -- and again, that's the latest information we have on it. You could imagine that that would be the time we'd probably need the furniture and other equipment, as outlined in the bill.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. Thank you.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Motion to table.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Now I'll make a motion to table.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Second.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

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

I.R. 1314 - A Local Law to authorize a County Registry for Domestic Violence Offenders (Gregory).

LEG. GREGORY:

Motion to approve.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Motion to approve by Legislator Gregory.

LEG. BARRAGA:

Second.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Second by Legislator Barraga. All those in favor? I've got -- before we finish the vote, Mr. Brown?

MR. BROWN:

Thank you, Legislator Eddington. Before you take the vote, I just wanted to comment on what some of the issues are that we've looked at with respect to the Department of Law. I know that Legislator Gregory did make some amendments in connection with some of our comments and review, but also one of the things that we looked at was whether or not there was any type of due process that's afforded to those who may be convicted that fall within the possibility of being added

to the domestic registry. And, you know, with respect to, for example, the sex offender registry, there is a due process accorded to those people who will be added to the registry before they are added, and that there's a hearing process, they get to be heard. And what we feel is that there's lacking in this particular legislation also a due process procedure, whereby before people are added to the registry, where they do get the opportunity to be heard, their cases can be evaluated, and whether or not their convictions properly fall within the definition of a domestic violence offense, and then would probably properly be added to the registry. So that's our position.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. Legislator Gregory, yes, go ahead.

LEG. GREGORY:

The bill, since its original conception, has been changed. The -- it's going to be at the discretion of the Probation Department because they're going to be familiar with the particular cases, and the judges will determine the sentencing -- or not the sentencing, but length of time a person is subject to register on the registry. So I think there will be, you know, a process there where someone could, you know, object to them being on the registry. I don't know if you want to add more to that, Counsel.

MR. NOLAN:

Well, I would just state that, yeah, the law has undergone a lot of revisions. And basically the law now is, as Legislator Gregory mentioned, that Probation is authorized to ask the sentencing judge to make this a term of probation going on the registry. Asked -- actually spoke to the Probation Department about this, whether they believe this was a workable alternative, they indicated yes.

MR. BROWN:

Okay.

MR. NOLAN:

So I think the due process problems, you know, have been resolved, I think.

MR. BROWN:

All right. Thank you. I just wanted to bring it to your attention. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

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

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Madam Clerk, I believe I'm on as cosponsor, but if I'm not, please make sure I'm added.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

All right. ***I.R. 1485 - A Charter Law to prevent double taxation for the 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 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. 1597 - To maintain the integrity and 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?

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Opposed.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

One opposed. Abstentions? **(Vote: Tabled 4-1-0-0 Opposed: Leg. Losquadro).**

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

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

I.R. 1777 -- oh, ***1708 - A Local Law imposing wireless -- a surcharge on wireless communication services in Suffolk County.*** I'll make a motion to table.

LEG. BARRAGA:

Second.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

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

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

I.R. 1777 - a Charter Law increasing the Ambulance Chiefs' representation on the County Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services Commission (Presiding Officer). And I've been informed by the Presiding Officer that he is making some changes and has requested that we table it. So I'll make that motion to table, second by Legislator Barraga. All those in favor? Opposed?

Abstentions? **(Vote: Tabled 5-0-0-0)**

INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Introductory Resolution 1814 - Accepting and appropriating a grant in the amount of \$85,600 from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, to provide enhanced defense presentations for cases -- representation for cases referred to the Legal Aid Society of Suffolk County by the Sex Offender Court with 100% support (County Executive).

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Motion to approve and place on the Consent Calendar.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

So noted. I'll second that. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **(Vote: Approved 5-0-0-0)**

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

I.R. 1831 - Accepting and appropriating a grant in the amount of \$195,000 in Federal pass-through funds from the New York State Office of Homeland Security for the Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant Program with 75% support (County Executive).

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Motion.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Motion to approve by Legislator Losquadro, I'll second that. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **(Vote: Approved 5-0-0-0)**

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

I.R. 1833 - Accepting and appropriating \$35,640.00 in sub-granted Federal pass-through funding made available pursuant to FY09 Recovery Act Internet Crimes (Against Children Task Force Program from the New York State Police Department) for the Suffolk County Police Department's participation in ICAC (Internet Crimes Against Children) Investigations and Community Outreach Programs with 100% support (County Executive).

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Motion to approve and place on the Consent Calendar.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

So noted, and I'll second that. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **(Vote: Approved 5-0-0-0)**

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

I.R. 1842 - Appointing member to the Hate Crimes Task Force (Isabel Sepulveda de Scanlon) (Gregory)

LEG. BARRAGA:

Scanlon.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Scanlon. 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) (Vote Amended to Discharged Without Recommendation 5-0-0-0)***

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

I.R. 1860 - Directing the Director of Real Property Acquisition and Management to --

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

I realize now that that's an appointment, it's not a reappointment. Because she wasn't here, I just thought it was a reappointment. Don't we ordinarily request that the candidate be here at least before the Committee?

LEG. GREGORY:

She's not here. I apologize. I'll make a motion to reconsider.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. Motion to reconsider, I'll second that.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Or could she possibly come?

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Let's just finish this.

LEG. GREGORY:

Yeah, she'll be here --

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Let's just finish this.

LEG. GREGORY:

She'll be here Tuesday.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Motion to reconsider and second.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

I was going to say, if we can reconsider and maybe discharge it without recommendation.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

All those --

LEG. GREGORY:
I'm sorry.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:
What would you guys like to do? Just tell me and I'll --

LEG. LOSQUADRO:
Reconsider.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:
Oh, we're going to -- okay. We have a motion to reconsider and a second.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:
I'll second that.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:
All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **(Vote: Approved 5-0-0-0)** Okay. We have 1842 on the table.

LEG. GREGORY:
I make a motion to discharge without recommendation.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:
I'll second that, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:
Okay. We have a motion and a second. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? I.R. --

LEG. LOSQUADRO:
Thank you, Legislator Gregory. If she could just be here on Tuesday for the -- to meet the general body. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:
Are we ready?

MR. NOLAN:
We're ready.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:
Okay. Thank you. ***I.R. 1860 - Directing the Director of Real Property Acquisition and Management to locate property for a police substation in Huntington Station (Cooper).***

LEG. BROWNING:
Motion to table.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:
Motion to table by Legislator Browning, I'll -- seconded by Legislator Gregory. All those in favor? Opposed? Abstentions?

LEG. BARRAGA:

Opposed.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

One opposed.

(Vote: Tabled 4-1-0-0 Opposed: Leg. Barraga).

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Home Rule Message 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). I'm going to make a motion to table subject to call.

LEG. BARRAGA:

Second.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

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

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Opposed.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

One opposed. Abstentions? Okay.

(Vote: Tabled Subject to Call 4-1-0-0 Opposed: Leg. Losquadro)

All right. That's our agenda, unless anybody has anything else. Okay. What we're going to have now is Chief Moore and his group come forward to discuss Natalie's Law, and also the Police Smart Program.

CHIEF MOORE:

Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Public Safety Committee. I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and all of you for inviting us to make these presentations. I've always been so very proud of the men and the women of the Suffolk County Police Department. And I know that you've had the opportunity to hear many of our officers from different areas within the Police Department and they are an impressive group, and some of the more impressive of our people are hear today. So why don't we begin.

I'd like to introduce to my left Detective Lieutenant Burke. He's the Commanding Officer of the Narcotics Section, and he has with him Detective Janes, she's assigned to the Narcotics Section also, and they'll be discussing, at your request, Mr. Chair, a number of items, Natalie's Law. Heroin, I believe, he'll be speaking about, and also prescription drugs. So with that, why don't I turn it over to Detective Lieutenant Burke, sir.

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

Thank you. First of all, apparently I have to work two buttons at the same time. This is going to be a little bit of a learning curve for me.

I was asked to speak today basically on the drug situation as it appears today in October of 2009. There are several things that I'm going to address. Number one on the list is heroin, which you could see from what I have up on the Power Point, not a secret anymore. I mean, when I first

started addressing heroin, we're going back probably four or five years ago when I was speaking to the Chiefs in the Police Department and we were discussing what was going on when we were starting to see the uptick. A lot of the public didn't believe it was going on; it was hard to get the message across. That's been changed quite a bit lately.

Another issue that we're having quite a bit of issues with in general is the pharmaceuticals, the pills that these young people are getting a hold of and abusing, specifically the opiates. That's where we're seeing probably most of our -- most of the damage being done. I have a list here of several of the more common ones, Oxycodone, OxyContin, which is just the time release form of Oxycodone. And OxyContin is probably the one you hear the most about. Hydrocodone, Vicodin, these are all just examples of the types of drugs that we're seeing that people are abusing. And very often these are what people are using before they move up to heroin, which is probably one of the biggest problems we're experiencing right now.

Another thing I'm asked to talk about is Natalie's Law and what we're seeing in relation to that. I believe it's a good thing. It is raising public awareness, and I'll touch on it later. There are some concerns we have, just about the way people view it and how they interpret the data that is available on the website.

And the last topic, this is something that's very big with us, overdose deaths. I have Detective Janes with me today. From the very beginning, when we started to take a real hard look at overdose deaths, she's been assigned to that task and she's been the lead Detective on that since. She does a great job addressing a problem that gets us a lot of -- we're able to do a lot because of the way that we attack this problem today, and I'll explain that. I'll also get into a little bit of -- quite a bit of what we tell parents with respect to what's going on in the drug world and how we're addressing that. I think it's important probably for you to know what we're saying, and, you know, I think the people sitting here today speak to the public a lot more than I do, and I'd just like you to know what we're telling them when we do.

This I found to be a staggering statistic when we first started looking at this several years ago. Over 200 overdose deaths each year in Suffolk County. I was shocked when I first saw it. I compared it to a couple of different things that we look at with deaths from various things we -- unfortunately, in the police world we deal with that quite a bit. Traffic fatalities are probably one of the number one things that we see. It gets a lot of attention, because every time there's a traffic fatality, you can rest assured, you're going to read about it in Newsday. Overdose deaths, on the other hand, there's a lot more attention being paid to it today probably than a few years ago through the efforts of a lot of people that are getting it out to the public. However, still today, if there was an overdose death last night in a home in Hauppauge, you're probably not going to become aware of that. If a fatal motor vehicle accident took place, you'll probably see that right away.

This is just a look at the last three years and the kind of trend we're seeing, and, as you can see, the overdose death numbers has been rising, it's over 200 at this point. In 2006, we had 196. 2008, it's up to -- it's up to 223. And when you look at the column next to it, the opiates, which include heroin and those prescription drugs that we're talking about, that's where we're seeing the increase. Those numbers are going up and that's why the overall number is going up. You compare that again to homicides in an average year, we have about 36, and people see that all the time. And, again, today it's becoming a little bit more known than it was a couple of years ago. A lot of these slides I prepared a couple of years ago and I've been kind of updating them, and you'll see that as we go along. The situation with public awareness is getting better.

This is a great example of what I just said. We're seeing younger heroin overdose death victims. Now, I have two sets of brackets here kind of to accentuate a point. When I first put this

presentation together, it was four or five years ago, I only had the top bracket because we were seeing what I consider kids in their twenties. I know they're young adults, but they're way too young to be dying of heroin overdoses, in my eyes. Unfortunately, when it came to prepare this today, looking at what's gone on over the last couple of years, I had to add the bottom bracket, because there are teenagers dying of heroin overdose deaths, and that's something we're attacking very aggressively, but people need to know that that's going on.

Our Overdose Death Team, which Detective Janes is a member of, has a very simple goal. We try to identify and target the source of supply responsible for the overdose deaths in Suffolk County. This is done a number of ways. It's been simplified for the purpose of this presentation because of the fact that it is, in fact, a public presentation. When I do this -- did this presentation years ago for the Chiefs, this portion was much longer because I get into the detail of everything we do. Because of tactically what we do and the safety of undercover officers and a whole bunch of other concerns, I can't really -- I'm not going to publicly let the bad guys know how we do -- exactly how we do what we do. However, we've set up a system now where we get notified on every overdose death that Homicide handles.

The Homicide Squad is still responsible for the overdose death for the death investigation. If this person died at the hand of another, that's the job of the Homicide Squad to handle.

The Narcotics Squad investigates the drug aspects of the case. We're very interested in the source of supply where these drugs are coming from and try to do something to stop that. We're also interested in others that may be involved in the drug aspect of the case, whether it be other people that are using, I firmly believe that we need to attack this problem from all angles. Just taking off a single source of supply is not going to cut it, because the users will reach out and find other sources of supply, I know that. And just taking off the user -- neither one works without the other. We try to attack the problem globally.

As you could see from what I have up on the board here, the Suffolk County Police Department is responding aggressively to what's going on. The heroin arrest charges I took a look at, and going back to the early 2000's, there were somewhat less than 300 heroin arrest charges being submitted to the courts. In 2004, which is as I said earlier, that's kind of where we saw the uptick. It went from less than two -- less than 300 -- I'm sorry -- to over 400, and as you can see, we've had a steady increase ever since. With the increase in what's going on in heroin, you're also seeing a significant increase in the enforcement, and we intend to keep that up.

This goes up to 2008. You'll see almost all of what I have goes up to 2008, even though I prepared it very recently. 2009 is difficult to look at in a lot of this data, specifically because 2009 is not over yet, so to compare it year to year doesn't make sense. And on some of the things, particularly when you deal with toxicologies, it takes a while to get that detail back.

This is something we -- this is a message we're trying to get across to the public. It can happen to any family, any time, anywhere, specifically the heroin issue. It's all over the place geographically. It's not limited to specific area or specific areas. The -- it's very difficult than crack-cocaine. When we dealt with crack, you had your hot spots, areas that were very much more inundated with the problem than others. This we're seeing pretty much all over the place.

Through our investigations we found the following: Drug overdose deaths are not confined to any particular socioeconomic group. Many of the victims have had prior incidents involving overdoses or near overdoses. So there are warning signs. People are become aware that something's going on, and we need to possibly educate them better how to handle it. Unfortunately, I'm not going to tell you there's a simple solution. You have a kid that's got a heroin problem, it's a real problem. There is no simple solution. We've had them in and out of rehabs, and, you know, people that are trying real hard. It's not an easy thing to deal with.

And another point. Most of our overdoses involve a combination of drugs. Even the heroin stuff that I talk a lot about, it's a small percentage of the cases where they're finding only heroin in an overdose death victim. And more often than not, you're coming across the other common drugs that we're well aware of. The prescription drugs are very big today. Cocaine, marijuana, alcohol mixed with this, these combinations are literally deadly.

I look at marijuana, I look at it as a gateway drug. I know I might get some argument from a lot of people on that. There are studies that say it is, there are studies that say it isn't. I put this out for consideration by people in the public, that, you know, maybe it's not physiologically a gateway drug. You know, smoking marijuana might not make it that you need to move on to crack, or heroin, or anything else, but there are things that I'd like people to consider. There have been studies done, many of them, where the -- they look at people who have tried marijuana and the risk of using cocaine is 104 times greater for those who have tried marijuana, so it's certainly a good indicator of a problem.

You know, when you talk to parents, I try to caution them. Finding a small bag of marijuana in your child's room doesn't mean that six months from now he's going to be a heroin addict; maybe not. Hopefully, the fact that you found it and take some steps, you might cut that off, but this certainly is something you should be concerned about. Adults who use marijuana before they're the age of 15, they're six times more likely to become dependent on illicit drugs, so it's, again, something I think people should pay a lot of attention to.

And this last bullet point is the big one to me. What marijuana really does, as opposed to the physiological effect of moving you to the next drug, what it really does is it teaches your child how to find a dealer, how to do a drug deal, how to stash, and it introduces them to the drug subculture. They become quite comfortable with hiding something from their teachers, their parents, the people that care about them, the -- and also, the marijuana dealers, in our experience, are not one-drug dealers, very often that same person can get them cocaine when they -- and may actually suggest it to them. They're running it as a business, they're trying to make money. So the fact that a child is involved with marijuana I think is very important, even though some studies claim it not to be a -- you know, a true gateway drug.

Some of these slides, I apologize, are made for the public. We have the Crime-Stoppers number on it just to remind them of where they can call to get help from us.

Heroin. Heroin today is much stronger than it was years ago, and people are becoming much more aware of this. But I remember back several years ago when I first came on the Police Department. Heroin junkies were, in my mind, you know, was a 40-year-old junkie that had been doing it for quite sometime. You were rarely coming across the young kids, and the product they were using was much less pure than it is today. Back then, the purity levels were probably coming out of the lab at about 12 to 15%, whereas today we've seen them up to 90%. It's -- you know, it's rare that you're going to see a product on the street at 90%, but, unfortunately, there's not a whole lot of control about the way these things get done, particularly in the heroin world. It can be -- it can vary greatly, which is a lot of times what's causing people to die, because they're using something that they don't realize is as strong as it is.

Marijuana, also, today we're seeing it being six times more potent than it was years ago through the use of hydroponics and the way that they're growing this product and making it stronger and stronger. Most heroin users started out smoking marijuana or taking prescription drugs. This is the progression that we're seeing. It's due to the easy availability of the -- and the perception that these drugs are somewhat socially acceptable; "It's only pot", or "It can't be that bad if a doctor prescribes it," the way people feel about this sometimes. Well, it's only pot, but it -- as I explained

earlier, it does lead to -- and I'm not suggesting that marijuana is okay either, don't get the wrong impression, but some people feel that it's not nearly as dangerous, because they're not seeing, you know, people die of marijuana overdoses.

The other thing about it, it can't be that bad if a doctor prescribes it, there's something to be said about that, because when you compare a product like heroin that there are no controls over and you don't know what's in that package. Yes, granted, a prescription pill, an Oxy 80, which is an OxyContin pill, it has 80 milligrams of OxyContin in it -- Oxycodone in it. That is a little bit more controlled if it was prescribed for you by a doctor who knows your condition. It is not okay to be doing this on your own.

We've also found that many people start out snorting heroin and prescription drugs, and this is something that -- big reason I know why kids are getting involved with heroin. They can snort the product. The fact that it's 90% pure, compared to the old product that you had to inject in order to get high because of its lower purity level, now they can snort it, similar to cocaine, and it's something that's a little more socially acceptable. You know, a lot of kids would never think of sticking the needle in their arm, they're repulsed by it, but they have no problem snorting the product. The prescription drugs as well, they'll crush them up, they'll take, you know, the OxyContin pill, which is a time released version of Oxycodone. By crushing it up into a powder and snorting it, you're getting the full effect immediately. You kind of eliminate the time release aspect of the drug.

Some, once they become addicted, begin to inject the drugs as a way to get the same high cheaper. Yeah, that same kid who would never stick the needle in their arm, after they start using heroin and experience that high, and their inhibitions kind of break down, they'll stick that needle in their arm. And it's -- by no means is heroin safe no matter how you use it, but when you start injecting it directly into your veins, it's more likely to cause death.

This is something I touched on before, that most people think the typical heroin or drug addict is some homeless looking person from a high crime neighborhood who comes from a broken home and lives in a seedy apartment. This couldn't be farther from the truth with what we're seeing today. I could tell you experience after experience that I've had walking into rooms and seeing the heroin junkie that you wouldn't believe what I'm looking at. Not too long ago we did a case with Nassau County. We've been working a lot with them because the heroin is -- there's a pipeline from New York City to Suffolk County, and we do cases jointly with them on a regular basis. I walked into a room where, when we were doing a take-down one night, I was there early, the guys were out making a lot of the arrests, I walked into the room, there was one young girl I thought sitting at a desk. I thought she was a secretary; very young, attractive, well kept. What I didn't see when I first walked in the room was she was chained to the desk. She was one of the people that got arrested that night. And there's a lot of that out there. It's not -- you can't -- I know I was told last week that one of the Judges in court made a comment about, you know, "I know what a heroin junkie looks like." Well, I challenge that greatly with what I see going on today.

This again, maybe I shouldn't be saying this here, I use this when I speak publicly, but look around you, it could be anyone. And again, I don't mean that here.

(*Laughter*)

LEG. BARRAGA:

You never know.

LEG. HORSLEY:

It's rough up here.

LEG. BARRAGA:

A lot of pressure.

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

I have a few examples of some recent overdose scenarios that I think it's good for people to hear. We've had cases where a person starts getting a high smoking a little marijuana or swallowing or snorting prescription pain pill where were found in a family medicine cabinet -- that's something that parents can do something about -- believing that it is relatively harmless and not addictive. They're wrong about that. They find that they now crave the high and it's getting expensive, so they find a cheaper alternative, heroin, and heroin is, in fact, a cheaper alternative.

Just quickly, the Oxy 80 pill can sell on the street for around \$40 a pill when they're buying these, whereas a bag of heroin can be purchased -- even in Suffolk County, we've bought it as low as \$5 a bag. It's averaging 7, \$10 a bag up to about 20. But it varies, depending on who you're dealing with. This is what I just said. We're seeing it for 7 to \$10 a bag, and they snort a few bags a day to replace or supplement the pills. They crave more heroin, so they decide to inject it, and the dose is too strong and they overdose, possibly fatally.

Another scenario, a person starts out casually using marijuana, alcohol, maybe some prescription drugs once in a while. They handle it well and it's not a problem; their words, not mine. One night they have a few drinks and smoke some marijuana, they're offered some pills, which they take. They're feeling pretty good and they decide to try some heroin or cocaine. We've seen this far too often. None of the amounts of these drugs by themselves would cause an overdose. And I've had many discussion with our people in the Medical Examiner's Office. Very often they're finding that the drug -- there's multiple drugs and none of them by themselves would have done this. The combination of all these drugs is enough to cause an overdose and even death and we see this far too often.

This is something, once again, that should shock all of us. In the last couple of years, off the top of my head, I know of two cases where we had 14-year-old overdose deaths. That is not acceptable. And I just want to show a little bit about these two. I'm not going to get into the detail of the cases, we don't do that. We don't discuss publicly overdose death cases because the families a lot of times would be offended by that and we're not going to do that. However, I do want to point out some of the particulars about the case because it's educational.

In the first case, we had a father who was a respected professional, who was devastated by the death of his son who was in his care at the time this occurred. The Overdose Death Team was assigned the case and their followup investigation resulted in the arrest of three subjects. These three subjects were not the specific source of supply on this case, but we will attack anything in the drug world once we set forth to investigate these cases. We wound up arresting three people, charging them with Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance with the intent to sell it, as well as several other charges.

And the second scenario we had, very different from the first scenario, the parents were the problem. The 14-year-old was in the care of his grandparents most of the time since his birth. The parents were drug addicts, and it was a mother and stepfather that were involved in this case. The child, unfortunately, spent the weekend with his mother. He's not alive anymore. The Overdose Death Team, again, was assigned the case. Child Protective Service got involved. I'm sure some of you are very familiar with these cases, you probably know them very well. The mother and stepfather we immediately identified as the problem; it was a no-brainer, everybody knew it. So we set the Overdose Death Team out to take a good look at these people and see what, if anything, we could do. There were warrants issued for neglect for both of these people by the Family Court

based on the followup investigation, I believe, by Child Protective Service, and one of my Detectives used those warrants to go to that home to arrest these people. When he walked up to the front door, it's a glass door and you could see right into the kitchen where these two people are sitting at a table diluting crack-cocaine in lime juice, putting it into a syringe and injecting it into their arm. This kid never had a chance dealing with parents like this and, unfortunately, sometimes that's the problem. However, very often we're seeing very good parents that run across these problems. Those are the ones I think we have a chance of doing something with, a better chance I should say.

These kids, teenagers, 14 years old, they're very vulnerable, they're very open to suggestion. The brain is still developing, they're less than careful about decisions. I don't think I have to tell anybody here that. Anybody who has ever met a teenager, been a teenager, I think is well aware that some of the decisions that are made at those ages are -- they're less than thought through. They have a feeling of immortality, nothing's going to hurt them. Peer pressure is huge at that age. I have three children myself and I have told them many, many times, the person that's going to try to introduce you to drugs, he's not going to be that monster-looking individual on the street corner who's beating people up, and, you know, a real clear bad guy, it's going to be one of your friends, it's going to be somebody you know and trust who has made poor decisions in their own life. You have to be very careful, because those are the people that can get through to the children a lot more than -- you know, the obvious drug dealer is going to have a harder time getting through to a decent kid.

And today's teen's life, filled with stress. I mean, I had three boys growing up recently and the pressure that's put on them by our education system and various other things, it's tremendous compared to what I had as a kid. I thought I had it tough, it was easy. We tell parents to get a good picture of their child's life. I use what we refer to as the three "W's", knowing where they are at all times. Is this always doable? No. But a lot of times we suggest to them that they use the same technology that the kids are using. My wife is better at this than I am with the texting, and she could tell you at any given time where all of my kids are and what they're doing, including the one who's now 22 and lives in Manhattan. What they're doing, very important, a dialog to know what your children are doing; and the last one, who they are with, and looking at these people and making sure it's the kind of people you want your children hanging around with.

I have quite a few different things that we look at, that parents can look at to identify a problem. That's the first step towards moving forward and doing something about it. Declining school performance is big, withdrawal from hobbies, teams, family, changes in energy level, which can be either way, depending on the drug that we're talking about. Cocaine, you're going to see a spike, because it's a stimulant, as opposed to heroin, which might put them in almost a lethargic state. Physical appearance changes, which again, depending on the drug, can be different, but just anything that's changing should be a red flag. Increased secrecy. As I was speaking earlier about when they start dealing with marijuana and they're hiding it, there's going to be an increased level of secrecy around the home. Another big thing there with the secrecy is on the internet when they're, you know, chatting back and forth with their friends and whatnot. It's a good thing to put into place, rules where everyone knows. You know, the computer should be in a common room. I know it's not easy to do. A lot of people today, especially with the smaller devices and the laptops. They have the ability to be up in their room communicating back and forth.

Another thing we look at is a change of friends. You know, sometimes the decent kids that won't go near drugs, if your child does get involved, he's going to have to move on to other people who will tolerate it, because there are a decent amount of kids out there. You know, everybody's not getting involved in this, there are quite a few decent people out there. The use of incense, air fresheners, perfume. You know, if my sixteen-year-old puts an air freshener in his room, it means something to me. He doesn't care what his room smells like. Wearing drug-related clothing, you know, that T-shirt from the mall with the picture of the marijuana plant. Why are they doing that? Evidence

of drug paraphernalia. Some of this is extremely obvious. You know, you're cleaning your child's room, you find a hypodermic needle under their bed, nobody has any question that that's a problem. But, if you're finding little small plastic bags or even a lot of people use -- they cut the corners off of plastic bags and then tie-wrap those bags, and you'll find like a white residue inside of a little piece of plastic, it might be quite innocuous if you don't know what you're looking at. The use of eye drops to get rid of the red eyes. Missing prescription drugs around the house, this is something that people really need to keep an eye on. Unusual requests for money or thefts around the house, items that are missing. We very often, when we're running, when we get cases, one of the things we do is we run it in all of our computer databases, and quite often, when we have a kid that's involved with heroin, one of the things that's popping up is that they're pawning items, because that's all in a database. We'll find that they're pawning, you know, jewelry and various items from around the home. And a lot of times when we wind up talking to parents, we find out that they had no idea some of these items were even missing, or that the child had pawned possibly an item of jewelry that they had given them. Also, the fact that they may be gone for hours at a time traveling to New York City. A lot of people out here are doing that, they're going back and forth to get the product.

There's way of -- check the mileage on whatever vehicle they're using. Some of these kids actually have cars. GPS cell phones are great for keeping track of where people are, something that people need to be aware of it. We ask them not to ignore these warning signs. Some of them by themselves don't mean much, but you have to at least pay attention. It is not a teenage phase and it will not go away. If they're, in fact, involved in the drug world, it's going to be a problem. These drugs are highly addictive and extremely dangerous. If you suspect that your family member is involved in this activity, you're probably right. Very often that gut feeling is the most important first step.

Families tend to want to keep these problems to their selves, and, unfortunately, this can be fatal. We highly encourage people to seek help immediately, because not everybody is capable of dealing with this on their own, in fact, almost nobody is. Schools offer counseling services, your family doctor, therapist, there are a lot of different avenues you can explore to try to address these problems. And we very much encourage people to safeguard, destroy or turn in unused or no-longer-needed prescription drugs, and as well as, to safeguard and keep out of the hands of individuals, the ones you're currently using. Any prescription should be treated a lot -- I wish we'd get rid of medicine cabinets because people -- that's where people just lay this stuff, and it's in a -- you know, very often it's in the same bathroom that gets used by children and possibly guests at your home. That stuff should be in a safe, or certainly somewhere where it's much better controlled. People should be counting their medications, making sure that it's -- that what is supposed to be there is there, both when you get them and as you're using them.

Next thing I'm here to address is the Natalie's Law, the Suffolk County drug mapping index. Overall, I think it's a very good program. It's great, the idea of the public awareness. I know I spoke to Legislator Horsley when he was preparing this legislation, and I applaud the efforts. It's done a lot to get the word out that we have this issue going on, and anything to me that winds up in the local paper or on the news, or something that's bringing to people's attention the fact that there is an issue going on with heroin is a good thing.

I do have a number of concerns. This is more, not so much for the people that are here today, but for the parents, that they become aware that there are things about this program that I would like them to know. Number one, the drug dealers and the users will access this information for their own benefit. We have that problem with almost every computer program that we use, specifically the -- like the WebCrim that keeps track of the -- what's going on in the courts. Drug dealers look at that all the time. We have people that, you know, every day, when they're going out to do their drug dealing, they might have 10 or 15 people that they're going to deal with that day, they'll go on WebCrim and research to make sure this person didn't get arrested recently and isn't possibly

giving them up. This happens to us on a regular basis. All of these databases, have a -- I have a great deal of concern with for that reason.

The bullet here, I have a Newsday map of Brentwood. It reminds me of years ago, before it was really internet-based. Just when you give information to the public, sometimes it gets used for the wrong reason. Back when I first came on in the early '80's, I was a cop in Brentwood working in the Regis Park area. We had a young girl from Dix Hills come over to buy marijuana. She was shot in the head with a rifle by somebody who was in the wooded area right near where she was making this purchase. I can't tell you how many times after that in the days, weeks and months later that we had people coming to buy marijuana and when I arrested them, or was speaking to them, I would find in their pocket or in the vehicle that they were driving a copy of that map from the Newsday article, which showed them how to get to where the drugs are. So the bad guys use it. Again, I applaud it for getting the word out, because it's a very good thing for that, but it's kind of a double-edge sword, and also the data gets misinterpreted. I've seen -- I know of many cases where people -- and this is just the way that the people are reading it and the way it's being put in, and I'm not sure there's a perfect way to correct it, in fact, I know there's not, because every scenario is different. I'll just give you a couple of quick examples.

You have a kid in Setauket who has a serious heroin problem and he gets together with a couple of his friends and they go back and forth to New York City to buy their heroin, which is probably one of the most common scenarios we come across. So they get in their car, they drive to some area in New York City, they buy their couple of bundles of heroin, they're on their way home, they get off the Expressway at Exit 60, go northbound on Hawkins Avenue, they blow the light entering Lake Grove Village. An alert Fourth Precinct cop sees this occur and does a car-stop. He gets behind them going up Hawkins Avenue. When he puts the lights on, they turn on to the side street, Win Place, and they get stopped. The officer does a diligent job, comes up with -- as he's approaching the car, the passenger tosses a package out the window, lands on the floor. The officer winds up arresting the occupants of the vehicle for the possession of the heroin. Great job. Accurately reported by this program, we have a heroin arrest on Win Place in Lake Grove. However, based on this scenario, do we have a heroin issue on Win Place in Lake Grove? No, we don't. And when somebody on Win Place tomorrow researches this, they're going to say, "Oh, my God, there's heroin on my block." And the guy in Setauket who lives next door to this kid who's bringing the heroin into Suffolk County, when he checks, "Oh, I don't have a problem." So the data doesn't get interpreted accurately all the time.

We also have scenarios where a drug deal will happen in Huntington. We're not always going to make the arrest right away at that particular location. So whether you look at incident location or place of arrest, gets confusing, because very often we'll make -- there'll be a drug deal in Huntington. We may make the arrest days, weeks later at a place of business in Mastic, and again, yes, there's a heroin arrest that took place in that place of business in Mastic. There may never have been heroin there. And I don't want to be overly concentrated on my concerns, even though those are the things that I deal with. I truly believe that overall it's a good program because it gets the word out. That to me is the most important thing, is educating the public to be aware that this problem is, in fact, going on.

I thank you for time, and if anybody has any questions, I'll be happy to handle them. I have Detective Janes here as well who deals with this on a daily basis.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Yeah, I have a couple of questions. You know, you're now dealing in the realm that I've been working in for 30 years. I have a degree from Stony Brook University in substance abuse prevention in the MSW Program and certainly a certificate from Adelphi University. I worked for the U.S. Education Department for 15 years in the '80's and the early '90's and have taught drug

education at Dowling College for 14 years. I say that only so you know where I'm coming from. I'm concerned with proactive activities. I commend reactive, but I'm concerned with proactive. And what I'm hearing is that every two years, approximately, since 2000 the heroin arrests are doubling, and so that leads me -- I mean, I saw it was 200, then 400, then 860 something, so we're seeing something happening. Have there been proactive -- have there been proactive undercover investigations as this increase has happened?

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

Absolutely. What I'm here talking about today is the team that deals with overdose deaths, that is reactive. We get called after somebody dies.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Right.

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

And that's a small part of the Narcotics Squad and a small part of the Suffolk County Police Department. The vast majority, what we do in Narcotics is proactive. The rest of the teams are undercover officers that, again, I'm not going to get into real specifics in a public forum, but their work is almost all proactive going after these problems. Very often the work that's being done by the Overdose Death Team is being handed off to -- you know, they'll identify a certain thing going on in a certain area, they'll hand it off to one of our undercover teams to go out and address the problem. But, yes, on a daily basis, most of the people -- most of the work we do in narcotics is proactive. What I'm speaking about today, a lot of reactive, I agree.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Right. Well, I just wanted to hear. Can you tell me, roughly, I mean, like how many Officers and Sergeants or -- and you're a Lieutenant, so, I mean, what kind of staffing do we have? I'll tell you why I'm asking these questions. I go to a lot of community meetings, even last night, and when I'm extolling the good things that we've done under the leadership of Legislator Horsley with this, I get questions, and I don't want to go, "Well, yeah, we are doing a good job." I want to be able to say -- especially with my background, sometimes the expectations are that I'll have more. So I'm questioning what kind of staffing do we have? Because I did see a report that four years ago the Commissioner added more Detectives to the Narcotics Squad. Could you just give me a little bit of the staffing?

CHIEF MOORE:

The Lieutenant will address your question directly. Before he does, if you'd like, we could go into Executive Session at your leisure, and when you and the members are available, and we could go into far more detail than we're able to in a public setting, so, you know, consider that. Two, as you know, drugs in particular are a societal problem, and when we depend solely on the police to address it we fail. I'm proud of my cops. My cops are so good at what they do that Joe Caracappa and Mike Sharkey need a bigger jail. In addition to that, judges are constantly going through all these machinations to develop processes.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

I know, Chief, and I appreciate that. I can tell everybody right here, we spend \$2.40 on proactive prevention activities, with people -- with kids in our community, and we spend \$70,000 each inmate incarcerating them. I get the point, I understand that. I know we're not doing a good job in prevention. We have a program here that's going to address that, but I'm wondering, even on the intervention and the proactive, how many people do we have out there? How many do we have out there in 2000? And if the arrests have doubled up, how many we have now? And the next part of that question is what are you going to do proactively to make sure we have some for next year? Because I'm not expecting this to just drop. So are we looking in terms of staffing requirements?

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

Okay. Without a specific question, you want me to just address in general our staffing, since --

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Well, you've been there for -- since the '80's. You had so many men under your command or with you, and now we're seeing double in things. So I'm just saying are you getting adequate staff? You know, are you able to do it? This is the group that recommends staffing at times, so we're asking you.

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

Excellent, and I'm glad you did. The staffing, adequate staff, with looking at what's going on here, there's no such thing. I mean, you know, the more we have the better, that's always going to be true.

And just to clarify, yes, I've been on the job since the early '80's, but I'm the Commanding Officer of the Narcotics Squad since 2004. So addressing specifically the staffing in the Narcotics Squad, in 2004, when we added the additional teams that we spoke about, we wind up with five teams in the office that each had six Detectives, plus two Detectives doing diversion cases, and then we have about 16 Detectives assigned to various Task Force's, which are a great idea, because that works as a what I always refer to as a forced multiplier where you have a couple of guys assigned to, you know, a team in DEA where you now take on all of their people to help you with what you're doing, so that's great.

Currently, in the Narcotics Office, we have -- I believe it's 23 Detectives in the main office that are assigned to the various teams that we're -- that I'm referring to. There are -- a full complement would be nine Sergeants; I believe we have eight right now. And a full compliment on Detectives across the board would be 48. So we're down a number right now, I think everybody in the Police Department is, and we're -- you know, we work with what we have and we do the best that we can. It's always going to be better to have more, no doubt about it. And if you're capable of providing that, I applaud that effort, I would love to see it.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Well, I mean, that's our concern. I think I speak for the Committee that, you know, I think the Police Department, just, you know, did a fantastic job of reallocating staff for the Gang Suppression Team. But what I'm seeing is that -- you know, we -- I mean, I know, I think everybody knows, where gangs are, so is drugs and so is violence. So there are a lot of other related crimes that are going up with this narcotics, so that it seems to me that you're a group that we would want to target to put more people in, you know what I mean, for more staffing, because you're there. Crime is all focused around you and I think we -- you know, the Gang Suppression Unit, I mean, my only concern with that is that we took people from I think proactive in the community and put them into one area. I don't want to see that happening with your unit. I want to make sure that the proactive activities are continuing, you know. I mean, we know that, you know, it's not the drugs and taking drugs that really is the problem, it's the abhorrent behavior that's associated with it, so -- but your unit is right in the middle, the nucleus of that. So, I mean, it seems like we've enhanced the Gang Unit, but you know where it's happening before the gang unit, because that's where the drugs are, so that's where the gang is, that's where the guns are. So, you know, I think it's imperative that we staff you, not just for what you think you need today, but what you might need, you know, two months, three months, because then you're doing more proactive activities and not putting out fires like our Gang Suppression Unit, which is commendable, but you know what I'm saying.

And the other piece is that I think you did a brilliant job of identifying the problem. In 1990, when I

did my Master's thesis for the School of Social Welfare, I had identified what you just said. So we're still on the same line, but it's 18 years later and we haven't done anything about it. And I want to tell you that when I first got elected, I wanted to fund this program and the Deputy County Executive laughed at me. He says, "Now you want to fund parenting education?" And you said it. What are we going to do? When I -- I did drug prevention in college, high school, middle school, elementary, and when a third grade little girl told me that, "My Daddy's getting remarried and he has this white powder on his desk and said don't touch it," I said, "Oh, my God, I'm dealing with the wrong group," and that was 1989. Parenting. Are we doing anything?

You know, Natalie's Law is the first step. Like, I mean, you're on it, but now what can we do to take it to that level? You said we're identifying it and telling parents, but they don't know what to do. You've told us some of the things to look for, but we've got to get the parents there. Smithtown has -- they got it, but I'm worried about Patchogue-Medford, and Blue Point and Islip and Wyandanch. What are we going to do and how can we help you do it? And I think it's going to require some type of staffing. What do you see there?

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

You sound like me talking at meetings where I'm trying to get staffing, you know. And every Police Commander in the entire Police Department feels the same way about their command, you know, the more people you have the more we can do, there's no doubt about it. And we are being proactive and there are things we're doing. I'm going up to Huntington Library tonight to do a presentation for parents. We get asked to do these things on a regular basis. So we're being proactive, we're trying to get -- and I'm trying to -- you know, our job is the enforcement end, but I see in this problem, yes, there's a lot we can do on the police end. I think there's a lot more the parents can do. You know, I think have a better chance. By the time it gets to us, the kid's already using heroin and the problem is way bigger than it should have ever gotten. On the -- on the staffing issue, you know, it's a no-brainer. The more we have the more we're going to be able to do.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

You know, I'd just like to hear it from you, because if you haven't noticed, we have been saying that. So I have Legislator Losquadro and then Legislator Barraga.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Thank you. I just did the quick math there, and I know that always troubles the Chief any time I'm doing math, but based on the numbers you just gave me, that means you're down 17 off your full complement, right? Didn't the numbers you gave me add up to 31 off your 48? You said the full complement was --

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

If it added up to being down 17, I misspoke.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Well, you said 23 --

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

Full complement is --

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

-- in the main office and eight Sergeants. That equals 31 to me.

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

No, no, no. Twenty -- eight sergeants are not in the -- the 23 that we have in the main office and

the 16 that I have assigned to Task Forces.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Okay.

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

Those are the Detectives.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Because --

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

The full complement is of Detectives I'm talking about.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Of 48.

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

The eight sergeants, that's a different issue.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Okay.

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

That's Supervisors.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

So you have then --

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

I can do the math for you, we're down nine.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

How many do you have then off that 48? How many --

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

I believe we're down nine at this point.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Okay, nine. All right. Because that 17 number was --

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

And again, I apologize if these numbers are not perfect.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

That's fine.

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

I didn't know that's what I was going to be speaking about today, but this is the job I do.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Okay. It's minus nine.

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

They should be very close to perfect.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

All right. That was just something quick. I was just sitting here, you know -- Unfortunately, having these -- you know, having telephones with calculators built into them is sometimes a dangerous thing.

What I wanted to ask you, a couple of specific questions. One, obviously, the Detectives in Narcotics Unit are investigating all narcotics-based crimes. You don't have -- or do you, maybe in one of these Task Forces, Detectives tasked specifically to heroin? I wouldn't think that would be the case, because you were talking about dealers deal in multiple product; is that the case or not?

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

There are times where we have people do something specific to heroin, but no, I don't believe in restricting any of the work that gets done by the people in my command. A lot of what I said in my presentation about the fact that very often people are dealing with different drugs, you know, I don't want to tell some teen to not -- to ignore cocaine because they're after heroin. Also, very often, because of idiosyncrasies in the law, it's better for us to attack one drug or another. Somebody's selling heroin and cocaine. If we pay more attention to the cocaine, we're likely to get a more positive result, and again, not something I'll get into the detail of publicly.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

All right. That's how I thought it would work, but I just wanted to clarify that with you.

The other thing I want to talk to you about was you touched on it somewhat briefly, but I think it was a very important point, the increase in the crime statistics, when you're talking about individuals that are getting involved in this at a younger age, they have less access to funds, so they turn to pawning things. Now, I'm assuming that also leads into a gateway to other types of crime, burglary, things of that nature. So, I mean, I think you would agree that there's a direct correlation between the increase in this activity, especially among younger and younger people, and the increase in the crime statistics that we see; is that correct?

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

Absolutely. I communicate on a regular basis with the Commanders of the various Precinct Detective units and there's no doubt about, the burglaries are being committed by heroin addicts, the -- you know, more and more of the crime that we're seeing -- heroin is a different drug than cocaine or crack. The crack addicts were violent, they would commit, you know, armed robberies, things of that nature. Heroin really doesn't get people amped up that way. I'm not going to say that it's never going to happen. We certainly -- it's dangerous in its own right, but you see more of the property crimes being committed. You're seeing people -- burglary, you know, they may be going into that home trying to steal things of value so that they can support their habit. God forbid there's somebody in that home.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

That's what I was just going to say.

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

And certainly, that could, you know, quickly escalate to, "Oh, my God, I can't get caught," and we could have a disaster on our hands. I live in Suffolk County, I raised my kids in Suffolk County. Two weeks ago a couple of blocks away, one of my neighbors, homes were broken into during the day and he was in the home when it occurred. He's a retired New York City cop. Luckily, we didn't have a disaster on our hands, but, yes, that happens, and I think a lot of crime is a result of what's

going on in the drug world.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Yeah. I especially saw a correlation there when you were talking about the younger and younger ages, because, again, these individuals have less access to their own funds, so turning to crime, you know, easy ways, especially when you see -- you know, and I know we talked about it in past years, even more prevalent now with the increase in the price of gold and other precious metals; very easy to turn around quick cash on these burglaries. So I thought that's where you were going with that when you were mentioning the pawning and things, so, yeah, I agree, definitely a correlation in the increase in the crime statistics to this drug problem, especially among the younger users. So I appreciate you coming down today. Thank you.

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Legislator Barraga.

LEG. BARRAGA:

Lieutenant, thank you very much for an excellent presentation. Just a couple of points. I remember when we were discussing the legislation, which became Natalie's Law. You know, as members, we were extremely frustrated because the tragedy associated with what happened to her. And, of course, I remember her parents being here as well. And from our perspective, and I think I would be speak for all of us, you want to do something as a Legislator, you want to put something in place to kind of offset this tragedy so we move in a positive direction, and Mr. Horsley came first with what eventually became Natalie's Law. But, you know, at the time, as I looked at the legislation, I had reservations. And, as you pointed out in your chart today, my reservations centered around the mapping system where, in essence, the bad guys could go on the internet and find out where these arrests were being made and making sure they wouldn't be selling their product on those corners. And, at the same time, none of the bad guys doing, but the users going on the internet and advising the bad guys, "Don't sell it on Smith Street or Brown Street because the cops made a bust there." I'm trying to ascertain how much of a negative effect that approach is now having in terms of the enforcement, in terms of grabbing the bad guys when they are selling drugs.

DETECTIVE JANES:

Hi. I'm Detective Suzanne Janes. Thank you for having us here today. It is having somewhat of a negative effect on certain cases, I'll have to tell you. We're in the middle of a case right now where the main target that we're looking at is fully aware of the system where you can go into and check where we're being active. He's also checking where people get arrested, and he's telling the underlings that we're -- who aren't smart enough at this point where to go and where to deal and where not to deal. So, yes, he's keeping himself insulated because of what his access is on the internet and other places where he can gain that information.

CHIEF MOORE:

If I may just add one thing to that. And you're as well aware as we are, every issue has advocates on either side. For example, when we started -- and again, you mentioned proactive steps. Well, the text tipping and the advertising that we did in the schools, I think you all remember, there were people who were enthusiastic supporters and then there were people who were horrified that their children were going to snitch on drug dealers. I mean, so the -- Natalie's Law, the text tipping, the hotlines, even the heroin presentation, which you're going to hear of the proactive approach, education, the Police are taking on a wider role that strays far beyond mere enforcement. But the fact of the matter is that when -- years ago, when the DARE Program was first introduced to the

schools, there were teachers who were horrified that there were would be cops with guns, you know, walking around in the classroom. And now --

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

What's DARE?

CHIEF MOORE:

I'm sorry, sir.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

What's DARE?

CHIEF MOORE:

Yeah. And now, if they had their way, every school would have Police Officers assigned to every classroom. Well, that's just not practical. I mean, other people are going to have to ante up. I think the Natalie's Law, the text tipping, the heroin presentations done by the Narcotics Section and our community outreach, the Police Smart officers, you know, the police are certainly doing their part. You, as Legislators, through the legislation, are certainly doing your part. But there are other people who have to ante up. The schools are getting better, but they need to do even more. Parents are getting better; they need to do even more. And, hopefully, all of these talks that we have with them, all the opportunities you get to speak with these other groups are going to break down the denial, because most probably the biggest challenge for all of us is the denial within the community. You know, "This doesn't happen here in my community, this happens somewhere else," well, they're wrong. It is happening in their community. And I think they're only just becoming aware of that, and, unfortunately, one of the undeniable realities is all the people who are dying from overdoses.

LEG. BARRAGA:

Thank you for the explanation, but I just want to go back to what the Detective said. Should we, as Legislators, be considering some sort of adjustment in Natalie's Law with reference to the issue of the mapping and the bad guys and the victims to make it easier for you to do your job, or do we just leave it alone? I mean, that's what I'm really keying, that specific point, because I think it's a problem. I mean, all the other stuff is nice, but I've heard that before. This is a specific issue and it's not working in our favor, I don't sense. And should we, as Legislators, take a second look at that and maybe make some sort of an adjustment in that so it makes it easier for you to do your job and doesn't give the bad guys a big advantage?

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

It's a complicated question. You know, as I said earlier, I believe it's a double-edge sword. You know, I applaud the positive of getting the information out, and, unfortunately, the wrong kind of people access it. And even when the right people access it, it's not always as clear as, you know, as it could be. And I don't know, because I've looked at it and I've considered myself how we can make it better. I don't know how to make this thing work exactly as perceived. We would all love for this information to get out to the good people to be able to see, but the internet doesn't work that way. And I find it far too often that, you know, the bad guys are more -- much more interested in it, to be quite honest with you. The fact that somebody is even looking for it, and that's another issue, it's not the easiest thing in the world to find if you don't know that it's called the Suffolk County Drug Mapping Index. Try Googling Natalie's Law, Suffolk County. I had a difficult time finding it when I was putting this presentation together. In fact, I wound up calling Mr. Horsley's office and had somebody there kind of guide me to find the program.

So, in answer to your question, I don't know what to say. It's good and bad. There are certainly things -- I would love to see a website that gets the word out to the public that we have a

drug -- you know, a heroin issue in Suffolk County so that people can pay more attention to it without giving information to the bad guy. You know, that's always something -- in narcotics, we do a lot of work every day. We don't write press releases on everything we do for very obvious reasons. We're always looking at the next step. We're looking at -- it will hurt us if we do that, so we don't put information out. Today, we executed two search warrants this morning, took down a marijuana grow operation. We also went into a home where we recovered a quarter kilo of cocaine, a couple of 40 caliber handguns, dangerous, bad stuff. You know, I'm not likely to be writing a press release on this, because complicated cases, and there's so much more we want to do there. And I think that's similar to the problem we're experiencing here. When we put stuff out there, sometimes it complicates what we do. Again, I think it was a great idea, it's for the right reasons to get the word out, and I don't have the answer on how to make it perfect.

LEG. BARRAGA:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Legislator Horsley.

LEG. HORSLEY:

Well, that's -- and this echos back to our original conversations.

DET. LIEUTENANT BURKE:

Absolutely.

LEG. HORSLEY:

And we did recognize that right from the beginning that this was maybe one of the shortfalls of this legislation. However, I would fall on the other side of Legislator Barraga's thinking, that this is more positive than negative, because I have heard so many of the right people who are looking at that legislation and looking at that -- at the mapping index. Community groups that are calling their school board members, that -- I see there was something -- there was an arrest on campus, or that down the street from the schools, because we all know that all drugs aren't sold just in schools. The issue is a community, it-takes-a-village concept. So I think that this is very positive, getting knowledge out there. And, you know, you and the Chief mentions is the whole issue of denial, and particularly the heroin issue where I was confronting in my community, it's a very middle class community, and people were denying that there was an issue. So now they know, and it was because of Natalie's Law that -- and Text-A-Tip, which were both mine, that the conversation is out there now. And so I think that we have gone the measure to improve it.

I would take this even further. And some of the things that I agree with you, I think it's hard to find for the average citizen to go out there. You've got to look up the website, the County website and then you scroll down and you find it, but we should advertise it. We should make it more public so people know where there are incidences in their neighborhoods of arrests, whether or not they're pulled over and that just happens to be an anomaly, but oftentimes it's the back woods or the -- you know, where you don't want your kids to be.

I would also consider the prescription drugs as a possibility as an overlay, maybe, of not just only heroin, but also the Percosets and the OxyContin, and those drugs that are so prevalent in our society that we should maybe have the same mapping index for those types of drugs as well, and also in the original legislation, which I think was somehow -- and, by the way, I think you guys did a great job. But we didn't go the measure to line it up with Nassau County, because, as we know, particularly on the west end of Suffolk County, there's -- no one knows the line where Nassau begins and where Suffolk ends, and it goes across boundaries. I think that we could work to improve this.

I think, again, the more knowledge we have, the more we get this information out there, the more the parents are aware of this problem, the more the parents are pressuring our school boards, our churches, our synagogues, and others, of peoples in authority, that we can -- that we can make this a community activity. And I go right to the Chief's comments about that deniability. It's in our communities, it's in all of our communities, and that is the way -- this is just one more tool in the box, the way I look at it. So I weigh heavily that this -- that the more information we have out there, the better it is for you as Police Officers.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Legislator Gregory.

LEG. GREGORY:

Thank you. It's good to see you. I know we first met when you were at the First Precinct, wow, back in 2009, so I'm glad to see that you've moved on and you're doing great things. Thank you for your presentation. You know, I think we've all come to the realization that heroin and prescription drugs are a serious issue here in Suffolk County, as well as Long Island, so I'm glad to see that your unit is doing wonderful things. I would like to see us do whatever we can to make sure that you need -- that you have the bodies so that you can be more successful. So, from a Legislative standpoint, I think we -- I could speak for all of us that we speak -- that we stand behind you 1,000%.

You have a -- you know, my girlfriend lives in Saint James. I know you made a bust in Saint James of a heroin dealer a couple of weeks ago. For whatever reason, it's been highlighted in the Smithtown area. So, you know, she has a 14-year-old and a 13-year-old and she's concerned every day when they go to school. I have a 14 and an 18-year-old. I'm concerned about them as well as others with their children and grandchildren and family members. So, you know, we're here to help you. I'm behind you 1,000%. I'm taking some notes and I'm thinking of some legislation that maybe we can do that can assist you and bring some awareness. So let's keep the lines of communication open, and we're here for you. So thank you for your presentation.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Legislator Losquadro.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Just very quickly, just to touch on what Legislator Horsley said. I'm sure he remembers that was actually my contention during the debate and the initial legislation, was not only did I -- was I concerned about some of the unintended uses for this information, but also because it focused very narrowly on one product, that it could perhaps lull some people into a false sense of security being that cocaine, prescription drugs, marijuana, all the other things are not included. And my thought initially was, well, if we're going to do one, shouldn't we include everything? Shouldn't it be a narcotics mapping, you know, and use that in the complete term? But now looking at it, and my thought was, well, let's look at it for a little while, see how it's working, and see if we do want to expand it. Now, it will engender certainly more debate and I'd like to discuss it further with you, but my feeling is if we went that route to include everything, you'd just be putting that much more information out there for the wrong people to see, and I think it's a very fine line we have to walk.

You know, what you do within the Police Department is, you know, almost like the special forces within the military. We need to be very careful about what we divulge in terms of activities to not hinder your operations and make sure that you're doing everything that you possibly can, as you said, to get the supply off the street, and let every other avenue work together towards the root of the problem, which is the people getting involved in the first place. But you need to be working on that supply issue, and we certainly don't want to do anything to hinder that. So I think this brought up some very interesting points and I'd like to talk to you further about them, so -- but, I mean,

after we finish this narcotics discussion, I do have a couple of questions for the Chief, though.

CHIEF MOORE:

One of the things that we have to be very careful about is information overload. In some legislation in the recent past, more and more aspects were added to legislation to the point where if you were doing any sort of mapping, basically what you would do is dump the map of Suffolk County into a bucket of paint, so you got to the point where it was counterproductive. So your points are well taken, sir. The only -- the only caveat is we'd have to take a look and see if there would be so much information that it would render the map being, you know --

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

All right. Thank you. I think Professor Horsley said it correctly, that information is power. We just want to see who's getting the most power. So thank you. It was a brilliant presentation and very informative. I thank you. And maybe what we'll do is every six months you can give us an update and we can address some of the concerns that we have here on kind of a twice-a-year basis. And, if need be, please contact us earlier. Thank you.

Chief, I'm going to ask you to hang around for a few minutes. I'm going to have Sergeant Marc Sitzmann and his staff come up and do Police Smart, but then we might have a couple of questions about overall procedures.

CHIEF MOORE:

Of course.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Thank you.

CHIEF MOORE:

Sergeant Marc Sitzmann is assigned to the Community Outreach Bureau. One of his many tasks is to oversee the Police Smart Program. Recently, our Officers in Police Smart, and two of them are here with us today, Officer Ward and Officer Verlotte, developed a Heroin Prevention Program, and the Sergeant and the Officers are going to describe that program. Sergeant.

SGT. SITZMANN:

As you know, the Police Smart Program started in roughly February of 2008. We've now completed one full school year of it. One of the beautiful things, and as you know, Mr. Chair, you were involved in the crafting of the initial thing where we transferred DARE into Police Smart, we have the ability to address things on the fly, create things, add things, and the heroin presentation is the thing we added. So, Officers, I'm going to ask you to give us a demonstration of the presentation.

OFFICER WARD:

Thanks, Sarge. I'm Officer Nancy Ward, Suffolk County Police Smart. I've been an instructor for the Police Department for eight years. This is our Crime Prevention Program. It's relatively new, approximately a year-and-a-half old. My partner and I, Officer Wendy Verlotte, are two of the ten who teach in a minimum of 35 districts in the County right now, as well as parochial and private schools, in a reaction to what we saw. Last year in the Spring we asked for approval to present and develop the Heroin PowerPoint, which is what we have now. It is targeted for eighth-graders and above. We've had increased demands, as you can imagine. You know the forums that have happened in Hauppauge and Brookhaven. The requests are coming in faster than we can possibly get our ten bodies out there to present it. We'd like to take an opportunity to show you what we do. Again, this is an educational crime prevention program, specifically heroin, for eighth-graders and above.

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

In our introduction to the concept of heroin exposure to young people. We try to show them the recent concerns that we have and the incidences that have occurred here on Long Island, and we do so by telling them that heroin is, in fact, a drug and define what drugs do, that they do affect the brain as well as the body, every aspect of what -- who you are and what you're capable of doing.

OFFICER WARD:

Again, we know many of you already know these definitions, but, again, a lot of the boys and girls do not that we're targeting. We try to relate to them exactly where it comes from, what it looks like, and how it becomes what they see or may see on the street. Some of the places that we are getting it from, Asia. We do let them know that's Pakistan and the places that we're fighting a war. Latin America, Columbia, where we did, in fact, start with our cocaine program. They've now said, "Well, you know what, we're going to introduce heroin, and when you buy kilos of cocaine in America, you're going to buy some heroin, too, which is brought on to the streets a lot more."

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

In an attempt to get them to understand just how severe a problem this is, we share with them the aspects of the law and tell them how it is a schedule one controlled substance as by the Controlled Substance Act, and that it's someone that is highly addictive.

OFFICER WARD:

For some reason we have technical changes here. Just to show you visually what it looks like, okay, we've got heroin that looks differently. On the East Coast it's predominantly white, or tan or cream colored such as this, on the West Coast, it's black in color, okay, in some of the photos. Tagging was a way that drug dealers were able to take credit, if you will. We see that in Suffolk County, and again we work in coordination with narcotics and our NESOT Officers, Detectives, Sergeants, Lieutenants. We see a turn-away from targeting packaging because they don't want to have the link if they did -- were, in fact, responsible for hurting, killing someone.

Again, some of the taggings. These are the things that some of the parents are referring to. "I find these baggies, I find these in the park. What does this mean, what are they?" Again, that's the drug dealer's tag, almost like in graffiti.

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

We show them how the dealers are trying to make heroin that much more accessible to younger and younger populations by sharing the fact that they're willing to mix them with other substances that are very easily accessible because they're over the counter. So mixing heroin with Tylenol is known on the street as "cheese".

OFFICER WARD:

Slang terms, I didn't know most of these. Perhaps you do, but the boys and girls, honestly, seventh, eighth grade and above, they're real familiar with this. When I grew up, my mom and dad called everything dope. It's not all called dope now. These are some of the -- some of the words they use, the slang terms for heroin.

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

Looking at some statistics, just to let children know that this is a real problem, we see that three million U.S. residents ages 12 and older have experimented with heroin, and we have a video that shows the severity of the problem.

(*A Video Presentation Was Shown*)

OFFICER WARD:

Again, this is a multimedia presentation. We're talking eighth-graders, seventh-graders and above, something like that, to show them this isn't a pleasant world, but the face of heroin has changed.

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

The most recent death of this young lady that we were just referring to earlier has really set off the import of how much education is going to play a role in trying to prevent young people to become exposed to this drug, to either its sale, use, distribution, and that it can happen to anybody. This was a young girl who had a very good family. She came from modest means, and, yet, she was able to be exposed to this culture.

OFFICER WARD:

Again, I've heard a lot of the word "proactive" throughout today, which is excellent. These parents are trying proactively, the Police Department certainly is. And, again, it comes down to the community, the parents, the school districts and the Police Department in that coordinated effort. It can be successful, and again, the requests are coming in faster than we can accommodate.

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

Recently, we also saw the loss of life of a young man who had actually come to his parents and shared with them the fact that he was under the influence of drugs and had been experimenting with drugs. He was not willing to share with his parents exactly what drug he was experimenting with, and although they were aware of the fact that he needed help, they were unable to get him the help that he so desperately needed and he wound up dying as a result of heroin use.

OFFICER WARD:

Again, the gateway drugs, I would agree wholeheartedly with the Lieutenant who spoke earlier, Lieutenant Burke. It isn't just -- a child does not just start doing heroin, and ordinary it does start with alcohol and marijuana, and a lot of times the over-the-counter. The prescription that are in the home, they could be stolen by a house-cleaner, they could be -- anyone who comes into your home has free reign if they use your bathroom. The most important thing is to get rid of these, because they are the gateway. And these pill parties are becoming more and more where you're required to come to the party with a handful or a fistful or a capful of whatever drug. They throw them in a bowl and grab a handful and roll the dice. It's like Russian Roulette with pills.

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

The recent exposure to heroin is indicated by the fact that it is not only easily accessible, but there are so many ways that a young person could get it into their bodies. We talk about how it was never acceptable that a person would inject it, and, yet, it would be accepted through the society that a person could ingest it, they could choose to snort it, they might smoke it, but inevitably, because it takes so long for them to get that high, that first-time high that they're repeatedly chasing, eventually, they all seem to move towards injection. And we talked about the fact that that exposes them to a myriad of other problems.

OFFICER WARD:

Just Sunday's Newsday, front cover, Michele DiBartolo, she was a former student of mine. It was heart-breaking to listen to her testimonial at Brookhaven two weeks ago. This is a girl who in eighth grade began to experiment in the drug world, the world of no rules. And by tenth grade she had begun snorting, and by the end ever tenth grade, because she couldn't reach that elusive high, she began injecting. She is not the face of heroin. She is a beautiful young girl who came from an upper middle class family in Smithtown who was walking into Walgreens going into the bathroom to shoot up. And it does -- the stigma that we don't have to shoot it up, heroin addicts will eventually shoot up, they all do. They're eventually going to get to that because they need to get it as quickly as possible and they never can achieve that high again.

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

In an attempt to try and show the young people how devastating the use of this drug can be, we try to show them some graphic images by allowing them to see what a person might lend themselves toward by eventually experimenting with this and continuing their use. And here on the left-hand side, you see a fairly graphic photo of person who has been injecting, and you see what we indicate as being skin-popping. And then, clearly, because there are so many ways that it can be taken into the body, we see on the right-hand side a picture of someone who's cooking it up so that they can now load it into a hypodermic needle for injection.

As you take a look here, and we're scrolling through, you can see that this is a person who we actually got this information as a reference from the Island Pulse Magazine, and this individual is a former heroin user and does indicate that he is still a person who is continually fighting the battle. He shares a story that occurs in his life, and at this time we ask the kids to close their eyes so that they can visualize what it is that he's saying, and if you'd indulge me, I'd like to share with you. He says that, "Fast forward five years and I'm parked in a Bronx Getty Station with 120 bags of dope hidden in my center console. I rip off the top of the two bags of dope and dump the brownish white powder into my blackened spoon, which teetered precariously on the edge of the sink. I tried to twist the faucet on, but no water came out. I needed to make my injection solution, and with no other water source in sight, I headed for the toilet. The bowl contained a putrid soup of disintegrating paper, cigarette butts, and brown muck. Above it, the tank's porcelain cover had been broken and removed, and a thick layer of dust and oil floated on the surface of the exposed water. I submerged my syringe to avoid the grime and I pulled in a half CC of Bronx toilet water.

OFFICER WARD:

Just take a look at this, please.

(*A Video Presentation Was Shown*)

And we come across these things, and, yes, we're trying to shock the students we're trying to keep their attention, because they like to think they know it all, I guess when we were all 13 and 14 we thought we did, but it could be your lawyer, your doctor, it could be anyone. The face of heroin is very much changed.

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

Peter Baggs, the individual I was referring to before, when the story goes on to say that he will continue like every other addict to pursue that first-time high, and he describes heroin as being a mistress and he always looked to return to her welcoming embrace.

OFFICER WARD:

Again, chasing that elusive high, they can't seem to ever get it. The dopamine that is -- that comes out of their brain when they use this drug is such a force that they want to achieve that every time they do heroin again and they can't seem to do it.

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

On the slide, you just see some general short-term effects of heroin, and we like to use a lot of visuals for the kids so they can see their bodies and the things that are being affected each and every time they choose to consider experimenting with everything, and we address everything from the brain to all the different working parts of the body, short-term effects as well as long-term effects.

OFFICER WARD:

Again, I know it's repetitive, but it's super addictive. There's no other way around it. And the dependence, it affects the parts of the brain that affect addiction and empathy, which is how it kind

of leads -- why this is a crime prevention program, well, if you're a heroin addict or you need heroin, you will do absolutely anything to get it. And if you are someone who wants to steal or you just need your fix, I will steal your child's or your sister or brother's Play Station or a Nintendo and you will sell it. You will take from your grandmother, the Nesconset incident. And I would beg to differ quite a bit that there are heroin people who are violent. Nesconset, that grandmother was murdered. She was stabbed multiple times by this person looking for heroin, for whatever reason they needed that.

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

When we take a look at heroin, we get the children to understand that this is, in fact, an opiate and that, in fact, it does affect the brain. And we show them what the brain looks like and the different parts of the brain and it why it is so devastating, because, as Officer Ward just shared with you, it affects that person's motivation, and it also affects the fact that they don't really care what it is that they do, as long as they're able to satisfy that high.

OFFICER WARD:

This next video is a take on the things, and I don't want to date myself, but probably the public services announcement that we were most familiar with and that was the most common when we were younger, this is a new heroin take on it.

(*Video Presentation Was Shown*)

It should speak for itself, I suppose. Affects on the body: It's relatively easy for an officer, an ambulance worker, emergency worker to determine if someone has overdoses on heroin. They are usually in some form of a stupor. And we kind of encourage the boys and girls, "Listen, if you're at a party or you know what they took, help us out anyway, maybe they mixed it with something." There are ways that we can help them as a police officer, or an ambulance or an emergency worker.

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

This was actually presented during the time when we were at the -- in Smithtown in the Middle School, and this does show what the face of heroin could look like. And the reality is that it could be any student, any single child. And here they say that you think you can control it, but, eventually, you're going to start to look sick, you'll start to lose weight, you'll start to lose interest in things in life. And the reality is, if someone offers you heroin, you know, consider what it is that you need to say to take care of yourself. Make the right choice.

We go further into other effects of this drug on a person's body so that they understand that, yes, although we don't want them to commit crimes, we also want them to value themselves and understand that they're doing a great deal of damage. And what does that do? Well, when they injure themselves, they're hurting their families as well.

OFFICER WARD:

Again, the lasting effects of drugs, between two and eight hours, what their tolerance as they use becomes greater and greater and they need more and more of it. We went back to -- actually it's down. We've talked to the Narcotics and the NESOT just in the Fourth Precinct area, \$5 a bag. Again, these kids are leaving Suffolk County, they go into Bushwick, Queens. They pick up, rather cheaply, and they come out here and they sell it. So if something is \$5, that is clearly much cheaper than picking up Percocet, an Oxy or a Vicodin, which makes it scary.

This next video is a few minutes, if you could just bear with us, but it's very good. It's the face of heroin in some of the places and communities where we see it.

(*Video Presentation Was Shown*)

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

In an attempt to further try and motivate young people to make smart decisions, of course, we address the people that young people believe to be role models, those that have fame and fortune and great success. And, as you take a look here, we see two faces and they're indicated in the yellow print of people that have great notoriety, people who are movie stars, people who are successful in the music industry, and yet they, too, have succumbed to heroin use and abuse. The entire list is of those people that we know that have experimented with heroin, and those indicated in blue are those that have died as a result of their heroin use. Once again, fame, fortune, notoriety, popularity, and they still made poor choices.

OFFICER WARD:

This is another story out of Newsday, but we're trying to highlight for the boys and girls that it doesn't matter who you are, male or female. I want to bring that out. But this beautiful young lady would only get clean during her pregnancies, and that was the only time, nine months plus, and she eventually did succumb to her addiction, and now her mother is raising the grandchildren. It's a crime, it's a sin. We don't know how to make it clearer to the parents, to the boys and girls how very real that this problem is.

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

Taking a quote directly from Dr. Goldstein, he is one of Long Island's most -- foremost addiction experts and he shares that heroin is, in fact, a major problem and that's the reason why we're here today. He talks about how young people can smoke it, they can snort it, they can inject it. There are lots of different ways they can get it into their body. And because it is so easy to get it into one's body, it's not all that difficult. It's a very easy trap for someone to fall into. And he wants us to understand that it is, in fact, all around us, and we have to be more proactive, we have to do something about it. Anybody can fall into this trap.

OFFICER WARD:

Again, to add to the Lieutenant's stats, these are some of the stats we have for heroin rehab admissions. And at first glance, the Suffolk admissions from '03 to '07 -- let's go back. Excuse me. From 437 jumps to 660. And from the past three to four weeks, the forums and summits that we have attended, we know that those numbers have increased disproportionately again in '08 and '09 from what we have into '09.

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

We understand that, unfortunately, kids are going to be exposed to lots of different people who may be making poor choices, and so we want to encourage them to make a good choice. If they have themselves experimented with this drug, they need to tell to get help. If they know of someone else, if they've been to a party, if they believe someone is currently under the influence of it, they need to tell us. That's the only way you can save a person's life. Keeping it quiet and keeping it in the shadows is not going to get them healed and it's not going to save their lives at all.

OFFICER WARD:

This is the big question, what are we doing about it? Well, we can speak for our Unit, the Community Outreach Bureau. There are ten of us teaching every single school day. We are attending PTA meetings, we are attending community forums and summits and bringing the information forth, telling the people about it, trying to implore them to speak to their children and understand this is a very real problem. So our first line of defense, our first proactive line of defense is education and that's where Police Smart comes in.

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

In addition to that, when arrests are being made, we're trying to find out if any of those are

involving heroin at all, if there was any heroin involvement during the course of the commission of the crime, or if that person has any working knowledge of heroin dealings in their exposure, as well as the Heroin Task Force.

OFFICER WARD:

I'm hoping everyone saw this. This was a huge seizure in the history of the Police Department and it was a phenomenal job on all fronts, but just to rephrase this article and to let you know, 500,000 hits were taken off the streets, Town of Huntington, Melville. And I ask people, where do you think those 500,000 hits were going? They were going to the boys and girls of Suffolk and Nassau County. So thank goodness those 17 pounds were pulled off, and maybe 17 pounds doesn't sound like a lot to a layperson or a civilian, as we call everyone else who's not in the police world, that's a tremendous amount of heroin because it is cut many, many times and there are additives to it. We're talking tens of millions of dollars taken off the street by the Police Department in Suffolk. And again, to remind people, where was it going? It's coming right here.

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

This is exactly what Officer Ward was just referring to, and I know for myself I have the benefit of making presentations within the Town of Huntington. So if I say Melville, all eyes open wide and ears perk up and people say they're incredulous that it could happen in their community.

OFFICER WARD:

We understand that eighth and ninth graders perhaps don't understand the Penal Law. There are many of us in the Police Department who the drug laws are -- they're challenging. We sort of give them a snippet of, to possess it, to sell it, but this slide right here says it all. Murder is an A-1 Felony. If you distribute or sell as little as three ounces of heroin, it is the same, it equates to the same as an act of murder, to try to bring home how serious of a problem this is.

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

Because we're trying to encourage young people to make smart decisions, and if, unfortunately, they have not, we try to get them to understand that there are options, there are things they can do. Yes, they may have made a bad choice and we all understand that, but we want to get them clean, we want to get them help, and we want them to understand that their friends can be helped as well, so we share with them some of the different options there are available to them.

OFFICER WARD:

We don't sugar coat this either. Withdrawal is hellacious. But for the grace of God, people sitting up here have never had to go through it. We do let them know that there are many people who do not succeed with the withdrawal symptoms. There are a small percentage of people who actually do die after being a heroin addict for so long, but that it is a -- I don't know anymore of an uncomfortable situation when we describe vomiting, and tremors, and scratching. And if you see someone who's a heroin addict, they are constantly ripping apart their face and scratching their arms and legs just to get through trying to get past that next hit that they require, their body and brain requires.

Some of the other withdrawal effects, none of them good, of course. And that's the big thing with our presentations, it's all about choices. But I challenge the kids right when -- from the beginning. I say, "Anything I show you up here, if it's positive, or I miss something, or if I'm doing it wrong and there's something that looks real appealing to you, let me know, perhaps I'm missing it, but there isn't anything positive about this."

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

And lastly, we want them to understand that if they do say yes just once the first time, it's not likely to be their last time, unless, of course, they die. The reality is that there's a very good opportunity

that they'll return and use that drug again and again until it does take their lives. And we end with this last public service announcement.

(*Video Presentation Was Shown*)

OFFICER WARD:

And usually there isn't a pin to be heard dropping on the floor after that. But we tell them, "If you do heroin and you do not stop, that you will die." We make it as easy as that. And I don't know. If you start using heroin at 18, I'm guaranteed to not see you past 30, absolutely, positively. Not to scare them, not to yell at them, not to preach to them, it's factual. And police officers telling you we've been there for those cases, we've been there when they die, this is what happens. And if you haven't been taught it at home or you haven't been taught in the schools, well, the Police Department, we're going to -- we're going to put it right in your face so that you do understand.

I also just want to add, too, that this is one of approximately -- we're almost up to twenty Power Point presentations, so I'd be remiss if I didn't tell you that we do start with the basic gateway drugs of tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, everything beyond the gateway drugs, bullying, internet safety, diversity. So this is just one of the many things that we do present from the Police Department. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Yeah. I want to compliment you on your presentation and what you're doing. It's obviously that we've created a program that really addresses the needs of Suffolk County and not necessarily something that comes from out state for us, and you guys are doing an excellent job.

I just wanted to comment briefly on the violence. I think if you check out the rebound effect with drug prevention, you'll find out with depressants there's that rebound before you pass out, and I think that might also be true of hypnotics, that you get in that tense, hypertense state, and that's probably when we see the violence with heroin.

And the other part is that, again, it's very frustrating when you deal with prevention. And I'm sure as you do more of this, you're going to become more frustrated, because in 1984 Harvard University came out with a study and said that we have to do a comprehensive approach, not just a program, or that we need information, education, enforcement and media. And like today, I've seen all parts of them, but I haven't seen a couple of those commercials that you've shown. I do remember seeing, "This is your brain and this is," when they fry it up, "Your brain on drugs." But I think we're trying desperately to get information out with what Legislator Horsley has put forward, and we're trying to get that information, and you're doing an excellent job, but it's not in all the schools. And they have to commit to the training and they haven't. So we have to do a better job of getting out, saying, "Look we want to help you, but you also have to step forward and help us help you."

And then I think we -- and I know the police are doing an excellent job on enforcement. I mean, arrests are up and they are definitely doing more with less. But the repetition with the media, I don't know what we can do, but, certainly, if this committee can help and you can think of any ways, because you're out there in the trenches, please let us know. I know we see the crimes in the paper, but I'd like to see more of what you presented here today. So I appreciate everything you're doing, you're doing a great job, keep it up. Is there anybody else that wanted to -- we have a guest, Legislator Kennedy.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate it. I had the benefit of seeing the presentation last Thursday over at Accomsett, and I know firsthand what good work Sergeant Sitzmann and Officer Ward and the rest of the officers are doing. I also was very pleased to see them at the heroin seminar that

we co-hosted with Islip Township two Thursdays ago where we had about 700 people there. And, you know, I guess each one of us is really trying to do whatever we can to be, you know, road shows within our particular Districts. And you're right, some Districts have moved forward forcefully to embrace the notification aspect of it. And for whatever reason, some districts you still see an element of reluctance, you know, to get it out there and to acknowledge it, and to be in your face, if you will. I'm curious just to hear what you find as far as students' reactions when you do these presentations. Do they engage you? Do they talk to you? Do they deny it? Are they stunned? What do you get?

OFFICER VERLOTTE:

I have to say that all the presentations, every opportunity that I've had has been exceptionally well received. And I'm excited about that and very optimistic about that. On occasion, you will find kids to be incredulous. They just can't believe that things like this happen, and they certainly say that it wouldn't be them, and I'm always happy to hear that, but most of them are just -- it's shock and awe, and they are all swearing to you that it won't be them and they're not going to do that, and that's exactly the message that we're trying to send and we're looking for, that's the response we're looking to get from them. And we are encouraged that kids are going to take this to heart and they're going to do the right thing, make good decisions, we really are, and it's been very well received, very well received. Thank you.

LEG. KENNEDY:

The other -- and thank you again. The other thing, I guess, that, through the Chair, I'll ask that I be made aware of is you talk about you're getting a significant increase in requests to be in either additional schools or additional districts, and I certainly would be wanting to know that. Ten officers is not a whole lot to cover. I guess we have what, 70 some districts at this point, Mr. Chair, throughout Suffolk County. So I certainly would want to know firsthand about additional districts that are asking you to be there so we can possibly do something to help address that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Sergeant, thank you for the great job you've done putting this whole thing together, because I was there when we first started talking about it, and it was nice to be able to come up with the concept and talk about what we'd like to do, but it was nice having you there to get it done and hiring or getting the staff on board that you felt were exceptional. So I want to thank you, Sergeant, for all the work you've done with this program.

SERGEANT SITZMANN:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. Thanks, guys. Go out and knock 'em dead, or save them from that.

*(*Laughter*)*

LEG. HORSLEY:

Figuratively.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Yeah, Figuratively. Chief, I've got a question for you, and then I think some of the Legislators do. Talk to me about the Sergeants exam. I know I talked to Alan Schneider. I believe we have anywhere from 35 to 40 positions that are empty. The last thing I had gotten was that in each Precinct there's about five Sergeants that -- openings that were filled at one time. And our test is going to expire, I think, around the 16th or the 12th of November and nobody's been made from the

list. Now I know I've heard things like, "Well, yes, and it will just keep them current by taking more tests, because they'll all have to take the test," but I have to tell you, I remember being in the military waiting for that Third Class Petty Officer exam and, you know, it's I think -- I don't know if the benefit is there. Is there anything that can be done about that, and is there anything planned like on November 15th?

CHIEF MOORE:

I have to apologize. You have me at a disadvantage when it comes to the issues of staffing. I was not in last week, the Commissioner's not in this week. I think we're going to have a much clearer picture within the next two weeks as it pertains to staffing needs and needs for supervisors, because, as you know, we have the budget discussions coming up, so

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Right. Now, I just -- I want -- I have a little yellow light go on because I learned at our last Legislative meeting from Ben Zwirn there's a new term being used, "fluid", and that's what I'm hearing you say, but that doesn't give me any answers. That means stand -- stay tuned, and I really -- I think this committee has pretty much made its statement clear, we don't want to stay tuned, we want answers when we ask questions. And you're telling me it's a fluid thing and we have to wait, and that's not really what I want to hear.

CHIEF MOORE:

Again, I have to apologize. If you could indulge me for two weeks, I'm really not privy to those discussions, and I really can't speak with any authority on those issues.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Well, I'm wondering, is -- I hate to put somebody on the spot, but I do see somebody from the Executive's Office here. I'm wondering if -- no, don't -- have you heard anything, Skip --

MR. HEANEY:

Nothing.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

-- about any appointments? He's shaking his head no. That's the international sign for no.

MR. HEANEY:

I really cannot add anything to this discussion at this point. I'm not privy to information that would be useful to you at this time.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. Thank you.

MR. HEANEY:

Okay.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Then I guess what I would ask is that as it becomes less fluid, you could let the members of this committee know by E-mail or something if there has been. I'd rather know it before I read it in Newsday. That's really my concern. And then I would like the officers that are involved to know it before then. So if we could do that?

CHIEF MOORE:

Yes, sir.

P.O. LINDSAY:

Okay. Legislator Losquadro.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Thank you. You know, ordinarily, I always want up-to-the-minute information, but I know you said you were out. These vacancies have been in place for sometime, so I'll take information that's two weeks old, that's okay. I think Legislator Eddington asked a fairly pointed question about staffing. We have a large number of vacancies with Sergeants. I think -- now, you're a student of organization and command structure. We've had a lot of discussions about that.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

What does that mean, time out, Mr. Brown?

MR. BROWN:

I don't think you have a quorum now.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

We're not voting on anything, we're having a discussion.

MR. BROWN:

I would ask Legislative Counsel. I think you're conducting business. It's my recommendation that you at least inquire of Legislative Counsel. I don't think you have a quorum.

LEG. KENNEDY:

I'm a temporary member.

MR. BROWN:

I think you should inquire of Legislative Counsel. I don't think you have -- you know, with all due respect, I don't think you have a quorum.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

It's interesting that you brought that up at this moment. You didn't notice that 15, 20 minutes ago, huh?

MR. BROWN:

No, actually, I did not. I did not because Legislator Barraga and Legislator Gregory were both here during the presentations. And you posed your first question, I stepped out to the men's room, I came back and I see that there are only two members here.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. Then you know what --

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

We're going to hold on one second.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

We'll just -- yeah.

MR. PERILLIE:

We're working on that.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Yeah. I guess this is yet another stay-tuned moment.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

How's the Yankee's doing? What's the --

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Are we allowed to discuss that without a quorum, sir? Can we discuss the Yankees?

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

What we can do is take a two-minute recess.

MR. BROWN:

Legislator Losquadro, I'm not trying to be disruptive or anything. I'm trying to actually --

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Oh, you are, but I think you're being informative. That's okay.

MR. BROWN:

I'm actually trying to, you know, be your counsel in this respect? I'm not trying to impede you at all.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

I don't see we're conducting official business here, there's no voting taking place. We'll wait a moment.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Well, let's ask our Counsel, what is the deal?

MR. NOLAN:

You can proceed with questioning Chief Moore, in my opinion. The business part of the agenda is done. Certainly, I believe you can proceed.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay. Thank you. But thank you, Mr. Brown, for at least alerting us to a possible situation and problem. Okay. Then --

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

-- we were in the middle of --

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

I was in the middle of complimenting you on your background. I know again that you are a student of organization and command structure, and I know that some of the things that I've read, you have certain ideals in terms of supervision levels, eight to one, ten to one. Sometimes those aren't necessarily practical, but from what I've seen, we have situations where we have supervision levels currently at thirty to one in certain areas. And again, with your background, your study of these command structures, where do you stand on those levels of supervision? What's your opinion on that? Where do you think we need to be, and what type of staffing do we need to increase to get back to levels that are acceptable? I'll start with that. I have another part to the question, but I don't want to make it an A, B, C, D, E, F.

CHIEF MOORE:

I just don't -- I didn't prepare to discuss staffing today and I don't have any --

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Like I said, I'll take information that's a couple of weeks old. So, I mean, this is just general questions. I mean, these vacancies have been in place for sometime now. This is general. If eight or ten to one is ideal and we're at thirty to one now in some instances, where does the Department need to go? What's your opinion, your position, given your expertise in that area, on those supervision levels?

CHIEF MOORE:

Well, I'm not sure it's thirty to one. I'm not sure what the ratio is. And, as you know, there are a number of factors that determine your appropriate levels of supervisors to staff. I think that the Police Commissioner has said on more than one occasion that the first line supervisor, and in this case, you know, that would be the Sergeant, is vitally important to the Police Department, it's good for the Police Officers, it's good for the public. So, at the same time -- there was another point. Give me a second. I'm sorry, there was another point. So -- but I'm not sure where the Commissioner and the County Executive are with those discussions. The Commissioner is well aware that the current list expires on November 11th. And in order to have any Supervisors promoted, as you know, that would require a decision on the part of the Director of Civil Service. I can telly ou --

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

I think we're sort of past that. I mean, we've all had those discussions. We've been talking about this list for some time. We know the impediments in Civil Law to the extension of those dates. I mean, we've all been made aware of that.

I know for my District that I represent, large geographic areas that need to be covered for the Sixth and Seventh Precinct. I know we had an instance last year. I happened to come on it myself just after the Sergeant had been taken out of the vehicle, heading north, backing up, a call for a supervisor. He was way down south heading north as fast as he could in the rain on Rocky Point Road in one of the Expeditions, wound up overturning the vehicle, because that District runs from the Great South Bay to the Long Island Sound, you know, that Precinct. And when we're talking about covering these type of geographic distances, not only do you have problems of supervision in terms of ratios, now you have problems in terms of backup, response times, coverage. I see far-reaching very serious problems with this supervision issue for the whole County, but specifically, you know, I always have to look out for my constituents from my Districts where these Precincts are so large geographically. Is that something that factors into your consideration?

Listen, we all know the County Executive has to sign the document, but you would hope that the Chief of the Department, the Commissioner, others are advising him. He's not a Police Officer, he's never been a Police Officer. I would hope he's is listening to the recommendations of the professionals. So your opinion on those staffing levels and what's being recommended to him is what we're really looking for here.

CHIEF MOORE:

I know that -- and our friends in the SOA could help me with this. I believe that the number of supervisors in patrol at a given -- at any given time has to be at a certain minimum level, and if that's not the case, we hire supervisors on overtime in order to cover those positions. And those ratios haven't changed and that's why, you know, I'm not sure where the eight to one versus the thirty to one comes from. I'm not aware that there's been any change in the number of supervisors that are required during a given tour in the Patrol Division.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Has -- well, this is something you probably -- well, maybe you can answer it, because it's a question historically. Has an analysis been done as to the cost effectiveness of -- if we are maintaining those levels, that I'm not certain of, but if we are, the cost effectiveness of doing that on overtime versus having additional staff? Have those numbers been analyzed?

CHIEF MOORE:

When the Police do analyses of sector car boundaries and that sort of thing, you know, budget is not one of the components that we take into account. We take into account the population density, the calls to service in the area, and even geographic boundaries, like the Expressway might as well be the Atlantic Ocean, because you can only cross it in certain areas. So, yes, the Police do analyses of sectors and sector boundaries and, you know, the supervisory zones, but looking at it from a budgetary perspective and, you know, what are the cost benefits of having people perform their duty on overtime as opposed to hiring new individuals and having them do that, that's not something that I believe the Police Department has ever done.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

That's refreshing to hear you say that, hear that from you, that the Police Department should let this body handle the budgetary decisions, because we've had the Commissioner before us on many occasions, I'm not speaking out of turn here, sitting right where you are telling us that his decisions were budget-driven. That's disconcerting. I like your answer, that it should be based on statistics and facts, and let us figure out how we're going to pay for it. That's our job and that's I think the crux of what we've been getting at. So that's refreshing. I'll be interested to hear those statistics if that analysis is done, because we want to make those budget decisions. We're in the midst of a budget right now and, hopefully, we'll be able to provide you what you actually need. As always, I appreciate your answers.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Chief, just to reiterate, you know, I mean, I know that we had in 2004 276 authorized Sergeants, the same as we do today, I know that. I know that we had two vacancies in January 2004 and now we have 36, so I know we're down, and that is a concern. But the reason I'm here is because I have gotten calls from many of the people on that list and it's the human element. If you said today -- and really, I mean, I'll reiterate, I really just want an honest answer. If you could say to me, "No, we're not going to use that list, I have no problem telling them. I'm not happy that I would tell them that you've been on the list, but I would tell them. But we've got people that feel like they're being strung along for whatever reason. I'm not blaming your office or the Executive's or us. They're crying out, "Give me an answer. Do I need to have to start studying for this test again? Do I give up on it because I've tried it many times?" That's all I'm asking for. And, of course, today it's fluid, so that's the problem I'm having.

Whether the County Executive uses overtime or not, that's his -- I am not trying to micromanage, nor are any of us, really, we just want a question and an answer, and then we can tell people. And, as I said before, what we find out is we read it in Newsday and we look foolish. So that's all I really want to know. If you can get us a definitive answer, I'd be happy. I'll relay the answer. I'm not taking responsibility for it, but I want to be able to relay information. So if you could pass that back, I'd appreciate it. In fact, I know it's already there, so thank you very much. Mr. Kennedy.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, although not a member, Chief, I -- actually, I wasn't going to go towards the Sergeant issue, but I guess I'll just echo what my two colleagues -- Legislator Losquadro and I share a peace of the Sixth, and I guess I'll -- the Chairman framed it in a global number of 38 vacancies. I believe, in some of the correspondence, and I want to thank you, because you've seen that I've done a number of queries about numbers, I believe we probably have

14 vacancies between the Fourth and the Sixth. I also believe that there are certain calls that officers go out on where a Sergeant is mandatory to actually be on site.

CHIEF MOORE:

Yes.

LEG. KENNEDY:

So, you know, I didn't major in math, but I think, you know, you have a finite number of individuals. You have a basically random number of calls that come in. You can only put that one individual at one location and you're really subject to a whole variety of variables throughout the rest of the District. And so, like my colleagues, I have concern.

The other two areas that I'll ask you, and again, I apologize that you're not able to speak towards staffing issues in particular, but I'll reference the heroin articles over the weekend in Newsday, and particularly on Sunday. And I was intrigued to see the Commissioner's comment, that there's been additional staff that's come to the Fourth Precinct as a direct response to some of what we've seen with the increased number of apprehensions. I am not a Peace Officer, I'm an elected, and, like my colleagues, I do my level best to maintain a current level of information, but I'm unaware of who the additional officers are that have come to the Fourth regarding this. And so I'd very much like to know so that I can share with my constituents who are extremely, extremely concerned about what they're seeing with their children becoming addicted and with the criminal element that's purveying this illegal substance here in our area. So however you may be able to go ahead and ascertain that, I'm going to ask you to communicate that to me, if you would, please, maybe in my office.

And then third, the other item that I'm going to bring to your attention, and this comes up just, I guess, in general conversation and some opportunity to see our new Fourth Precinct building that's going up, which is outstanding. Contractors are doing a wonderful job. It's a testament to your office and to the organization for the design there. I think it's going to be a phenomenal keynote for law enforcement throughout Suffolk County. But I do know that we are, I believe, doubling our holding cell capacity there from what we have right now in the older building. And I believe it is matrons and detention aides that are actually the individuals that do surveillance when we have prisoners that come; is that correct?

CHIEF MOORE:

For the most part, yes.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. If we're doubling our holding capacity with our new facility, once again, I would think we need to address at least some increase in individuals that will be doing the monitoring for our increased number of arrests that we'll have at our new facility. And I just ask you if you'll bring that back to the Commissioner going forward into next year for our staffing purposes.

CHIEF MOORE:

Okay.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay?

CHIEF MOORE:

Absolutely.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Thank you, Chief. Thank you Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

One last comment --

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Yeah.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

-- by Legislator Losquadro.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

I know this has been said before and I just want to pass it along. Both of you gentlemen there, you've worked your way up through the ranks, you've been very successful, but in your deliberations on this, in what you're bringing back in your meetings and discussions, we know that promotion, especially at that first step for Sergeant to become an Officer, a Superior Officer, you know, the studying time and expense is part of it, but promoting the continuing education component and the desire and the drive to continue to improve oneself is a critical component to keeping the ranks moving and keeping that experience moving so you don't wind up with lags or gaps in information or experience that happen when people wind up retiring after a period of time when promotions have not been made. It's a critical component to any organizational structure, whether it be in policing, or in business, and it's something that really has to be addressed here. This type of time lag, especially in a time where we have not been backfilling the ranks through natural attrition that's occurred I think could be devastating to the long-term wellbeing of really one of the greatest Departments in the nation, and I don't want to see those long-term effects start surfacing as we move forward. So something I just needed to put on the record. I know you're aware of it, but it's something that's very disconcerting to me.

CHIEF MOORE:

Yeah, I appreciate your comments, sir. Being promoted is a gut-wrenching experience, not only for the officers, but for their families, for the Police Department, the sacrifices the individual makes, the voracity of the competition for the positions. I mean, if you were to look at a typical list, many of these officers score perfect scores, they'll get 100 or more on the test. And, you know, I've gone through it, my Captain, we've all gone through it. It's a long and laborious process and we're all pulling for our people.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

Okay, then. Before the Committee disappears, I guess I should adjourn. Did you want to say anything else, Chief?

CHIEF MOORE:

I don't know if you have a quorum for that.

CHAIRMAN EDDINGTON:

But I appreciate you coming and going back with some questions, and maybe in the future we'll get some more answers. So thank you very much, everyone have a good afternoon.

[THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 12:25 P.M.]