

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 1st, 2015 at 10:00 a.m.

Members Present:

Legislator Kate Browning - Chair
Legislator Robert Calarco - Vice-Chair
Legislator Kara Hahn
Legislator Leslie Kennedy
Legislator William Spencer
Legislator Monica Martinez

Also In Attendance:

Presiding Officer DuWayne Gregory - Legislative District No. 15
George Nolan - Counsel to the Legislature
Sarah Simpson - Assistant Counsel to the Legislature
Jason Richberg - Chief Deputy Clerk/Suffolk County Legislature
DJ Russo - Legislative Aide/Office of Clerk of the Legislature
John Ortiz - Budget Analyst/Legislative Budget Review Office
Michael Pitcher - Aide to Presiding Officer Gregory
Josh Slaughter - Aide to Legislator Browning
Bill Schilling - Aide to Legislator Calarco
Ali Nazir - Aide to Legislator Kennedy
Alyssa Turano - Aide to Legislator Hahn
Elizabeth Alexander - Aide to Legislator Spencer
Katie Horst - County Executive's Office
Kerri Suoto - County Executive's Office.
John Marofino - County Executive's Office
Mohammed Awais - County Executive's Office
Matthew O'Malley - Lieutenant/Chief of Department's Office/SCPD
Michael Sharkey - Chief Deputy Sheriff/Suffolk County Sheriff's Office
Patrice Dlhopsky - Director/Suffolk County Probation Department
Joel Vetter - FRES/Coordinator of Emergency Medical Services
Russ McCormick - Sgt-at-Arms/Suffolk County Detective's Association
Lou Tutone - 1st Vice-President/Suffolk County Police Benevolent Assoc
John Becker - President/Deputy Sheriff Police Benevolent Association
Suzanne McBride - AME Representative for 911 Center Dispatchers
Kathy Malloy - Secretary/Suffolk County AME
Tim Bigoti - Suffolk County Police Department/Communications
Jennifer Nunns - Suffolk County Police Department/Communications
Nancy Hawkins - Suffolk County Police Department/Communications
Barbara Gordon - Suffolk County Police Department/Communications
Jeremy Sommeso - Suffolk County Police Department/Communications
Kathryn Piekarski - Suffolk County Police Department/Communications

Christopher Gagliano - Suffolk County Police Department/Communications
Dawn Ruggiero - Suffolk County Police Department/Communications
Karen Hauff - Suffolk County Police Department/Communications
Timothy Eagen - Superintendent/Kings Park School District
Kimberly Revere - President/Kings Park in the kNOW
Pam Farino - Resident of Smithtown
All Other Interested Parties

Minutes Taken By:

Alison Mahoney - Court Stenographer

(*The meeting was called to order at 10:05 A.M.*)

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay, good morning. We will start the Public Safety Committee meeting. If everyone could please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator Calarco.

Salutation

And a moment of silence for those who defend our country at home and abroad.

Moment of Silence Observed

Thank you. Okay, we have couple of cards, and the first card is Suzanne McBride.

MS. McBRIDE:

Thank you. Good morning, Legislators. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. As you all know, my name is Suzanne McBride, I'm the Suffolk County Association of Municipal Employees representative for the employees up at the 911 Center of the Police Department.

I'm here, once again, to speak about the staffing shortage at 911.

If you'll all remember, when I came back in 2012 we had 137 employees. Mr. Ortiz said at that time that was out of 154 authorized positions and that left us 18% understaffed. Today we have 136 employees; you heard last month the department spokesperson say that's out of 144 authorized positions. I don't know how we lost seven positions, it's one of the questions I'd like to get answered.

But the other issue is we all know how long it takes to staff 911 when we're this short. This body, the full Legislature passed a resolution to make sure we didn't go 90% of authorized positions; we are well below that at this point. How we got there, why we were led to get there, I have no idea, but I would like some answers.

I have a group of people with me here today from 911. Their lives have been extremely affected by this. They don't get to go home to their families, they have to make choices between taking their kids to doctors' appointments and showing up to work with two hours sleep because they've been mandated in for the second or third time during the week. They have to make choices between keeping their job and protecting their health, and many of them have had to choose their health, they've left County employment. We've reached a point where the County is filling the seats by violating Federal law, State law and our contract and it needs to stop.

On a Saturday in September, there is no excuse for violating State law and our employees not getting meals. This is not vacation related, this is staffing related. We need at least another ten employees now, today, and I know we're not going to get them. I don't know what can be done to

fix this problem immediately, probably nothing. At the time it takes to hire, to go through the process of the background check, the psychological, the health screening, it's going to take probably five to six months just to get them in the door, it's going to take another four to six months to get them trained; we're looking at some time maybe next September. That means another summer of not having staffing, of being mandated probably not just for 12 hours but for 16, of more missed meals, of more not going home to their families.

This needs to be fixed. Suffolk County Legislators have a history of ground-breaking legislation that the country looks to to model theirs. I'm asking you to step up to the challenge and find some ground-breaking ways to fix this problem. We need your help. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Suzanne, don't get go anywhere, because I've got a funny feeling you're going to have a couple of questions, but I have one. Actually, I did get some information, you know, from some of the 911 operators and situations with family. You know, finishing the shift in the middle of the night, having to go home, prepare your children for school, doctors' appointments, whatever, and then being mandated that you have to come back to work with little or no sleep. My concern is your performance and how that's going to affect your performance, if you are not getting enough sleep. And the last thing anybody -- and I know we have other people from the public here that are listening, I'm sure they're probably getting very disturbed from hearing that, you know, you are coming into work with little or no sleep, and now if you make a mistake, what happens?

MS. McBRIDE:

If we make a mistake, somebody's life depends on it, someone could die. I can tell you, as a union rep who represents the employees when they've made those mistakes, that the need for me to represent them has increased over the past few months. There's been far more disciplinary cases and, in my opinion, it is related to the stress, to the lack of sleep, to the overwork situation. If we don't answer that phone promptly, somebody could die. If we're not sharp and an officer is shot on the road or run over and we are not sharp enough to figure out who he is, where they are, we're not getting them the help they need. They count on us to start other units to help them, to start rescue, to start the resources to help find the person responsible for injuring them. Our job affects all of the public and all of our officers. You need 911 operators, you need dispatchers.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

And I know that there's been a lot of laws that have been changed over the years, and I know my husband being a pilot, you have, you know, the crew rest time that you are supposed to get a certain amount of time to rest, you know, from one shift to the next. I know it doesn't always happen. However, even truck drivers, there's a lot of discussion because of truck drivers being tired. There is no laws in place, Federal or State laws, with regards to rest time?

MS. McBRIDE:

To my knowledge, there's no laws in effect to guide that. We do have a departmental rule at this point that you have to have eight hours in-between a shift; so I can do 12 or 16 hours, but I need to have eight hours off. Hopefully going forward we'll be able to maintain that, but like I said, we have 136 today. I forgot to mention we have two more who are scheduled to walk out the door in the next few weeks -- one October 9th, the other sometime by November -- so we're going down to 134. I have no doubt that this short staffing, that the stress is going to lead to more people either going voluntarily leaving or medical conditions. I've had two employees who have recently suffered strokes. It wasn't on the job; I can't stand here and tell you it was job related, but I have serious doubts that it wasn't.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Well, yeah. I mean, the time that you're sitting there all day, you know, it's not healthy. We have talked about it in my office about how much time you're sitting at a desk and, you know, they say the best thing is that every 20 minutes to be able to get up and move around; that's not something you guys can do. But I did want to ask, I mean, obviously there's a pending storm. Have you guys been notified about mandated overtime yet?

MS. McBRIDE:

To my knowledge, we have not been given any notification. I did have the opportunity to unofficially speak with one of our Supervisors who is working on that. I do anticipate there are going to be many mandates coming up. We fully staff the center when we have a pending storm, which means we go from the normal eight to 11 operators to, I want to say 24, 26, I could be off on my numbers; that's a huge increase. The staff, if this turns into a major storm of Sandy's caliber or anywhere near it, they are going to be exhausted. The potential for mistakes, for things being missed, for things being overlooked goes up.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Obviously -- now, I would assume that they're doing voluntary overtime or people will volunteer the overtime first before they get to mandated; is that correct?

MS. McBRIDE:

I would hope so, yes.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. And I guess my question would be in the event of that, I know that there were past storms, they'd set up cots and try to do things to --

MS. McBRIDE:

Yes. The supervisor I spoke with did say that that was all mentioned already, that that will be something that will be in place if needed should this storm hit us.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Right. I believe, Kara, I know you've got questions. Go ahead.

LEG. HAHN:

I always have questions. Can you just go through those numbers one more time, that you read off in the very beginning of your --

MS. McBRIDE:

In 2012, we had 137 employees, that includes employees in the positions of Public Safety Dispatcher, Public Safety Dispatcher II and III, as well as Emergency Complaint Operator and Emergency Complaint Operator Spanish Speaking. It does not include any of our clerical staff.

At that meeting, in the minutes you'll see that the Budget Review, Mr. Ortiz, stated that there were 154 authorized positions out of the 160 that were budgeted in the County budget. Last month it was quoted by a department source that we have 144 authorized positions; we're currently down to 136 of those filled.

LEG. HAHN:

Okay, wait. And I'm just going to clarify; you said 154 authorized and 160 budgeted?

MS. McBRIDE:

Yes.

LEG. HAHN:

And he said last month, because I'm looking at the transcript, *Of the 144 funded positions, we have 137 filled*, is what he said last month.

MS. McBRIDE:

Yes.

LEG. HAHN:

So is that what still exists? John, can you help?

MR. ORTIZ:

Yeah, I think I had mentioned this last meeting as well. There is a difference between the number of authorized positions in the budget and the amount that we put the funding in for, so it's authorized versus budgeted. So yes, they put in money for 145 positions and 135 to 37 are filled at any given point. So there --

LEG. HAHN:

But last year -- but we didn't eliminate authorized positions.

MR. ORTIZ:

No, no, we didn't.

LEG. HAHN:

So how could in 2000 -- well, last year I'm saying, as if -- it's now three years later. Three years ago, if she's correct -- and I didn't go back and look at those transcripts -- but if she's correct and we had 154 authorized positions in 2012, do you have any way of looking back over that and determine --

MR. ORTIZ:

I have data going back into the 1990s.

LEG. HAHN:

Okay. So we haven't changed the number of authorized positions, have we?

MR. ORTIZ:

No, but the number of budgeted changes.

LEG. HAHN:

Sure. Okay, so 160 budgeted in 2012.

MR. ORTIZ:

Authorized.

LEG. HAHN:

154 authorized, 160 budgeted is what they said, she said.

MR. ORTIZ:

It's usually -- there's usually more authorized than budgeted.

LEG. HAHN:

Right, that was my question. Because you had said, Suzanne, 154 authorized and 160 budgeted; is it opposite what you had?

MS. McBRIDE:

I used the term that was used in that meeting in 2012 by Mr. Ortiz, that there was 154 authorized; and I looked at the budget for that year, there was 160 listed in the County budget.

LEG. HAHN:

Okay. John, why don't you try to tell us where we're at, where we've been and where we're going; is that possible?

*(*Legislator Spencer entered the meeting at 10:17 A.M. *)*

MR. ORTIZ:

Where we're at right now is what Suzanne said, we're still under the budgeted amount, because there's a pretty high level of attrition; as she said, two more are going soon.

Where we're going? The recommended budget fully staffs all vacant ECO and Dispatch positions. There's enough money in there to fill them all for a half a year, which is usually some early in the year, some are later in the year. So they put in an additional amount of funding to fill all of those positions. And like Suzanne says, by the time you canvass them, do background checks and train, they're not going to be all on board January 1st, obviously. So the intent of the budget is to bring up staffing levels to a near authorized level, you know, so the budgeted and the authorized amount are the same now.

The difference is that in the budget they made a precipitous drop in the amount of overtime, so they're assuming that all these new positions are going to cut overtime from over 800,000 down to 300,000, which I'm not sure is going to happen because not all of these positions are going to be filled early in the year. So it's six of one, half a dozen of another whether they're going to have enough money to fill all these positions and pay the overtime. But the intent of the recommended budget is to fill all vacant ECO and Public Safety Dispatcher positions during the course of the year.

LEG. HAHN:

So one more time with that number that's in the budget; how many authorized and budgeted?

MR. ORTIZ:

I have that, I'll have to call up the file and give it to you.

LEG. HAHN:

Thank you. Do you -- are you -- how do you read it? Because I know we had a conversation that -- I mean, is that good news to you? Are you feeling skeptical?

MS. McBRIDE:

That will be wonderful news for 2017.

LEG. HAHN:

No, I get it.

MS. McBRIDE:

In 2016, quite honestly, the public will be at risk, besides the effects on my employees and their families. I have one employee who is already in a custody battle for their child because of the irregular schedules that she's forced to maintain. If there is not some way to find a way to better schedule their lives, there's no way that these people can survive another year, a year and a half if we wait until mid-2016 to hire these people. There's just no way to sustain the 911 operators. You're going to end up bringing in police officers to dispatch at a much higher cost than to fill these positions with civilians.

And this money comes out of the E-911 Fund, it doesn't come out of the General Fund, it doesn't come out of sales tax. This is the E-911 Fund, that maybe we need to look to see if the State is giving us our fair share. There was a report a while back that some of that E-911 money is being diverted into the New York State General Fund. Maybe that's something we need to look at.

We might need to look at, also, that prepaid cell phones I don't believe pay E-911 taxes; maybe that's something we need to look at as a revenue generator. But we cannot keep going on like this. 911 is a vital function of public safety, they are the first responders, and if those positions are not filled, the public is not getting the help they need in a time of crisis.

LEG. HAHN:

Do we have a representative from the Police Department here?

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

We do, we have Lieutenant O'Malley.

LEG. HAHN:

Ah, you were sitting behind the podium, for me.

MR. ORTIZ:

Kara, can I give you those numbers?

LEG. HAHN:

Oh, yes. Oh, and John found the numbers.

MR. ORTIZ:

Just a little bit of history. Back as late as 2003, we had 142 authorized positions and 140 of them were filled. Fast forward to 2015, we have 160 authorized positions and 136 are filled.

LEG. HAHN:

And for 2016, how does that change?

MR. ORTIZ:

We still have 160 authorized positions and there's enough funding to fill them all for over the course of the year, assuming some are hired earlier and some are hired later.

LEG. HAHN:

You said 2015 we had 160 -- we have 160 authorized and right now we have 136 filled. How many are budgeted?

MR. ORTIZ:

For '16 or now?

LEG. HAHN:

Fifteen.

MR. ORTIZ:

One hundred and forty-five.

LEG. HAHN:

So, and then for '16 we have 160 authorized and we budget for a hundred and --

MR. ORTIZ:

Sixty.

LEG. HAHN:

-- sixty. And obviously we cannot -- the filled is up to them, to hold the class, then training and sign the SCINS and actually get them in there and do it as fast as possible.

MR. ORTIZ:

And assuming nobody leaves, we'll have 160 by the end of the year.

LEG. HAHN:

By the end of the year. Is there any way -- we have 140 -- so at the very least, at the moment -- well, minus the time it takes to get them ready. But we could start the process sooner, at the very least fill the nine spots that are budgeted currently but are not filled? Should we be doing something to fill that?

MR. ORTIZ:

I don't know where the canvassing and the hiring is right now, maybe the Police Department can fill you in on that.

LEG. HAHN:

Thank you for coming to the podium.

LIEUTENANT O'MALLEY:

Hi, Legislator. Lieutenant Matthew O'Malley from the Chief of Department's Office. As far as the hiring, I do know we did lose the one ECO and we have another one basically ready to be hired right behind him; we expect to be bringing that SCIN over for signing in the very near future. The two that they're speaking about that will be leaving -- one October 9th and the other, like she said, by November sometime -- are both Spanish speakers. That gives us a little bit more trouble because, as of right now, we're at full hiring for the Spanish speakers, so there really isn't a SCIN to sign until they leave, and as they do we'll be going, but as far as what the candidates are, I don't have that with me.

LEG. HAHN:

But that's -- so we're talking about three positions, but there are nine there, right? So there are nine. So we need to be working towards Spanish, not -- you know, just getting them filled which means -- remind me, a training class; like a call for people?

LIEUTENANT O'MALLEY:

The training's all done in-house, I believe; correct? They're hired and then they're trained in-house.

LEG. HAHN:

Yeah, hired then trained. So we can be hiring, like we can be doing that now.

LIEUTENANT O'MALLEY:

I do not have all the information as far as where the lists are.

LEG. HAHN:

We have nine that were budgeted for. We don't even have to change the budget, we can just do it. Do it!

*(*Laughter*)*

LIEUTENANT O'MALLEY:

I will certainly bring that back.

LEG. HAHN:

(Laughter). I don't get it.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Well said, Kara.

LEG. HAHN:

I don't get it. I don't get what the problem is here, like really. I mean, I'm not -- yes, I'm going to -- every month it's like frustration is expressed here. I don't get it. I don't get the holdup. There's clearly public safety -- we have an impending storm, we knew one would come, one is always going to come. And now, you know, this is -- it's not right. I can't get any madder than I've been in the past. We're in a worse position than we were back when we were crying on the record, cursing on the record. You know, I don't understand. I mean, we've thought of -- we tried to think of things that were outside the box, bringing back in, you know, at least begging retirees to come back in and bringing them over from other counties and all kinds of -- we've had all kinds of out-of-the-box thinking here.

Really what it takes is a signature on a form and just do it, at least for those nine. It's not like we're sitting here with 160 authorized, 145 budgeted and 145 filled. We don't have to come up with an offset, right, John? I mean, it's there. I get that we have a budget problem, but this is -- you know, you've got to balance the public safety, the urgency of protecting the people here. This is important. We're not talking about coming up with an offset. I don't have to file a bill that says, *This is how we're going to pay for it and that's where we're going to slash*. We've got it budgeted, just do it.

LIEUTENANT O'MALLEY:

I would remind you that there's obviously a process with the task and --

LEG. HAHN:

It takes a while, I know.

LIEUTENANT O'MALLEY:

-- to go through the hiring process.

LEG. HAHN:

I know.

LIEUTENANT O'MALLEY:

-- making sure they are the right candidates for the job.

LEG. HAHN:

So why are we dragging our feet to get it started?

LIEUTENANT O'MALLEY:

Honestly, I can't tell you where it is we stand right now.

LEG. HAHN:

No, I get it. I'm not really talking to you.

*(*Laughter*)*

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

We don't like to shoot the messenger. And we understand, Lieutenant O'Malley, that it's not your call, and you're the one that has to take our frustration and take it back.

LIEUTENANT O'MALLEY:

It's quite all right.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

So we certainly appreciate that you do. And I don't want to depress you anymore, because I can tell you FRES dispatch is no better. And I have learned about phone calls on hold, which is extremely disturbing when a 911 operator switches the call over to FRES, which I know is not your jurisdiction. However, they're switching a call for fire or ambulance and the phone is ringing because they're all on the call. They're all on calls and they're not able to answer the phone. And I know, I've been down there, I think it's probably one of the most unhealthiest rooms you would ever want to be in anyway. But looking at a screen and you're seeing all these boxes of unanswered calls for fire and ambulance and these guys -- again, so, you know, we're hearing the same thing from the FRES dispatch. And the fact that a phone call is coming for a fire or an ambulance and we are not able to respond immediately, that's disturbing, extremely disturbing. So that is another issue.

I know Joel Vetter is here and, again, I don't want to shoot that messenger either. I know that's not why he is here, but this is another issue that we need to talk about, John, is the dispatchers at FRES and what we have budgeted there, what's authorized, what's budgeted and what we currently have. Because I know we had a few retirements, like we did with the PD and other law enforcement, anticipated retirements. Does the AME workers, Suzanne, do you guys have a retirement seminar for anticipated retirements, anyone who is considering retirement? You might want to come up? Okay, she's shaking her head no, okay. I don't know if you would be able to do that, is to be able to give us some ideas what you expect over the next couple of years before your -- the contract, I believe, is until 2018, correct? You want to come up? Because I'm assuming that you might have some idea. Granted, if we fill the nine spots, how many could possibly retire between now and 2018.

MS. McBRIDE:

We have a large class of dispatchers. For those who aren't aware, dispatch function was civilianized about 22, 23 years ago. They brought in probably about 20, 25 people. The people that are left are getting close to retirement, they have another two, three, four years. We do have a large group that will be looking to retire shortly.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

How long do most of them stay?

MS. McBRIDE:

That varies. We have quite a few that leave after the ten years. They get their ten years in and they're gone; they're vested in the health system, the retirement system, they go. We do have probably a third that are here since the beginning that are approaching 20, 25 years. We have a few, a handful, that are there for 30 years or more. How they've done it, I couldn't tell you. But for the most part, they're leaving pretty quickly. Out of the last group, we had quite a few that didn't even make the first year.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Well, when you have a full complement of workers versus a short staff, it makes a difference.

MS. McBRIDE:

It definitely changes the retention levels if you don't have the staff.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Right.

MS. McBRIDE:

I know myself, if I had started in the County today as opposed to 18 years ago when I did, I never would have stayed. There's no way you can raise a family on the work schedule that we have now, none.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Leslie, you have a question? Do you have a question for Suzanne? Suzanne, you better not go anywhere.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Suzanne, we will all be making our calls again today. You deserve at least the nine as soon as possible. But my question is the other night we were at a FRES seminar and something very interesting came up; you want to discuss that?

MS. McBRIDE:

We were at a seminar on emergency preparedness, it was given by someone in the Emergency Operations Center, they spoke on Smart 911. For those of you who are familiar with Smart 911, it's an on-line based program that you go on. You can enter your family information, your medical history, as much information as you want to share with the 911 system, so that when you dial into 911, God forbid you can't speak, they have the information. They may know of that maybe you have a heart condition, maybe you have a history of strokes, they'll know if you have a key placed somewhere and you've put that on your profile, they'll know where your house key is. They'll be able to get access to you much quicker.

The County has done public safety announcements. County Executive Bellone has been in those announcements stating that Suffolk has access to smart 911. When you dial 911, we have that information; well, we don't, FRES does. So if you speak and you ask for Fire or Rescue, we'll transfer you to them and they'll have the additional information. But if you dial 911 and you're unable to speak, you drop the phone before you're unable to say anything, hopefully you're on a landline and we can get to you quickly, but we're not going to know what the problem might be. We do not have access in the department, in the Police Department to Smart 911. I'm told it's a matter of money, licensing fees. I've actually been in touch with a representative from the Smart 911 Program who represents Suffolk County. She would like, actually, Legislator Kennedy, to sit down with you and discuss this further. I'll get you her contact information.

LEG. KENNEDY:

I will be in the office.

MS. McBRIDE:

But we do not have access to this program that is being advertised as being available in Suffolk County. Again, it's putting people at risk. If you think that I can dial 911 and you're going to know my family history, where I might be, we don't, it's false advertising.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Suzanne, this is a dangerous situation, since a majority of the calls come through you.

MS. McBRIDE:

All 911 calls come to us.

LEG. KENNEDY:

We will take care of it as soon as we can. And I will request that FRES and the PD check into how much licensing for those are and come back to us? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Kara?

LEG. HAHN:

My question is to John. Suzanne mentioned E-911 money, the prepaid cell phones don't pay the E-911 taxes. Can you -- is there any -- do you know anything about that, any options for us there?

MR. ORTIZ:

I think she's correct, but I'm not 100% sure. I don't think they pay the 30 cent surcharge.

LEG. HAHN:

Why wouldn't they?

LEG. KENNEDY:

There's no regular billing.

LEG. HAHN:

Obviously, if we -- that's something we'd have to go to the State to get permission to add.

MR. ORTIZ:

I think the problem is that with the prepaid there's no bill that's submitted, so we wouldn't be able to track it and we don't know who to charge.

LEG. HAHN:

Well, no, but it could come at the time of the purchase.

MR. ORTIZ:

The surcharge is actually \$1.20. One of the other things that Suzanne mentioned is out of the \$1.20, the State keeps most of it, we get \$0.30 out of it, and we've been lobbying for a while to get more of the action out of that, because the State is literally doing very little and collecting most of the revenue.

LEG. HAHN:

Okay. But in order to implement that on a prepaid cell phone, like at the time of purchase or at the time of purchasing additional minutes -- is that how it works? I've never even used one, so I don't even know. So, you know, that fine or tax or whatever it's called could be instituted at that point; am I correct?

MR. ORTIZ:

I don't know the exact logistics, but if you walked into a 7-Eleven and bought a prepaid phone, they would have to charge the \$1.20 surcharge on it. I'm not sure how they would remit that to the State, a whole series of procedures would have to probably go into effect.

LEG. HAHN:

Well, we do it for everything else. So then the E-911 money issue is just as you described; the State gets the bulk, then sends us a tiny portion even though we do the 911 services.

MR. ORTIZ:

And then we take 20% of that and give it to the PSAPs.

LEG. HAHN:

Right, I remember those discussions. Okay, so we do need to include our State representatives in these discussions, whether that E-911 money should go up or whether we should get a bigger portion; I'm sure there's one that's more likely in that scenario.

MR. ORTIZ:

Well, we get 30 cents for the cell phones and the Voice Over Internet Protocol, or VOIP, and we get 35 cents on the land-lines.

LEG. HAHN:

Okay. And we're getting a lot of cell phone -- I mean, Suzanne, I know you've spoken about just the sheer number of calls that come in, especially for car accidents, for example, that 10, 12, 20, 30 people will see something and call and so, you know, the cell phone really has increased the load. I mean, it's good, but it also -- there are many, many, many more calls that come in as a result.

MR. ORTIZ:

One other caveat is that next year we're moving to what's called Next Generation E-911 where we can now accept video and text messages as well.

LEG. HAHN:

Yes, I passed --

MR. ORTIZ:

So it's probably going to increase even further.

LEG. HAHN:

Yes. Hopefully that's true of the 911, that it will help them, hopefully. I think there's great potential there, it just has to be figured out. It's discouraging that the State keeps so much of it, but I'm sure --

MR. ORTIZ:

The Police Department has been lobbying the State for as long as I can remember to get a bigger piece of that action.

LEG. HAHN:

Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. No more questions? Leslie?

LEG. KENNEDY:

I had the occasion last night to have to call 911. I want to thank you for being there. Whoever answered the phone was more than adequate, polite, did a good job. There was a car accident that occurred right in front of us as we were driving between events.

You do a good job, we appreciate it.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay, thank you.

LEG. HAHN:

Can the committee write a letter to our State representatives, and whoever else is appropriate, about the E-911 and the prepaid cell phone issue?

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Sure we could. Actually, the prepaid cell phone, you know that's a favorite subject.

LEG. HAHN:

I know. Well, I love your issue on that.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Because I see we have a couple of people coming to talk about the heroin epidemic, and having spoken with people who have lost their children and showing me that this is the prepaid cell phone that their child's drug dealer was using, it's coming back.

LEG. HAHN:

I think you should resubmit that for sure.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

It is coming back.

LEG. HAHN:

I think you should.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

So anyway, I guess no more questions. We do have two more speakers; believe it or not, we haven't even finished the cards. The next speaker is Timothy Eagen. Good morning. I hope you're enjoying the conversation.

MR. EAGEN:

Absolutely. Good morning. My name is Timothy Eagen and I'm the Superintendent of the Kings Park Central School District, and I'm here this morning as the School Superintendent, obviously representing my school district. I'm also an East Northport resident and a proud father of two young ones at home, six and eight. And I'm not a Superintendent who is in denial of our heroin epidemic. I have huge respect for everything that you guys do for Suffolk County and for public servants in general and I thank you for the opportunity to say a few words here this morning.

Some of my Superintendent colleagues would hate the statement I'm about to make, but I would venture to guess that on most days, in most secondary schools on Long Island, you will find drugs; it's a simple fact. Why? Because they're relatively easy to get. Just three weeks ago in East Northport, they had the annual East Northport Fair. There were numerous EMS calls that night, two were Narcan related, many were drug related. Two individuals would have died that night had it not been for emergency medical service and Narcan, to bring them back to life literally.

So I'm just here this morning to keep heroin and the heroin epidemic, that is not new but has been here for a while, on the public service agenda, and to encourage you to ask important questions and continue to ask important questions, like where is the heroin coming from. We know that most likely it's coming from the west; so what collaborative mechanisms in particular do we have in place with the DA, with Nassau Police, with New York City Police? Are things improving? What kinds of resources do we have devoted specifically to this issue? And if we're not improving, are we thinking about increasing those resources and increasing those collaborative efforts?

At the end of the day, it's about our children, our children of Suffolk County. We know that heroin is largely a white, young, middle class to upper middle class epidemic, it's our kids. As public servants, whether elected or not elected, I think it's our duty to continue to ask these important questions and demand answers and accountability.

I'm not here to knock Suffolk County Police. My family has a long history of serving in the Suffolk County Police Department. I have huge respect for the people of uniform, men and women, but I want to keep this on the public service agenda and make sure that elected officials and non-elected officials keep on this and keep asking important questions. And I thank you for your time this morning.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Thank you. A quick question. Obviously, Lieutenant O'Malley, I'm sure, has taken note of your questions. I'd like for you to give your information so that they can reach out to you.

I'm curious. We had a committee a number of years ago -- and again, thank you to Legislator Hahn and former Legislator John Kennedy, because they're the ones who initiated the Narcan. But what --

LEG. HAHN:

With the Police Department.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

With the Police Department, yes. So I live in the William Floyd School District and one of the things that the William Floyd School District decided, there was a committee formed quite a few years ago with Jeff Reynolds to look at the heroin epidemic, to look at the drug problems. And one of the things that they recommended was having programs within the school districts. Now, the William Floyd School District has Family Service League, they have an office in the school district itself. Initially some people had a little opposition to it, you know, because, of course, there's always some people who have denial. Have you guys worked with any organization like Daytop or Family Service League to have that kind of resource available in the school?

MR. EAGEN:

I am glad you asked that question.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Good.

MR. EAGEN:

We have more numerous things in place in the Kings Park, East Northport, Smithtown, Commack area than I could probably name in the next three minutes or so. We have a great organization -- the President of which is standing behind me, Kings Park in the kNOW -- that is devoted to this issue. We have a strong commitment through Horizons in Smithtown, and we just hired a new social worker in the school district to spearhead this issue. School districts have done amazing work in this area. Again, some are in denial that there is a problem and you will find some Superintendents who will flat out tell you that they do not have a problem in their schools; statistics show that that statement is probably false.

The reason I'm here today is to ask you to continue to ask questions of -- along the nature of those I mentioned before. What mechanisms do we specifically have in place to track drug trafficking; where are the drugs coming from; and what resources do we have devoted to this area? At the end of the day, schools can bend over backwards and have all the programs in terms of prevention. Narcan's a great drug, but it's bringing somebody back to life, it's not preventing the drugs from getting to that individual.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Right. But -- and again, education with our younger kids is something that we have to continue to do. But do you actually have something in your school? Because I know --

MR. EAGEN:

We absolutely do.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

-- in the William Floyd School District, we have a lot of programs outside, but sometimes when you've got the -- the children are captive, it's good to have them there.

MR. EAGEN:

And not to be argumentative, but elected officials are great at creating new mandates for schools.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Not us.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

This was not a mandate.

MR. EAGEN:

We have many of them.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Not a mandate.

MR. EAGEN:

But I am here this morning for you to ask the questions regarding the drug trafficking which, you know, if drugs were not as easily accessible as they are, we can have as many programs funded in schools as we possibly can. At the end of the day, if I can go to the corner and purchase a bag of heroine for \$30 and it's easy for me to do that, it's very difficult for us to control that in schools.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. Leslie, is any -- I know the next speaker is from Smithtown also. So I know they're your district or close to your district?

LEG. KENNEDY:

Kings Park in the kNOW is in Legislator Trotta's District.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Legislator Trotta is presently working on some additional tracking, another bill for additional tracking; that's all I can give you right now. But we are on this and we have been working on this for years and years and years. It is getting somewhat better, but we do need exactly what you're asking for.

And I thank you for coming out and having the courage. Unlike others in your profession, there is a risk to coming out and discussing the facts of what is going on with our kids. I personally believe that substance abuse education should begin appropriately, in kindergarten where they show them pictures of pills or whatever, heroin, in a controlled classroom protocol and teach them, *This is bad, this is scary*. It should be age appropriate, but it should continue periodically and be mixed within every protocol that you do throughout the day as they grow. So that it's not reach middle school and this is an exciting thing to try.

I appreciate you coming out today, it takes a lot of courage. Keep up the good work in your school district. Kings Park in the kNOW we have worked with for years, they are probably one of the best community organizations. I know quite a bit, as a nurse and having worked in substance abuse facilities and hospitals with adolescents, but when I'm stuck with a referral, I go to them. So you are very lucky to have the group that you have.

MR. EAGEN:

Thank you very much. I appreciate your time.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay, thank you. And Lieutenant O'Malley will make sure he gets your information. The next speaker we have is Pam Farino.

MS. FARINO:

I brought my own Power Point, just in case we all forgot what happened this summer in a 60-day period. So good morning. My name is Pam Farino, I'm a resident of Smithtown. I'm here today because I want you to see this poster that I will be bringing to the Fed-Up Rally in Washington, D.C. I want them to know where I come from. I want them to know what is happening in our suburbia. So I'm here because we need to have the Federal response for this Opioid epidemic, and everyone sitting in this room is painfully aware of this epidemic and how it's affecting every single community in each and every single district. We're the epicenter. So one would think that Suffolk County Police Department is doing everything it possibly can to fight this wrong, correct? Wrong.

Over the course of the summer, our kids were dying, either due to Opioids or to gun violence. Because with drugs come illegal guns. In Presiding Officer Gregory's District, there were 34 shooting incidents in about 60 days; not only is that embarrassing, but it's extremely scary for every single member of that community.

So here I am going to D.C. in about 24-hours to lobby for Federal help. Yet the Suffolk County Police Department, since 2012, has systematically removed the six DEA Agents, the two ATF Detectives and the three FBI Agents that we once worked arm-in-arm with. Yes, I know, we've had two reinstated, but they're basically administration rather than anything else. Perhaps I'm missing something here in these headlines. Because by all accounts, the Suffolk County Police Department on its own has not decreased the proliferation of illegal guns and violence in our communities, nor have they been effective in prohibiting the flow of the drugs into our County.

I have been informed that these Federal Detectives had worked under the command of the Chief of Detectives. Now, I'm not sure why they were moved, I don't know if it was personal or what, because I have read the Newsday headlines. However, are we having a complete breakdown of the seventh largest police force in the entire country? I don't know. But aren't these headlines enough for all of you?

All of you must insist that these Federal investigators are brought back into Suffolk County so that our County can actively and forcefully cut off the flow of the guns and the drugs coming into our communities before we lose one more life, unless we've already lost that one while I've been speaking. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Thank you. And again, Lieutenant O'Malley will take the message back to the Administration. Any questions? No? None. So we have no more cards. So is there anyone else in the room who would like to speak? Nope. Okay.

MS. REVERE:

Can I say something?

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Commissioner Williams did --

LEG. CALARCO:

No, you've got one more.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Oh. Okay, come up.

MS. REVERE:

Just very quickly.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Just state your name.

MS. REVERE:

My name is Kim Revere and I'm President of the Kings Park in the kNOw and I'm standing up here because they mentioned me. I just wanted to just say that I am -- I was listening to Dr. Eagen speak before. The first time I ever spoke with my Superintendent was our former Superintendent, and when I did go to her to explain to her that we wanted to work with the school district on the substance abuse problem, which does start with alcohol and tobacco, her answer to me was that it was going to be a problem because she had to deal with real estate agents in Smithtown. Okay? Last night I went to speak with -- I went to hear Michael {Dillione} speak and he mentioned the same exact thing about real estate. I would rather live in a community that was actively trying to keep our communities safe and do something about this problem. It is true, there are programs such as *Too Good for Drugs* that are K-12 evidence-based programs, they do cost money.

In Kings Park, we do have the *Too Good for Drugs Program* in our middle school and our high school. We pay for it; Kings Park in the kNOw does raise the funds to pay for that program. But this country would be so much better off if we would invest in our children and take care of this as a whole. We can't -- and we need the Feds. I'm a small government person, I'm ready to move into the middle of the woods. I told my husband -- I'm a Suffolk County employee. February 12th, 2017, I begin living, because I know what it's like to be an employee in this County. I told my husband I want to move to the woods. But you know what? It's not even safe in the woods anymore, because this problem's gotten so out of hand. And I just want you to take that message back to your offices and I'm just not going to give up the fight, and that's it. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Thank you. So there are no more speakers. I know Commissioner Williams, obviously with the pending storm, could not come today.

So we appreciate all the work that our members of FRES -- and again, our 911 operators -- are going to possibly face this weekend. I can only hope that it doesn't turn out to be as bad as what's being anticipated.

I think -- yeah, I think Joel is here. I know that there was -- there's some bills coming up, some CNs. Mike, do you have anything you need to report or discuss?

CHIEF SHARKEY:

(Shook head no).

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

I see John Becker is here. Are you guys the only contract, or Probation and you guys? I'm just curious how things are going. I mean, I know Probation -- oh, sorry, Matt, you're here, my constituent. Just curious how your contracts are going, if any of you want to say anything.

MR. BECKER:

Good morning. Yes, we've had numerous meetings with Labor Relations and the Chief Deputy County Executive Dennis Cohen. As of right now, the Deputy Sheriff PBA has offered a deal that would realize significant savings to the County. It would also settle the Highway Patrol litigation. As I've spoken about before, this has become a very costly and lengthy battle to the taxpayer.

I spoke personally with the County Executive, as of last week he stated he would follow-up on our negotiations with the Chief Deputy County Executive Dennis Cohen. As of now, that has not happened. I spoke with Labor Relations yesterday, she stated that there has been no follow-up. I am asking the County Executive to focus on this negotiation. We are approaching our sixth year without a contract; to say that the members that I represent are frustrated and angry would be a tremendous understatement.

This deal that we presented would also settle the \$4 million that was deferred by our 2011 Memorandum of Agreement. That money is scheduled to be paid by December 31st of this year. It's been my understanding that that money has never been allocated in the budget. That presents another serious concern, again, to our members who are expecting that money to be paid. That money would be also negotiated in this agreement.

So once again, I am asking the County Executive to focus on this negotiation. This is in the best interest of both parties. If a deal cannot be reached, then we have no alternative but to go to arbitration, and we feel that a deal reached between two parties is better than one imposed by a third party.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

So let me ask you, obviously arbitration is three years. So if you go to arbitration, arbitration comes up with a decision, a contract for you guys, it's a three-year contract.

MR. BECKER:

Correct, it would be a three-year arbitration.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

And as most of the other unions have done, they have put into negotiations to put off or delay retroactive money. Because I keep remembering, I haven't forgotten that nice chunk of change that we had to borrow for retro for Correction Officers because of arbitration. So the arbitration would be -- do you have an estimated -- let's say you were to get -- I guess it might be a little hard for you to try and figure out, if you get a three-year contract and there's a retro in there, what would that estimated amount be; it would be kind of hard to say?

MR. BECKER:

Yes, it's difficult to say. It would be based upon whatever the arbitrator awarded, which you just don't know. You know, we'll present our arguments and the County would present theirs, but the unknown becomes the biggest reason either party wants to go to arbitration.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Yeah. I mean, personally I don't think we always win when it comes to arbitration. It hurts us as a County. So you -- knock me if I say something I probably shouldn't say, but I'm just curious. So obviously there's that \$4 million that's sitting out there. So you have negotiated, you know, either

making that \$4 million go away or pushing it off, so you have used that as a negotiating tool.

MR. BECKER:

Yes. Both the contract and the highway issue would be settled at the same time.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. So -- and I know that each bargaining unit is required to bring in a certain amount of savings.

MR. BECKER:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

So are they asking you besides the \$4 million to bring in more or are they --

MR. BECKER:

Yes, they're asking for our pro rata share of savings and that's based upon the savings that was realized from the Police Department contract. We don't reap the benefit of their wage increases based on different bargaining patterns, but we are asked to come up with our pro rata share of the savings, which we feel we've done.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. I don't know if there's anyone -- I don't know about the rest of the committee, but I think six years is a pretty long time to be without a contract.

MR. BECKER:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

And it would be nice to see something ratified sooner than later. And again, we could wind up being the losers, you could be the winners on the arbitration. So it's a gamble, I understand it is a gamble and it's a gamble on the part of the County to not -- to allow you to say *Go ahead, go to arbitration*, and I know it's a gamble for you.

MR. BECKER:

Yes.

LEG. HAHN:

Well, John, isn't it also more and more painful the longer it gets pushed off, like from a one-shot makeup for -- you know, like if they get increases over years that have gone by? It's painful that way, right?

MR. ORTIZ:

Financially painful.

LEG. HAHN:

Yeah, that's what I mean.

MR. ORTIZ:

Yeah. For instance, the sworn police units deferred a lot of vacation time and holiday pay for the first several years of the contract, but that all comes due in 2016. So they took zeroes up front, saved us a lot of money; if we had gone to arbitration it would have cost us a lot more up front. Arbitration also won't give you a new pay scale for new employees, that's going to end up saving us

a lot of money over time. You know, there's -- a collectively bargaining agreement would be less painful, yes, than going to arbitration.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Possibly less expensive.

MR. ORTIZ:

Well, you're looking at a two or a 3-year deal as opposed to what the police did which was a 7-year deal.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Right. Well, thank you, John. We wish you luck. And I guess whoever is here from the County Exec's Office, I think Katie's still here, you know, it would be nice if we could get an update. Come on, let's get this done.

I don't know, Matt, I don't know if you want to speak on your contract. Is there any negotiations going on with Probation at all? Or are we doing one contract at a time?

MR. PORTER:

We are actively negotiating our contract. We, too, are six years without a raise, five years without a contract come January.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

So another one.

MR. PORTER:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

You don't have arbitration, though.

MR. PORTER:

No.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Which makes it harder. I know that that's been attempted over the years and it seems like the State will not agree to binding arbitration for Probation Officers.

MR. PORTER:

Correct.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

However, we value your service, the things that you do. You guys are the ones that help us to keep the jail from getting as big as they want it to be, which is a big savings. So I'm hoping -- I'd certainly like to find out, are you close to an agreement? I know that you probably can't discuss the --

MR. PORTER:

Can't discuss the terms, but we're getting closer, yes.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. So do you have an anticipated time where you think you might be done?

MR. PORTER:

We're very hopeful by the end of the year something can be done.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

By the end of the year? Okay. I was hoping like maybe by the end of even this month would be nice.

MR. PORTER:

I would be glad if it could come across the table like that, that would be fantastic. My members are just as frustrated and angry about the situation as can be.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

And I understand. Personally, I'm hearing from them. I've heard from some Correction Officers. I have a lot of Correction Officers who live in my district, Probation Officers, including yourself, that I have spoken to and I've heard from -- the frustration of, you know, *I'm six years behind and the bills are just -- everything's getting more expensive and I'm still making the same paycheck.* So again --

MR. PORTER:

By and large, most of our members don't really make any overtime whatsoever, so base pay --

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Right.

MR. PORTER:

-- is what they've been surviving on without a raise for roughly six years.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Right. Do you have many that have second jobs?

MR. PORTER:

We do.

LEG. HAHN:

Do they happen to be 911 operators?

*(*Laughter*)*

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

No. The stress of being a Probation Officer and then a 911 operator, I don't think so. But listen, Matt, we appreciate it. Thank you. And it would be nice to just at least keep us up-to-speed on how things are moving.

MR. PORTER:

We can do that.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

We would appreciate it. Thank you, Matt.

MR. PORTER:

No problem. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

I guess, Mr. Vetter, you're here. I know that there is something that you guys, and Lieutenant O'Malley, there's I guess some CNs coming up?

MR. VETTER:

Local Law 40 Resolutions that you have in front of you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. Do you want to come on ahead? We might as well talk about them now.

MR. VETTER:

So there's four Local Law 40 resolutions for Tuesday's session. With the change in the Federal Grant System, the big term is the super circular, we're under a very tight timeline now to produce the contracts and sign within the Federal E Grant System. Those contracts need to be engaged by October 9th for those four funding streams, which is the Local Emergency Management Preparedness Grant which is a reimbursement of revenue for salaries for various departmental staff. The HazMat Regional Grant, the Strategic Homeland Security Program Grant and the Urban Area Safety Initiative Grants; all four of them are in excess of \$4 million and there are no matching components associated to that.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Any questions? No questions? Okay. If you would do me a favor. I hope you don't -- okay, no, this is a different thing. I just got a message from Mastic Beach, but I guess it's not pertaining to the weekend. If you can hang out, I'll --

MR. VETTER:

We will talk. You should be getting, and I checked earlier, the conference bridges for the storm coming up. Your Legislative side has been established, so I can share that information afterwards with you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. So if you don't mind, that would be appreciated. So are there any other questions before we go to the agenda?

LEG. KENNEDY:

The Lieutenant.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

I'm sorry, Lieutenant O'Malley?

LIEUTENANT O'MALLEY:

Hi. I also have two of the Local Law 40s for basically the same reason he just stated. We have the Explosive Detection K-9 Team Support, also 100% support worth about \$19,000; and then we have the 2015 Bomb Squad Initiative Program which is about \$220,000, all the same reason it will be in front of you on Tuesday.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. No questions? Okay, thank you. So we will go to the agenda.

Introductory Resolutions

We have ***IR 1662-15 - Appropriating funds in connection with improvements to the County Correctional Facility C - 141 - Riverhead (CP 3014) (County Executive)***. I'll make a motion.

LEG. CALARCO:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Second, Legislator Calarco. No questions? Okay. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Okay, it's **approved (VOTE: 6-0-0-0)**.

1692-15 - Amending Resolution No. 119-2015, establishing a School Traffic Zone Safety Commission (Anker). I'll make a motion to approve. Second, Legislator Calarco. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? It's **approved (VOTE: 6-0-0-0)**.

1694-15 - Authorizing certain technical corrections to Adopted Resolution 522-2015 (County Executive). What is that, George?

MR. NOLAN:

It's a very minor technical correction to a grant resolution, 100% grant resolution that was previously approved.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

So can we --

MR. NOLAN:

You can put it on the Consent Calendar.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. So a motion to approve, Legislator Martinez, and place on the Consent Calendar. Second, Legislator Kennedy. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? It's **approved (and placed on the Consent Calendar) (VOTE: 6-0-0-0)**.

1706-15 - Accepting and appropriating a grant in the amount of \$300,000 from the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services for the State Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program (SLETPP) FFY2015 with 100% support (County Executive). I guess same motion, same second, same vote. **(Approved and placed on the Consent calendar - VOTE: 6-0-0-0)**.

1707-15 - Accepting and appropriating Federal pass-through funding in the amount of \$233,254.53 -- which is really important, that 53 cents -- from the State of New York Department of Taxation and Finance for the Suffolk County Police Department's participation in the Cigarette Strike Force (County Executive). I'll make a motion to approve. Second, Legislator Calarco. Oh, sorry, Spencer was seconding that.

LEG. SPENCER:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

That's not a hundred percent?

MR. NOLAN:

You can put it on the Consent Calendar because the money, the matching money is already in the budget. So if you want to put it on the Consent Calendar, that's fine.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay, and put it on the Consent Calendar. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? It's **approved (and placed on the Consent Calendar - VOTE: 6-0-0-0)**.

1711-15 - Directing the Suffolk County Police Department to study the feasibility of establishing an online preliminary Police Report System (Cilmi). I'll make a motion to approve. Do we have a second?

LEG. CALARCO:

Second.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Legislator -- which one? I thought --

LEG. KENNEDY:

We both said it.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Calarco? Okay. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Does anybody have any questions; no? I think most of us know what that's about, right?

LEG. CALARCO:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. So it's **approved (VOTE: 6-0-0-0)**.

1732-15 - Accepting and appropriating a grant award of federal funding in the amount of \$325,000 from US Department of Health and Human Services/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration ("SAMHSA") to the Suffolk County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council with 100% support (County Executive).

(*Presiding Officer Gregory entered the auditorium at 11:11 A.M.*)

LEG. MARTINEZ:

Motion.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Motion to approve by Legislator Martinez, and place on the Consent Calendar. Second by Legislator Spencer. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? It's **approved (and placed on the Consent Calendar - VOTE: 7-0-0-0)**.

1750-15 - Accepting and appropriating a grant providing 75% support, in the amount of \$321,325, from the United States Department of Homeland Security, and amending the 2015 Capital Budget and Program in connection with the purchase of marine equipment (CP 3513)(County Executive). Motion by Legislator Hahn. Second, Legislator Spencer?

LEG. SPENCER:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? It's *approved (VOTE: 7-0-0-0)*.

LEG. KENNEDY:

I have a question.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

You have a question?

LEG. KENNEDY:

Yes, I do.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay, one question.

LEG. KENNEDY:

One question. We have to lay out the money for this initially?

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Generally we do; correct, George?

MR. NOLAN:

Yeah, there is a bonding element to it, I think it's a 75/25, and I don't know that we get reimbursed for that 25%.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Probably not. So, however, *1755-15 - Amending Resolution No. 578-2015 (County Executive)*. Again, grant correction, same thing.

MR. NOLAN:

Correct.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

And we can put that on the Consent Calendar?

MR. NOLAN:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. So there was a motion to approve by Legislator Calarco to place on the Consent Calendar. Second, Legislator Martinez. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? It's *approved (and placed on the Consent Calendar - VOTE: 7-0-0-0)*.

With that, we have no more --

LEG. SPENCER:

Kate?

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Doc Spencer, you have a question?

LEG. SPENCER:

Yeah, I have -- I don't know, maybe I missed this earlier.

MS. MAHONEY:

Please use the microphone.

LEG. SPENCER:

I know we've been monitoring the weather recently. Is there any guidance as far as what we're expecting here on Long Island and with FRES?

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Well, I know Commissioner Williams wasn't able to be here today because they are --

LEG. SPENCER:

Preparing?

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

-- preparing. Joel, I don't want to put him on the spot. If you want -- could you come back and maybe give us a little bit of information? I know you mentioned about the call-in.

MR. VETTER:

I would anticipate rain and wind. No.

*(*Laughter*)*

There's a storm coming, obviously. We started to do our 190-hour timeline. We've started to ramp up efforts. I know today there was an All-Department Head bridge conference set up that will reoccur on a daily basis. Later today they'll be doing a municipal phone call with our local officials as well as the emergency management folks, and then they've set up the Legislative bridge to bring you guys in the loop.

I do have some other information that we could share with you. The best effort that we should be messaging to our constituents, just like any day, is preparedness; to plan accordingly and to build communication plans and have, you know, adequate, appropriate resources.

LEG. SPENCER:

Right. I some of the guidance this morning that had indicated North Carolina, it seems to be shifting more towards off the shore. Now with the latest models and, you know, either off the coast or really more coming a little towards us, perhaps. So, okay.

MR. VETTER:

I'm a betting man, and I would put money on an impact.

LEG. SPENCER:

Sure. Just as far as, you know, obviously years after Sandy and knowing that we put some changes in place to be prepared and the fact that the storm may hit over the weekend where we're kind of in our weekend mode, so tomorrow is Friday and we have a storm that may hit Sunday.

MR. VETTER:

Correct.

LEG. SPENCER:

So just I want to make sure that I have advised my constituents and have the appropriate staffing over the weekend to be prepared to disseminate whatever information is necessary.

MR. VETTER:

Absolutely. And that daily bridge, in the aspects from both the Executive and the department level, will be brought to you for routine. So a lot of after-action corrective components that were taken away from Sandy are engaged and being done that way now.

LEG. SPENCER:

Okay, good. Can I get some gas? *(Laughter)*.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Fill the gas tank. Our Presiding Officer -- Joel, don't go anywhere, the Presiding Officer has a question.

MR. VETTER:

No? I tried.

P.O. GREGORY:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a follow up to that inquiry. So we have a plan in place for our elderly and those with medical conditions, you know, dialysis and other --

MR. VETTER:

So, you know, for 15 plus years we've had the Preparedness Registry, that information was on the timeline, rebatched yesterday into our notification components. Scripts have been started to be developed, that information will start being pushed out later today after the five o'clock weather briefing. You know, we don't want to go back to the Irene days, right? We were hooting and hollering and banging the drum and then nothing happened and we kind of lost some of the effort that way. So after the five o'clock weather briefing today, we'll be able to script that a little bit better.

They were meeting today with the Red Cross to discuss the shelters and that, and the other component of messaging that will be going to the County employees are several months ago we, I'll say rebirthed the County Shelter Officer Program with County employees, so that information for solicitation and hours of work availability will be done later today.

P.O. GREGORY:

Okay, good. And if there are any changes, I know people are creature of habits, and if there is a shelter that's traditionally been a shelter in their community and that's changed, are we assuring that we're getting that information out to people?

MR. VETTER:

So the shelter locator and storm surge is an active/interactive component on the County's website. The shelters that are picked are based on storm impact, right. So we try not to necessarily put a shelter in every geographical location, it's just -- it's wasteful.

P.O. GREGORY:

Right.

MR. VETTER:

And it doesn't allow us to really meet the needs of the public. So having people and your constituents understand what shelter is most appropriate is key.

So for myself, I have family needs that would require a little bit more than a general population shelter, I would have to travel a little bit farther. So knowing where that shelter is and how that's going to be facilitated would be very important. But we already had phone conversations with the

bus companies yesterday as far as the evacuation plans and the routes, so, you know, they're checking their fleets, we're making sure contracts are engaged and everybody understand at what point the power of the dollar is associated there.

P.O. GREGORY:

Right, but we -- my concern is, you know, particularly the elderly population who are not too -- as savvy with technology, may not be -- and if we don't have electricity, they can't go on-line.

MR. VETTER:

We work with our Office of the Aging, we work with the Office for People with Disabilities in a very active manner. We stress to them the importance for them to reach out to their base. We could push as much as we want, but the end result is what comes back. The Federal dollar, due to our grant system, has purchased a lot of stuff in comparison to the past. Four or five years ago, we can count the special needs cots, you know, on one scratch of paper; we have hundreds, if not thousands of those, pre-deployed throughout a lot of the prime super shelters. So there's a lot more now that we're prepared to do in comparison to four or five years ago.

P.O. GREGORY:

Okay. Good, good. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

I know Kara has a question, but I'm actually going to have a couple. Because having the Mastic Beach community, and I know a lot of those homes that have just -- they just repaired. They haven't even -- with New York Rising, haven't even gotten to the elevation stage yet, so I'm just crossing my fingers and toes and hoping for the best. But my concern is I have a lot of seniors that live down there, some of the homes that are right there on the water. So, you know, I know the local fire department and ambulance company are very good, but we had a wash over at Smith Point Beach, that still has not really been filled up. So I have concerns that if the weather really does get that bad, what could potentially happen with them? So is there a lot of focus on communities like that?

MR. VETTER:

So we've been doing -- we've been doing -- the amount of presentations that we do now is tenfold in comparison to a year ago. In addition to that, we're working with the faith-based organizations through the County Exec's Office where we see greater return for our effort, you know, gets more of that information out there. For that population and knowing my own parents, they want to stay, they don't want to go.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Right.

MR. VETTER:

Right? It's a struggle. So what's more important is capturing that information and knowing where the people are. So the registry is something that you should promote to them more than anything --

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

I've done that already.

MR. VETTER:

-- and help them.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Yeah, I've done that a lot. You know, just yesterday there was a gentleman, I called him yesterday because I was going to come down to his house for something and he says to me, "*No, don't bother.*" Now he has elevated and he's right next to a marina and he says to me, "*No, you can't come down,*" he says, "*I'm under water right now.*" So thank God he's elevated so his house is not damaged, but he says to me, "*I don't know how long I'm going to have to wait just from the high tide.*"

MR. VETTER:

Well, the other issue, too; so we're running from the water and we're hiding from the wind. So the elevation is great because it solving their flooding issue, but it's pretty much making them their own Island in a way.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Right.

MR. VETTER:

So, you know, locally here we have stood up. For the last several years we've been building out with a mixed team from all the different departments, the USAR, the Urban Search and Area Rescue Team. So they are actively engaged right now logistically with prepping and planning and moving assets around in that manner.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Over time, clearly a lot of the FRES employees are coming in on overtime for preparation, I'm assuming?

MR. VETTER:

We've cancelled non-essential activities, or have reshifted them, we're taking it case-by-case. But the employees' assignments and overtime is based on the mission and the need, not just, you know, an open menu there.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Because -- okay, let's say the storm decides to take another direction and we don't get hit. Is that overtime covered, your preparation overtime, is that covered? Do we get any kind of Federal or State funds?

MR. VETTER:

So traditionally, after a Federally-declared disaster is engaged -- so this is after the Article 2-B has been signed off and authorized -- the Federal government tells us how far they've dialed their clock back to the start of the match towards the Federal dollar, how much the County has to put towards what is that reimbursement rate.

So to better answer your question, some of the grants, as you have read them through the last year, you'll see that there is pre-made overtime built into that. So the USAR team specifically right now, that logistical overtime is built into it for the maintenance of the equipment anyway. We just moved the schedule up, instead of the end of October, they're doing it earlier.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. So if you can just keep us up-to-speed on all of that.

MR. VETTER:

Yep. I think the data, the conference bridge that was established with the County Exec's Office and the department I think will -- you'll see a huge difference in comparison to the need for individual

phone calls and things along that lines, or putting staff in our building; some of that will be reduced a little bit more appropriately.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Kara, you had a question?

LEG. HAHN:

So two things. Suffolk County website, you've got -- there's like something that scrolls through 17 different topics.

MR. VETTER:

So if you --

LEG. HAHN:

One of them is hurricane, I think it's number seven. I think there should be something on the main page of the website that's like, you know, *we're in the line, we're in the cone, be aware.*

MR. VETTER:

So to re --

LEG. HAHN:

Maybe on the FRES website, but --

MR. VETTER:

No, I can answer it. So post Sandy, once we crashed the website in this County, the initiative was set up to set up a backup site. Later today -- right, we don't want to be crying foul. Later today, if you go to the FRES page, you'll see in left corner a caution symbol, yellow triangle. We take over the County website at a certain point, we don't want to do it too early. That site's up and running, we were testing it yesterday, we were checking the links, making sure that what goes to Red Cross goes to the Red Cross, etcetera, that will take everything over. So that will go up, if you go to the FRES website, the left corner, you can see the page, actually, in a test mode.

LEG. HAHN:

No, I mean, that's all great, but people know it's coming now. You know, there should be at least a little link on the main page that says, you know, *if you want more information now on what's coming, you know, on hurricane preparedness, on whatever --*

MR. VETTER:

Yes.

LEG. HAHN:

You know, I could imagine it just being somewhere right at the top, you don't have to scroll down, you don't have to wait as 17 things scroll through. You know, it's coming.

MR. VETTER:

Well, something's coming.

LEG. HAHN:

Something's coming, yeah. I mean, how strong it is, who knows.

MR. VETTER:

Depending on which model you look at.

LEG. HAHN:

Yeah.

LEG. SPENCER:

We're right in the middle of the bull's eye right now, as of an hour ago.

MR. VETTER:

As of right now.

LEG. HAHN:

As of right now.

MR. VETTER:

Not an hour ago.

LEG. HAHN:

And that could change, there's no question about it.

MR. VETTER:

You're absolutely correct.

LEG. HAHN:

And we hope it does. There's no question about that.

MR. VETTER:

We have to just stick to the timeline of what's known and proven with the past practices of not only the Federal level but here in the County. I hear what you're saying, I'll bring it back to them.

LEG. HAHN:

No, I'm not suggesting that you should take over the website today, that's premature.

MR. VETTER:

No, but --

LEG. HAHN:

No, I just meant provide a link to -- or it's number seven, so you've got to wait till seven. Or you can -- I guess you can click through them if you know it's there, but if it's just a static, little -- you know, hurricane information, I think that would be more helpful.

You know, I believe in the intuitiveness of these things.

MR. VETTER:

We will take care of it. We'll work with IT.

LEG. HAHN:

So then the second item was about employees. I know sometimes it's like -- it's so last second, wait to the very last second to let employees know if they're needed, if they're supposed to come in. Like is there a plan for better communication with employees about, you know, traveling the day of the storm, do you have to come in to the -- you know, which offices have to come in and are essential and which are not.

MR. VETTER:

Are you referring to the department, to Fire Rescue itself, or others?

LEG. HAHN:

No, sorry, all.

MR. VETTER:

So I can't speak to the effect of the other departments. I know the department heads --

LEG. HAHN:

I tried, I tried to get you to answer the question for all departments.

*(*Laughter*)*

MR. VETTER:

I will give you an answer, though. It was a topic listed today for the discussion on --

LEG. HAHN:

Okay, good.

MR. VETTER:

-- department head conference, for them to do it. As far as the department, you know, we operate in this environment every day.

LEG. HAHN:

Oh, sure. No, I just meant the rest of the departments, even here.

MR. VETTER:

I personally had a phone call yesterday with, you know, several DPW officials to discuss fleet and repair and other components of a support nature, reprioritization, so it's better than what it was prior events.

LEG. HAHN:

Thank you. Presiding Officer, is that adequate? Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

So you're preparing for the worst and hoping for the best, that's the best thing to do. Thank you.

And also, I did want to clarify, I know John left, is walking out the door. But Suzanne, you mentioned something about E-911 salaries, before we go. It is something I believe -- that is something that we cannot -- the E-911 surcharge cannot pay for salaries, it's equipment only. So that is something that should be considered maybe to lobby for a modification of how those funds can be used.

So with that, there is nothing else on the agenda. I'll make a motion to adjourn. Second, Legislator Martinez. All in favor? We are adjourned.

*(*The meeting was adjourned at 11:28 A.M. *)*