

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
OF THE
SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Operating Budget

A special 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 Tuesday, October 20, 2015.

Members Present:

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

Also in Attendance:

Legislator Tom Muratore - District No. 4
Legislator Robert Trotta - District No. 13.
George Nolan - Counsel to the Legislature
Jason Richberg - Chief Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
Robert Lipp - Director, Budget Review Office
Rosalind Gazes - Budget Review Office
John Ortiz - Budget Review Office
Jill Moss - Budget Review Office
Craig Freas - Budget Review Office
Ed Webber - Suffolk County Police Commissioner
Stuart Cameron - Suffolk County Police Department
Katie Horst - County Executive's Office
Mohammad Awais - County Executive's Office
Elizabeth Alexander - Aide to Legislator Spencer
Lauren Auerbach - Aide to Legislator Muratore
Christina Delisi – Aide to Legislator Schneiderman
Michael Caplan - Suffolk County Medical Examiner
Linda Russo - Medical Examiner's Office
Joe Williams - Commissioner, Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services
Joel Vetter - Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services
Mike Sharkey - Suffolk County Sheriff's Office
Mike Franchi - Suffolk County Sheriff's Office
Ed Heilig - District Attorney's Office
Karen Lombri - The Retreat
Jim McGoldrick
Kathy Malloy - AME
All Other Interested Parties.

Taken by:

Lucia Braaten - Court Stenographer

*(*The meeting was called to order at 2:51 p.m. *)*

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. I would like to go ahead and start with the Public Safety Budget Hearing. If everyone could please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance. Oh, okay, sorry. One second. Are we good? Okay. Pledge of Allegiance, led by Legislator Martinez.

*(*Salutation*)*

Okay. If no one would mind, Commissioner Williams, I know you have something that you have to take care of, so if you'd like to come up. I do have three speakers, but I'll let the Commissioner come up.

I don't know if anyone has questions. If you could just kind of let us know how things are going with the Dispatch positions.

COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:

Yes, gladly. Approximately, right now, we have six Dispatchers that are coming off their probation period, their training period, and they'd be working starting the end of November, beginning of December.

What we have done with them also is we are using them as a test case, it's working out fine, for taking calls back and forth to fire departments. It's worked out very well.

Two weeks ago, we appointed six more Dispatchers. What that has done -- and promoted one supervisor -- that has filled up the staffing level of FRES in the Dispatchers Office. The current two-week people that are in place now, they will not be able to go online themselves until March. We do see light at the end of the tunnel.

In this current budget recommendation from the County Executive, there are two additional Dispatchers up and above what we have right now, which I think is a step in the right direction. And our projection for retirements in 2016, I know of only two Dispatchers that are talking about it. There is no paperwork in, and both of them are talking after the next -- the next eight people coming back online, including the two that's coming on after January 1st.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. So you have six that are currently in and two that are going to start after January 1st, did you say? Sorry.

COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:

That is correct. Right now, we have six brand new Dispatchers after two weeks. After the -- if the budget is approved with the two people we have now, which I hope it is, new, brand new up and above, that we'd would have two more coming on after January, January 1st.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. And I guess your overtime budget, didn't BRO -- did you guys recommend to increase the overtime?

MR. FREAS:

We did. We felt like this year that the -- especially in '15, that the budget was going to come in close to historical, over the last couple of years, where there was probably -- they were probably going to need some more overtime. And next year, it should decrease somewhat because of the two new Dispatchers, and because Commissioner Williams has so many more trained folks available to him, but it's still going to be pretty significant. It's a -- you know, it's a department where

there's a lot of overtime. In the last two years since they took over some of the automatic fire alarm responses from several departments that stopped doing it, calls are up, I want to say probably three, 300,000, 500,000 calls from --

COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:

It's approximately about 300,000. But I just want to caution, is that the alarms that we're getting is not driving the overtime here, it was the lack of personnel we had, which has now been filled. It's also event-driven. This past year, we've had 10 activations of our EOC to be open, which causes us overtime. So it's kind of more of an area where we -- you know, we have the people now, we -- the County Executive has -- every time we've put in a SCIN to fill, we got it filled. As a matter of fact, an example was just this past week, we have somebody retiring, not a Dispatcher, and I expect to see that SCIN on Monday, and I've been told we're going to get it. So it's been -- it's been there.

And I understand Craig's concern, we've had a lot of discussions about that, but I really feel the overtime next year is going to be a lot less. But we could have 25 activations next year, which there's no way of knowing that at all, or preparing for that, or budgeting for that. The good thing about sometimes most of those activations, if there is overtime involved, we always try to get reimbursement back from the Federal Government.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

That's what I was figuring you'd say. Now, the recent threat of the -- what was it, Hurricane Joaquin, is that what it was, right, the last one?

COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Because of your activation of the employees to prepare, but it didn't actually hit, are you -- are we entitled to any kinds of funds, or we don't get anything, right?

COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:

No. What they -- there's a graph or a scale they use in the Federal Government to reimburse, and actually in Suffolk County, it goes by the number of homes. But statewide, we would have to show within the state 100%, like \$26 million. The County itself would have to show about 5 million. In the preparation for that particular storm, we kept on watching, we didn't gear up. There were expenses which we could not put aside, but we'll not be getting reimbursed for that particular storm.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. Does anyone have a question? No questions. Okay. This is good for you.

COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:

Okay.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Anything else you want to add?

COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:

No, thank you. I just wanted to publicly thank Craig. I know he's new at this. He's taken the time to come out and work with us, and I really appreciate his interest in FRES.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. Thank you. So now we can let you go. So we do have a couple of cards. The first one is

Karen Lombri.

MS. LOMBRI:

Hello. Thank you. And I apologize for people who have heard me speak earlier. My name is Karen Lombri and I'm the Program Director at The Retreat, eastern Long Island's only dedicated domestic violence services agency whose mission is to provide safety, shelter and support for victims of domestic abuse and to break the cycle of family violence. Our core services include a 24-hour hotline, emergency shelter, counseling, legal advocacy, and prevention education services.

For 20 years, The Retreat has been a safe haven for thousands of residents from all areas of Suffolk County. Our shelter is tucked away in a remote part of Suffolk County, a long distance from any abusers, and provides battered women and their children the opportunity to safely heal, access support, and realize and reestablish their lives free from violence.

The Suffolk County Legislature has been pivotal in providing support, both financially and energetically, at the community level for our lifesaving work with victims of domestic violence. Just two weeks ago on Commemoration Day, we collectively honored the Suffolk County residents who we have lost and survivors of domestic violence. We also celebrated the legislation that has been enacted to support victims, and the availability of services for survivors that are funded through Suffolk County.

As domestic violence is a public safety issue, the work we have done together has saved or enhanced the physical and emotional well-being of countless residents of Suffolk County, and has helped us to work to prevent future abuse, and to improve the health, safety and quality of life of those in our region. Unfortunately, the progress that we've made together is in jeopardy, as the County Executive proposed to cut funding for The Retreat by 18% in the 2016 budget. These proposed cuts will undermine the advances that we have made together.

Prior to the budget being released, the Retreat's Executive Director, Loretta Davis, had sent a letter to the County and to the Legislators requesting a larger funding allocation from the County's budget in 2016 in order to directly address the elevated need and unprecedented victim waiting list that we have waiting at The Retreat. Over the last five years, The Retreat has experienced a 75% increase in the request for services to our 24-hour hotline.

In response to increased request for services, The Retreat has been forced to implement for the first time ever a wait list for our Legal Advocacy Program, set time limits for our counseling services, and turn down community and school requests for education about dating and domestic violence.

I'm here to ask for you to reinstate the money that has been cut from The Retreat. At a time when heightened national media attention to abuse is giving more of our local residents the courage to ask for help, we don't want any request to be met with a closed door or wait list. Please help us to meet the increased demand for our critical services, ensure that victims who have had the courage to finally reach out for assistance do receive immediate and comprehensive crisis intervention services. This goal is within our reach. Again, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Thank you. No questions? Okay. Thank you. Next speaker, Jim McGoldrick.

MR. MC GOLDRICK:

Good afternoon. My name is Jim McGoldrick. I lived in Huntington Station for 56 years. I am here to discuss the violent crime, Police Officer Collins being shot, Maggie Rosales brutally stabbed in front of my home. We have three unsolved murders in our town, Danny, Sarah and Louie. There is an epidemic of drugs. I personally have witnessed drug transactions, some right in front of our

home. It is out of control. Police cannot keep up with the crime.

Our township has no public intoxication laws. This is a huge issue. Drunk-stricken blatantly right at children's bus stops. We see them passed out along Depot Road, the five corners, Pulaski, Fairgrounds, Depot Road, also known in some places as the "Gates of Hell". It's the worst location for public intoxication, as well as prostitution and gang activity. This is an environment not for children. They work as loitering at CVS, which is located at the five corners. Women are hesitant to shop at CVS or to get a tire fixed at the five corners. I wouldn't let my wife and daughters be subjected to the catcalls and the harassment that is taking lace.

The Guardian Angels are in the Station. What does this say when you need them to come from New York City? The community is very grateful to them.

There was a stabbing in the parking lot on Depot Road while children were playing right there. The Suffolk County Police informed me that there was two drunks that stabbed each other. It has come to the point that we're almost numb by these occurrences. Oh, just a couple of drunks again. This is insane.

Why, why isn't the Suffolk County Police Department asking for outside help? Where is the FBI, the ATF, the DEA or Immigration? If you continue to ignore these issues, it will escalate. We will not go -- it will not go away, it will only get worse. Why is Nassau County using these agencies' help? It will cause nothing. Please ask for help. It's not a reflection on the Suffolk County Police Department, it is a reflection on our society.

The Second Precinct is doing all they can. It's like bringing sand to the beach for them. Please, I beg for you, call, make phone calls to the Huntington Town Hall and tell them to enforce the housing laws that are on the books. They talk -- they talk about the laws, but they do nothing. Inform the Judges and the D.A. stop with the deals. These deals are destroying our communities. They talk about redeveloping the Station. Who is going to spend money and invest in an area with what's going on there?

Please, save our precious resources, our children, our daughters, nephews, nieces. And the reason I am here to ask help is for my grandson. My grandson will grow up in Huntington Station in a safe environment. You know, we're sitting here talking and I noticed all the drug epidemic problems and all these great facilities that we have here. And if we get more police and we get more help, these facilities won't be back here begging for money. Our children are being destroyed in Huntington Station. The Police Department, the Second Precinct, God bless Inspector Hatton. They're doing their job; there's not enough of them, okay?

I know they're hiring 65 new Police Officers. How many are going to retire in the year of 2017? I used to work with pensions. How many are out on disability at any given time? You could end up with a negative number. So that 65 is not a good enough number. We talk about taxes for this and that. Well, let's take some of these tax dollars and push them into the Police Department. They need the help. And move the Police Department from troubled area to troubled area.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:
Any questions?

LEG. SPENCER:
Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:
Okay. Doc, go ahead.

LEG. SPENCER:

Hi, Jim.

MR. MC GOLDRICK:

Hi. How are you?

LEG. SPENCER:

Thank you so much for being here. When -- you just, you know, kind of relayed overall quality of life issues in Huntington with regards to -- you mentioned public intoxication, prostitution, drugs, violence. And, you know, you also indicated that Inspector Hatton and Inspector Brady had been doing a pretty strong job.

MR. MC GOLDRICK:

Oh, yes.

LEG. SPENCER:

Do you think it's -- what do you think is the critical piece that's missing? Do you think it's an issue of numbers that's there, or what -- just from your personal assessment. I know that, you know, I'm not asking you to be a professional, but your personal assessment, you're the eyes and ears. You said you've been in the community for how many years?

MR. MC GOLDRICK:

Fifty-six.

LEG. SPENCER:

Fifty-six years.

MR. MC GOLDRICK:

I grew up in that area.

LEG. SPENCER:

Wow.

MR. MC GOLDRICK:

I know most of the business owners and everything, and, sir, Doc Spencer --

LEG. SPENCER:

Sure.

MR. MC GOLDRICK:

-- what it is, I think the public safety from the Town has to get more involved. But I honestly think -- I mean, Commissioner Webber, they need more police. I mean, they are doing their job. If you look at Depot Road on a Saturday afternoon, between them and the -- between the police cars and the ambulance, I mean, and this drunkenness, which is a town issue, and I understand who's in charge of what, but we need more police.

And, you know, Amityville is going through the same problems, Brentwood is going -- I'm not -- you know, I am aware of what's going on, I read the newspapers and I talk to a lot of people. If they take the Police Department and maybe take 25 Police Officers and put them in one group and let them move from town to town, and call immigration, call the -- when the DEA and the ATF was in the Station four or five years ago, I'm not sure on the timing, they went in there, they locked up everybody, everything was good. But the problem is they don't maintain. We have to maintain.

When you go in there and make an arrest, you have to maintain that area. There's not enough -- there's not enough Police Officers. And you know what, we could sit here and talk about a budget, but if your townships start going down the tubes before a crime, none of us are going to be sitting here, because everybody's going to move out.

LEG. SPENCER:

Jim, you've been a huge advocate and a huge asset in that community.

MR. MC GOLDRICK:

I try.

LEG. SPENCER:

And I think your words really come from a very -- a wise perspective. Thank you for your time.

MR. MC GOLDRICK:

Thank you.

LEG. SPENCER:

Appreciate it.

MR. MC GOLDRICK:

Thank you very much. And the Police Department is doing their job, just give them more money.

*(*Laughter*)*

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

We appreciate you coming in. We hear the same thing in other communities, and that is going to be something, I guess. Well, we'll have the Commissioner come up and just kind of give us a little bit of feedback on that. I -- oh I have one last card, Kathy Malloy.

MS. MALLOY:

Good afternoon. My name is Kathleen Malloy, representing Suffolk County AME President Brian Macri, and thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

Based upon our and your Budget Review Office review, the budget is not adequately balanced. This Capital Budget has not addressed the structural fiscal problem that has existed in the General Fund for over ten years, the absolute need to raise a recurring revenue. Sending a message to other taxing jurisdictions has only negatively impacted the County's fiscal standings, and has resulted in General Fund being less than a mere 1% of the total property taxes in Suffolk. AME has borne the negative impact of this policy in making a no-pay agreement for no layoffs, a hiring freeze and a deferred payroll.

As County Legislators, I know you recognize our greatest asset are our County employees, and AME represents the largest number of County employees. Our members have been described as the backbone of Suffolk County Government, which they rightfully are. Although a quick solution might be to tap into a reserve account to offset the current imbalance, that would only make the fiscal problems more severe in 2017. We need a recurring revenue source.

Since budgets tend to be incremental, the only realistic short-term solution, which would result in becoming a long-term solution, is to increase property taxes. The financial impact, although symbolically scary, is actually negligible per household. The average household property tax is \$9,875 per year. Out of that, only \$88 goes to the County General Fund for all the services we receive. If we consider an incremental tax increase as over a four-year period from 2016 through

2019, at first 50%, decreased to 33%, decreased to 25%, decreased to 18.25%, what it results in is an annual County tax increase of only about \$44 per year per resident. After four years of incremental General Fund tax increases, the average homeowner would go from \$88 a year to \$261 a year paying into the General Fund. But the bottom line here is the bigger goal, the bigger picture. From the 570,418 housing units in Suffolk County, which I got from the Suffolk County census facts dated 2014, 2016 you would read 28.5 million additional recurring revenue; 2017, 27.4 million; 2018, 27.3 million, and if it went to 2019, would be 23.3 million. In four years, the additional recurring revenue to the County general tax fund could be as high as 106.5 million. This formula would close the General Fund and Police gaps in three to four years in the least painful way possible.

In the long-term, it is necessary to focus on those taxing jurisdictions that have created the problem, and AME is willing to work with you in resolving these issues for all Suffolk County residents, because all my members are Suffolk County residents, too. There are many people we can blame, many ideas that didn't work, but the bottom line is better targeted towards solutions, not blame. And we are here to work with you for a viable long-term solution to this recurring deficit, which could be resolved with the same words, recurring, but recurring income.

We are here to work alongside the Suffolk County Legislators and we hope to work together. Thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Thank you, Kathy. Okay. We have no more cards, and I guess I will start. I know we have a number of Commissioners, Directors. We're to start with Mr. McGoldrick here. I don't want to keep him longer than he would like to be. Commissioner Webber, if you could come up and kind of give us a report.

LEG. SPENCER:

I have questions.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

And I know there's questions (laughter). You know, I know we have the 911 Operators is an issue, Mr. McGoldrick's concerns about the Huntington Station area, and that is -- that actually is something that I know that there's a strike force or something going on. My major concern is, is we -- I know, and John Ortiz will continually say this, however many retirees is what we need to hire. And my concern is, is that when you're looking at Huntington Station, and the North Bellport, and the Wyandanch communities, you know, to have these concentrations of Police Officers going to Huntington Station, but pulling them from other places to do that, I feel like it's a cat and mouse game.

And, you know, what's happening is you focus in Huntington Station, you're chasing after them up there, they leave, they go to Wyandanch, they go to Riverhead, they go to North Bellport. And when things calm down, now you've got -- stuff is steaming up, or they know that you've gone. You know, the criminals know when there's a concentration of Police Officers. And my biggest issue is, is why? And, again, staffing levels. It's that concentration that you do in Huntington Station should be happening at the same time in all the places you know they're going to bounce to and giving them nowhere to go.

And I hate to say that they're all coming from the City, because we know a lot of them do, let's chase them back, that's the way I see it.

But, you know, what can we do? I know that we have this class of what, 60 in the budget, 65 for the next -- next year; is that correct? No, there's the 100 now, but for next year, what's the number?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

First of all, good afternoon. Stu Cameron to my right, and he replaced Mark White, because he's his twin brother.

*(*Laughter*)*

You've asked a lot of questions, Madam Legislator. Let me get to the first one.

This year and last year, we lost 158 officers and we hired 208. So we're actually 50 higher than we were, or let's say we outpaced our retirements in the last two years. With the inclusion of the Park Police, 50 more than we had last year, which is something we hadn't done in a while.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. But that's just the one year. In the previous years, we haven't actually caught up with what's the past. So it's really not bringing us up to the right level that we should be at, correct?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

No. There isn't a sitting Commissioner or Police Chief that wouldn't want more people --

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Your mic's not on again.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

I'm sorry, I keep pushing this thing. Okay. Can you hear me now?

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

We hear you.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

There isn't a sitting Commissioner or Chief of Police that wouldn't want more people, but we understand the County is in a tight financial crisis at the moment. We have hired more than two years giving. There's 65 in the budget, but that doesn't mean that it -- this year there was 65 and 15, we hired 106. The County Exec's people and myself will be talking later on during the year to see how many we actually need and how many we can afford.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Do you know what the anticipated retirement is going to be for next year? Because I know you had the retirement seminar, so that would be -- wasn't that retirement seminar to include 2016?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

Yes. An educated guess, between 130 and 150.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. So, if we only hire 165, then we're going to be behind again. Okay.

LEG. HAHN:

Hundred and --

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

A hundred and thirty, you said, to 150?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

Retirements, 130 to 150, right. That's an educated guess.

LEG. HAHN:

And how many are we scheduled to hire? I'm sorry.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Well, there's 65 in the budget.

LEG. HAHN:

Okay. You said 165, so I just wanted to make sure.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

No, 65.

LEG. HAHN:

Right, that's what I thought. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

So, okay. Doc Spencer, go ahead, you start.

LEG. SPENCER:

Hi, Commissioner. Thank you very much. It's always good to see you. And, again, I did want to add my accolades to just really all the resources that you have been giving in Huntington Station in the Second Precinct, and they've been working very well.

I wanted to address the issue as far as I think that, overall, our budget issues, you know, it's always a battle between providing services and being -- not increasing expenses. And I always feel that in New York, as a state, we give more federally than most other states, and in Suffolk, we give more as a County. And I believe a big part of the solution to what we have to do is to try to bring in more from the outside, instead of trying to cut services and/or increases the expenses on our residents. To that end, you know, we see a lot of Federal grants that come through that are 100% funded that we put on the Consent -- that we put on our Consent Calendar.

From a law enforcement point of view, there's been some criticisms that indicate that we're not engaging as much Federal resources as we potentially could. But I know -- I've also heard that sometimes it's not necessarily what it's all cracked up to be, that sometimes we might be having a couple of positions that are part of those Task Force, but they're not necessarily getting the engagement that they -- that we are looking for.

So I guess my question is could you give me an update? And that's a big concern in Huntington, and as far as one, the Gang Task Force. And when -- before I became a Legislator and things were really out of control, and we saw that there was a lot of operations that took place, and there was a lot of bad guys that went to jail, and it made a huge difference on the street. But then what we witnessed is that these guys are now starting to get out of prison and they're coming back to Huntington, and, you know, we're talking about sort of the leaders there.

So could you comment on our Federal Task Force engagement with the FBI, the DEA? And nothing that's top secret, but -- and the criticism that we're not maximizing those resources.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

First of all, let me explain that we have 63 grants we currently match in Suffolk County Police Department, \$19 million, so we do go out for the grants. We constantly monitor all the resources

that are out there. Unfortunately, most of them are competitive, so when you put it in, there's no guarantee. But we do put in for every grant that could help us in any way minimize expenses to the County.

We do have 12 Detectives in various Task Forces. From the FBI, we have two in the FBI Gang Force, we have one in the Joint Terrorist Task Force, we've got three in the -- three in the IRS, three in Customs. We have one DEA, one in New York State, General -- Attorney General's New York State Sales Tax for untaxed cigarettes and untaxed fuel. So we do have a fairly good representation out there as far as Detectives in these groups.

LEG. SPENCER:

Are we seeing the engagement on the Federal end that -- with our officers or personnel that's being involved? Is it -- are we getting the clearances that we need? Are they getting the participation and the cooperation? Or is that criticism just a misperception? I know that we're doing a great job in going after grants, and I commend you for that and thank you for that. But I do hear that over and over again, and I definitely wanted to just kind of set the record straight, because what I -- you know, I am hearing that we are utilizing them. So, if we are utilizing them, is there -- most of the operations that are going on, are they classified where we're -- it's not visible? And us, as compared to Nassau, it seems that there's the perception that there's a much bigger engagement with Federal Task Force and resources. So can you -- you may not know, but can you address where that perception is coming from, that we're not utilizing as much as we can as far as those resources?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

I can't explain where the perception may come from, but we assigned these two Detectives to the FBI Task Force. We then turn over all our command and control to them, and they, the FBI, are the ones who run the Task Force as they deem fit. I will tell you this: There's four incidents this month in which there will be a raid tomorrow morning that we're utilizing and work very closely with the FBI. And I can't get into more detail than that, but we are four times this month alone.

LEG. SPENCER:

Well, thank you, I appreciate that. And that's really one of the things, is that if there's something that is out there that we could pull in, and it sounds like you are of the same mindset, but that would be important. And it's important that I communicate that with my constituents in Huntington, that they know that we are taking advantage of every Federal resource or State resource that we possibly can. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Any other questions? Kevin?

LEG. MC CAFFREY:

Sorry. I came in a little late. I know I caught the tail end of speaking about hiring. Hello, Commissioner. How are you? Good.

So we're expecting 165 retirements this year, is that what we're projecting?

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

One-thirty to 150.

LEG. MC CAFFREY:

One-thirty to 150? And then --

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Next year.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

Next year, between 130 and 150.

LEG. MC CAFFREY:

Okay. And in the budget, we have 65, okay, 65 new hires, correct. And then the -- do we have a number for the Police overtime for this coming year, what they're projecting? Is that in there, Robert?

MR. LIPP:

Forty-four million. I'll double-check, though.

LEG. MC CAFFREY:

Forty-four is what's in the budget for this year, I mean, for 2016?

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

What's 2016's budget for overtime?

MR. LIPP:

I think it's 32.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Thirty-two?

MR. LIPP:

I'll call up the numbers now.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

I think it was 44 for this year, correct?

LEG. MC CAFFREY:

Yes, 44 or 48, I think.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

What was the actual for 20 -- well, actually you don't know. Well, November 11th is your -- the end of the year for you guys for the budget, right? So to date, what is your overtime budget?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

We're anticipating -- you know, there's a little difference this year between what I think that John from BRO recommended. We don't agree with the 44, we think it's something less than that. But, in addition, on the cash basis, the Detectives have given up 100 hours each, and there's 341 Detectives at their rate. We anticipate a non-cash payment of almost \$3 million, so we figure we pretty close to their estimate of -- County Executive's estimation of \$38 million, probably \$39 million, in that area, in 2015.

MR. LIPP:

So in the recommended budget, there is 40.65 million for this year, 2015 estimated, and for next year, it's 32.7 million in the recommended budget for '16 for overtime for the Police Department, which includes the three funds that they're involved in.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

What was that number again, 30 --

MR. LIPP:

Thirty-three million, just over 33 million for this year in overtime across the three funds they're involved in. I'm sorry, that was the Police District one. Forty million in 2015 estimated. That's 40 million I said.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Thirty-three for 2016?

MR. LIPP:

Yes.

LEG. MC CAFFREY:

So my point is, we're going to -- it looks like we're going to be down 65 officers, and we're budgeting less money in overtime. So that would kind of put a crimp on your ability to put men on the street, then, right, Commissioner?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

To some extent, but there is an agreement next year also. The County is exercising their right for the Detectives again to give 100 hours each up accrued time, which is overtime. And the PBA has offered something you'll see shortly, to give up 50, 100 or 150 hours of overtime, or some other items. So we believe that it will be tight, but we -- you know, we don't know exactly, it depends on what's going on. But there'll be some mitigating amounts of reduction in the overtime for this year on actual cash payments.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

I know, you know, they're trying to save us money by not taking their overtime right away, but they're deferring that overtime, correct?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

Correct.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

To retirement, and --

LEG. HAHN:

Giving up something.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

It's not really giving it up.

LEG. MC CAFFREY:

Right.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Because when they retire, say, ten years from now, they're going to collect that, correct?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

Yes, that's correct.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Which is going to be at what cost, is the question?

LEG. MURATORE:

We don't know.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Depending on -- we don't know, because it depends on when they retire.

LEG. MC CAFFREY:

My concern is it looks like we're going to have less Police Officers on the street, which is my concern. It actually looks like we're budgeting to actually have less POs on the street and officers in general, right?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

There may be, it depends. We're having this 106, will be on the street April 1st. And then, of course, we'll be losing -- we don't know how much we're going to be losing, so it's very difficult to judge. It's just educated guesses that we do.

LEG. MC CAFFREY:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

I know, but the reality is, is that we're not -- if we do get 130 retirements, we only hire 65, we're going to be in the negative again. And the number keeps going like this (indicating), you know, and it's never going like that (indicating).

And the gentleman from Huntington Station, his argument is, is, you know, the concentration of Police Officers all the time, it's -- you know, and I know, I've talked to some of the guys and they tell me, they pick somebody up. And, again, it's not the fault of the Police Department, because they arrest somebody, they process them, and almost the next day, the same are back on the street. So, you know, it's -- that's not your fault, that's sometimes the fault of the courts, that they're just not doing what they need to do to keep them off the streets. So I think there's a bigger picture to this.

But, again, my concern is, is are we pulling Police Officers from other precincts to go work in Huntington Station when there's areas in their own precincts that now you're kind of shortchanging. And, yeah, you know, it's like I have the Seventh Precinct. Manorville is very quiet, you know. So are we shifting people down to, you know, Mastic Beach because of the need? And we appreciate it. But, again, it's the frustration of keeping that concentration on a permanent basis in all of those significant areas, because we want to basically give them the message that, you know, you have nowhere to go. We don't -- we're not going to let you go from one community to another community to do -- to cause trouble, we're going to chase you everywhere you're going. So maybe that's just too simple of a way to say it, but, you know, zero tolerance is so important no matter what it is. You know, it's just a constant -- just constantly hammering at them and getting them the message that they're not welcome and their behavior is not welcome.

So I don't know if anybody else has any questions. Doc Spencer has another one.

LEG. SPENCER:

Thank you, Commissioner, again. The other side of that, I know we talked about the FBI, and I don't know, is there a different way that we address as far as actual drug trafficking? Do we -- are we interfacing, or do we have the same amount of interface with the DEA as we do with the FBI?

And, you know, I know that I see it on the medical side of things. You know, I'm the President of the Suffolk Medical Society and we're seeing a dramatic decrease in pharmaceuticals, because now docs are now checking the database. But it's really put a lot of pressure on your end, because heroin has just gone through the roof, and it's just a major, major issue.

Could you comment briefly on any initiatives, specifically with regards to heroin and our relationship with the DEA, or what we're doing about the heroin issue, just kind of Countywide?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

Well, as I mentioned briefly before, Legislator, we are on the Custom Task Force, we are on the IRS Task Force, we're on the DEA Task Force, all of which deal with money laundering and drugs. You know, beyond that, yes, they work with us all the time, plus we have reshifted some of our own assets to decentralize, to some extent, some of our drug activity, buying and Detective work, to the precincts from Headquarters to better, you know, be active on the streets.

LEG. SPENCER:

Do you have any sense of just -- you know, I know at times, when we look at the statistics, where we have a positive trend in terms of maybe seeing a decrease in crime. Do we have any gauges of just the heroin epidemic from an internal policing point of view? Are we starting to be able to kind of disrupt the supply? I mean, what's your perception in terms of how we're doing? Because I know a big thing now is Intelligence Led Policing. So, as far as -- how's it going?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

You asked a lot of questions there.

LEG. SPENCER:

I guess what I'm saying is how is it going?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

You know, it's not a Police problem, we can't arrest our way out of this, it's a social problem. It's not particular to Suffolk, nor New York State, it's country-wide. The changeover from prescription drugs, as you -- pills to heroin is a fact. And, yes, it's driving some of our robberies, the needs for quick money in order to buy heroin. We are working, we're doing our best. I don't know if we can gauge, because it's just more -- it's more prevalent, you know, there's more of it. So it's hard to say whether we are -- we're arresting people for it, we are reducing some of the supply, but I don't know, I can't quantify exactly whether you're plus or minus or where we are with it.

LEG. SPENCER:

Thank you, sir.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Rob, do you have a question?

LEG. CALARCO:

I do. Thank you. Excuse me. Commissioner, I wanted to actually deviate a little bit from the conversation and get to something else, which has always been a little bit of a personal point for me, and that's the ability to use technology to help your force. Obviously, we are working with a low number of guys compared to in the past. And the Intelligence Led Policing, which your Department is utilizing in many ways and in a very good effect, can be helped out through technology, through things like video, license plate readers and cameras in certain particular places and situations.

And one of the things that I've noticed in Nassau County -- and we've had this discussion as it

related to ShotSpotter, which I think has actually been working. I just looked at the report today for October, and in my community, in Bellport, we had -- we had one incident in October, and that incident resulted in an arrest. So that, you know, to me, the numbers have continually gone down in the number of reports, as well as gone up in the number of confirmations and the ability to deal with those confirmations.

So the thing that Nassau does quite proactively is they use their asset forfeiture money to acquire those tools that would otherwise have to come out of an operating or even Capital Budget expense that are often expensive and tough to get a hold of. I'd like know what your approach is to that, because, honestly, we don't hear much about the asset forfeiture money, at least how it's being spent, and I know there's an awful lot of it, in terms of how the Department is utilizing it.

In Nassau, they literally have a unit that's called their Intelligence and Asset Forfeiture Department -- Division. So they linked the two together, realizing that those resources need to be utilized to get the tools that are going to best maximize the performance of their officers.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

Many of the technology that we -- you mentioned, the license plate readers and those items come from our asset forfeiture. Our asset forfeiture, which is transparent, there's an annual report done to the Feds as to how we spend it. We are limited. You can't -- you can only augment, you can't supplant operating funds, so we're limited. It's always been purchased out of operations. You can't decide to buy it out of asset forfeiture. We do it for innovative new type of things.

And to answer your questions, we're heavy into technology, and we're looking forward to even expand that area.

LEG. CALARCO:

Well, I guess that's the point, right? Like we certainly could use cameras, it sounds like, in the Huntington Station, we can certainly use -- in fact, I think Huntington has done quite a bit of cameras, and I know we received a big Federal grant to start tying our capacities with private cameras that are out there as well. So that is certainly, I think, a realm where asset forfeiture money can be utilized to expand those capacities that we don't have and wouldn't otherwise be able to afford to buy.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay? Good?

LEG. HAHN:

Kate.

LEG. TROTТА:

I have.

LEG. MURATORE:

Me.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. Kara was next, and then -- okay.

LEG. HAHN:

I remember -- I was surprised at how few license plate readers we have. Do you have -- I remember being told it was something like -- I don't know. It was very -- it was very few, a handful per precinct. Do you happen to know, you know, what percentage of sector cars have a

license plate reader?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

No, I don't have it. Do you?

CHIEF CAMERON:

Yeah, about 20.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

Chief says about 20 in operation.

LEG. HAHN:

So that clearly means that it's not a regular thing we buy with the Operating Budget, and certainly could be augmented with asset forfeiture funds. It's absolutely something that, you know, really helps out. I've been in a car on a ride-along when they had that, that technology, and we certainly should have more than 20, and I would hope you would consider that. I did want to ask about 911 Operators.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

Okay.

LEG. HAHN:

Very, very concerned about the ongoing struggle to properly staff that division. The mandated overtime appropriately used during storms, during other types of disasters, not appropriately used on a day-to-day basis because you have inadequate staffing. And these people are being tortured, quite frankly, not being able to plan for their families, not being able to take breaks, to go to doctor's appointments, to a whole list of things that a human being needs. And this has been going on for far too long.

I know there's an increase in the budget for next year. It's so little so late as far as I'm concerned, and probably is not enough, and it will take way too long. We've known about this problem for years now, and it's just -- please excuse my frustration that you probably are hearing in my voice, but month in and month out, we, you know, demand this to be addressed in a real way that will have ongoing and lasting impact on our employees and on the safety of the public. And so I implore you to find an answer that solves the problem there.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

I can tell you the County Executive has signed ten SCINs for ECOs, three Spanish-speaking and seven non-Spanish speaking. They're in the process of hiring them as we speak.

LEG. HAHN:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Well, I don't know if they got the letter yet, but if they didn't, disregard. However, it's important, and maybe you should just save it and tack it up somewhere, maybe a few months away from now.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

Am I going to receive a letter, is that it?

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

You're going to get one. Actually, I'm not sure. I believe that you might get it. I know it went to the County Exec to sign the SCINs, so -- but we appreciate it. I mean, when we hear the stories

from those operators, it's pitiful and --

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

We will be at our budgeted number of 144 when we have those 10 on board. And we have two that have passed prior. We just weren't able to reach them last time, so, hopefully, they'll be ready to go now, and we'll be moving along as swiftly as we can.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

All right. And we understand, everybody likes to work overtime, but when they get hit with the mandated overtime, that's when it becomes a problem. And I think, Kara, you said it, was mandated overtime really should only be for emergencies, you know, snow storms, and hurricanes, and, you know, fire emergencies. We get that and they get that. But when they're being told to do mandated overtime just because they're short-staffed, it's a little unfair to them. So, hopefully, we can start setting the trend where they're not going to have to do that as much. Oh, Tom, you said you had a question?

LEG. MURATORE:

Yes. Actually, just a couple of budget questions. So, I don't know, can we go back to the budget now and talk about that?

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Yeah, sure. These are budget questions, about staff.

LEG. MURATORE:

I don't know. This is kind of like, you know, asking the Commissioner about micromanaging the Police Department and stuff like that. I mean, I just want to know -- I mean, I know you a long time, Commissioner, and, you know, I know you'll be straight with me. Is there -- is there enough money in the budget to hire enough cops to help you do your job next year to the level you're doing it right now?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

Well, as I mentioned before, Tom -- Legislator Muratore.

LEG. MURATORE:

Tom is fine, you can call me Tom. You know, we go back a long way, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

We -- I would love to ask for more.

LEG. MURATORE:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

But we understand the financial restraint -- constraints.

LEG. MURATORE:

We are.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

So we understand that. As the new people come on, they are much cheaper.

LEG. MURATORE:

Sure, on both ends. You know, on both ends, on the hiring end and on the overtime end, like Kate

was saying, you know. You know, there's no fair in being a police officer. You know, you raised your right hand, you swore to uphold, you know, the rules and the laws of the County. There's a lot of sacrificing, and you know, Kate, because you're married to a police officer, you know. And when they ask you to work overtime, you may not want to, you may have a christening, you may have a wedding or a baptism, but there is not -- there is no fairness. You know, we raise our right hand, we're expected to do that, we know we do that.

But getting back to the budget. How about vehicles, did they give you enough money for -- I know some of those years, trucks are terrible. I mean, I don't know how keep them. When you were there still, I'm sure it was a mess, and it's probably more of a mess keeping them on the road. Do you have enough money for vehicles.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

It's in capital now, it's not in operations, so that's where we're getting the cars from. So it's not really a subject of this negotiation, this discussion.

LEG. MURATORE:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

They took them out of operations and they put them into capital.

LEG. MURATORE:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

That's where we're purchasing them out of.

LEG. MURATORE:

All right, good.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

And they gave us a substantial amount of money.

LEG. MURATORE:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

And could we ask for more? Of course.

LEG. MURATORE:

Okay. The first issue that's brought up when police officers get involved with situations where, you know, misuse of deadly physical force, or false arrest, or something like that. And, you know, coming out of training, I want to make sure that the department will budget enough money for training next year for the cops. You know, those men and women need to keep abreast of what's going on, what they can do, what they can't do, because it's ever changing there. You know, we end up with a cop doing one misdeed and it ends up costing us millions dollars of dollars, and we don't want -- we want to stay away from that. So I want to make sure you have enough money for training. That's a thing that, you know, I guess, hopefully, when we go to the Police budget, we'll look for that for you.

You know, they want you to build bricks without straw, and I know what you're up against. The young man in the back from Huntington, you know, he was just asking for a couple of cops to ride

through the neighborhood, you know, with the windows down and seeing what's going on, and I know you want them to do that. The problem is you don't have them to do it with. So I know the PBA entered into an agreement with the County Exec, which was profitable on both sides. We just need to give you the cops, and hopefully, we can find a way to replace those that are retiring and then some. You know, I don't want to end up with, like Kevin was saying, with Legislator McCaffrey, that we're going to end with a deficit of cops. We can't go -- we can't keep sliding backwards with the number of bodies we have out there. You know, we need to find a way, and, hopefully, the County Exec and this body, too. You know, they're downstairs, they're really -- they're breaking their backs trying to put the right things together down there for our budget.

So you know, you have my commitment. We'll try and do the best we can with you. And, please, just let us know when you need things and we will find a way to do it. Thank you, Commissioner.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. Good? No more? Everybody's good? Okay, Commissioner. Well, we'll be --

LEG. TROTТА:

I have a question. Can you tell me what Intelligence-Based Policing is?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

I'm sorry?

LEG. TROTТА:

Can you tell me what Intelligence-Based Policing is?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

Intelligence-Led Policing is when you use trends and patterns to discuss and utilizing all the analytical data available.

LEG. TROTТА:

How is that different than anything we did 20 years ago?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

What we did was we centralized it and we now have analysts in all the precincts and criminal intelligence that monitor on a daily basis, are online, realtime basis, the information, where years ago it took someone entering it into the computer your field reports, you may recall, or any data information, arrest reports all took data. Now it's online. They immediately read, analyze and direct resources accordingly.

LEG. TROTТА:

That was all in there before. I mean, when I was -- 20 years ago, you knew exactly. There was a daily bulletin that came out, the suspects were there. I mean, it just seems like this term was coined, you know, and it's -- and I sit back and I look at it. You know, there was 34 shootings in 60 days in the First Precinct. You know, it's a 37% increase in gun violence, you know, and you don't have anybody in the ATF. When I was in the ATF, we would be over there, and as this gentleman says, they get out of jail in two days. If someone were to drive by this building right now and shoot in here and not hit us, it's a reckless endangerment. And if we caught them the next day and arrested them, they'd be out in two days. In the Federal system, it's an attempted gang assault.

We were in Huntington Station, I was kicking doors down in Huntington Station with the FBI. We arrested 17 Latin Kings and there wasn't a shooting for two years after that. I want to know how

Intelligence-Based Policing is stopping these shootings in the First Precinct.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

Well, I can tell, we removed 69 more guns this time. We had 225 guns removed, as compared to 169 last year, so we're removing a lot more guns.

LEG. TROTТА:

Commissioner, what does that have to do with 34 shootings in 60 days?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

Because they need guns to shoot.

LEG. TROTТА:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

I don't want to be argumentative.

LEG. TROTТА:

And they're still shooting.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

What we're removing is, as quickly as they -- the problem is, as you know, 75% or more come out of the state. They have readily accessible access to guns, and they're using more of them. We are taking them off the street, we just can't take them off as quickly as we would like.

LEG. TROTТА:

Wouldn't it be smart to have someone in the ATF, someone in there? Wouldn't it be smart to have someone embedded with them, like there was in -- back in the old days? Wouldn't it be smart to have six Detectives in the DEA? We used to have six guys there, okay?

Heroin in Suffolk County doesn't come from Suffolk County, it comes from Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx. We need people there to do it. I mean, I'm sure I get -- clearly, you know that I get phone calls all the time. Your drug sales are -- you know, what they used to do, and I don't know what the numbers are, 1,000, they're doing 200 now, hand-to-hand transactions. You know, I don't -- you know, I'm not a big fan of that. I think a lot of the people they were arresting were just low level people, but there's got to be more cooperation with the Federal Government, because, clearly, it's not working.

You know, and back in the day, I mean, this gentlemen will tell you, after what's happened in 2010 in Huntington Station, there were no more shootings for quite some time. And I think that you should reach out and repair these relationships, because, clearly, they need repair.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

Well, as I mentioned, we are in 12 Task Force -- we have 12 officers in the Task Force, including the ones you mentioned, the FBI, the ATF.

LEG. TROTТА:

The two guys in the FBI, if you want to talk about them, do they have top secret clearance?

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. I think maybe that's not necessarily conversation that needs to happen here.

LEG. TROTТА:

Well --

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

No, Rob, but I --

LEG. TROTТА:

How about from the budget standpoint, are you getting overtime reimbursement?

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

I believe it's \$17,000. That's all we --

LEG. TROTТА:

Not for those guys, you don't. You don't have theirs cars, don't have the phones, and they don't have overtime.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. There is a question he has to ask, but I think that would be more appropriate to be asked not on the record. I think that's a sensitive issue. So, with that, I don't think there are anymore questions. Okay. Thank you, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER WEBBER:

Thank you all.

CHIEF CAMERON:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

I guess -- I know, Mike, you've been here quite some time. Mike Sharkey, from the Sheriff's Department, if you'd like to come up. Okay. Mike, I know I've seen you in the room for quite some time, but if you would like to give us an update. I know you had an opportunity to look at BRO's recommendations and fill us in.

And, actually, I do have one question before you go anywhere, in case you might not have that on your list. There was a class -- not a class, a test was taken recently for Corrections.

CHIEF SHARKEY:

It's actually coming up.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. So --

CHIEF SHARKEY:

The entry level test for Correction Officer I?

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Right.

CHIEF SHARKEY:

Yeah, it's actually coming up. The filing is closed for it, but it's --

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Oh, okay.

CHIEF SHARKEY:

-- scheduled for November.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

How many -- how many people have filed to take that test?

CHIEF SHARKEY:

I believe that the number was somewhere in the 2700 to 2800 range.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. And what traditionally is the number that you have for people taking that test?

CHIEF SHARKEY:

I don't have a long history. I do know the number from this time was around that, you know, 2800. And I know that the last test was somewhere in the neighborhood of 9,000.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. So my next question, I'm sure you know I'm going to ask, is that -- so the application to take that test, was that application -- did that go out before the ratification of the contract, or was that afterwards?

CHIEF SHARKEY:

I think the test date was set after. I believe that the announcement was out without a test date prior to that, but I believe the test, you know, the test date was set after the contract was approved.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. So I guess it will be interesting to see how many people actually show up for the test. Can you -- when is the test?

CHIEF SHARKEY:

It's mid November. I want to say November 17th, but I don't know that for sure.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. So if I don't remember, I would appreciate if you let us know how many people actually do take the test.

CHIEF SHARKEY:

I did discuss that a little bit with Civil Service, because, obviously, it's a concern of ours. We need to be able to fill our positions, especially with our, you know, retirement rate. They did say that historically, most tests, there's roughly 20% of the people don't show up that sign up, so, you know, that were dropping off, and then, you know, maybe another 15% don't pass. So we're going to have a very short list. The last time we had a short list, I believe it was the time before the final list, it was somewhere over 3,000, and we exhausted that list to the last passing grade.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. And what's your anticipated retirements for next year? Do you guys do the same thing, you have the --

CHIEF SHARKEY:

We figured about 40 next year.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Forty? So is there anything in the budget for a new class for you guys for next year?

CHIEF SHARKEY:

There is, but it's going to be later in the year due to the Civil Service testing cycle. We have an unusual situation this year. The last time the test was given, the results came out very quickly, because we were in -- we were in a situation where we needed to hire immediately. So the maximum expiration of this list is the end of December of this year. The grade will not -- the grades will not be out from this November test, so we're going to have a period of time when there's going to be no list. Then we're going to have to start investigating off of a fresh list this spring. So best case scenario, we'll be ready to hire --

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Summer?

CHIEF SHARKEY:

September.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Oh, end of summer. Okay. So -- and you're hoping to hire what you lost? And do we -- what do we have budgeted for you guys? What's for the next class?

MR. ORTIZ:

Forty.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Forty is what you're expecting to hire?

CHIEF SHARKEY:

So it's just going to be keeping pace, essentially --

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay.

CHIEF SHARKEY:

-- with our retirements. And, you know, I have a short presentation.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Yeah, sorry.

CHIEF SHARKEY:

Abridged -- an abridged version. We do have our full presentation, which we'll leave a copy with the Clerk and with BRO.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Right.

CHIEF SHARKEY:

But we'll give you -- we'll give you the high points.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Yeah. And I guess, you know, the same question would have been for the Deputy Sheriffs. But, you know what, go ahead and do what you got to do, and maybe there'll be questions. Sorry.

CHIEF SHARKEY:

Okay. First of all, I'd like to thank BRO and the County Executive Budget Office for their review of our budget submission. I'd also like to thank my colleague, Deputy Warden Franchi, sitting to my right, for his work in preparing our budget submission.

Our '16 Operating Budget request was 156 million, and the County Executive's recommended budget is 154 million, which is roughly \$2 million less, a million out of personal services lines, and a million out of the overall equipment and supply lines.

Now, on its face, this budget comes close to being exactly what we asked for. However, the requested was submitted without any attempt at adjustment for the pending new contract agreements with any of the Suffolk Sheriff's Office bargaining units. And as it so happens, the largest bargaining unit in the Sheriff's Office, the Correction Officers, did reach an agreement, which was to be adjusted for in the recommended budget. While an adjustment was made, we feel it's not adequate. So our feeling, the recommended funding level for '16 will not be sufficient to cover the Sheriff's Office personnel expenses, even if we have a high level of attrition, which is what the recommended budget seems to be factoring in.

It is possible we could lose 40-plus officers to retirement next year, which would allow us to close the gap in the 110 accounts. However, we will need to hire and replace these retirements, which will lessen the positive impact of the retirements on the shortfall in the 110s. If we don't hire or hire an insufficient number, we'll be in a situation where our overtime will rise. These are the assumptions that we took into account when we made our request.

We planned on hiring at least a number of Correction Officers to bring us to the New York State Commission of Corrections minimum staffing levels by the end of 2016 to include all backfills of Correction Officer positions that occur from retirement. We intended to fill all remaining Correction Officer promotional vacancies by the end of '16. We intended to maintain the current Deputy Sheriff staffing levels and hire the number of Deputy Sheriff I's to fill vacancies that occur from retirements and promotions through the first quarter of 2016.

Portions of the Old Yaphank Facility will continue to be closed during '16 for dormitory renovations. This has and will continue to mitigate a portion of our overtime expenditures as housing units are closed for renovation, and the attendant staff is reassigned. This will save approximately 4.9 million in mandated overtime to date. This year, we'll see an additional projected savings of 4 million. This has already been factored into our overtime funding request, and is the main reason we have not incurred a much higher overtime level because of insufficient staff. It should be noted, however, that 2016 will be the final full year where this scenario will be true.

Capital Project 3009 is scheduled to conclude in July of '17, at which time all of Old Yaphank will again be open for inmate occupation, along with the currently closed security posts.

One of our other assumptions is no adjustments were made to the new labor agreement with Suffolk County Correction Officers Association. A 9.17% increase in Correction Officer pay will take effect 1/1 of 2016.

I want to point out that that's not a single-year raise. This was an eight-year contract, and that represents five years of contractual past raises that were deferred until this year of the contract. An additional increase will take effect of -- 3.25% will take effect in 6/1 of 16.

All housing variances granted by the New York State Commission of Correction have been rescinded, taking 374 beds out of our inventory. This leaves our current 90% occupancy rate at 1411 beds. The figure will drop to 1325 at some point in '16 when Phase II of 3009 begins, and we close the

four larger dorms in Old Yaphank for renovation. Therefore, we have included some funding in anticipation of having to house inmates out of county at some point in 2016.

Under staffing, I do want to mention a couple of civilian positions. We had requested two new Criminal Identification Technician positions. They were not included in the recommended budget. And while we're aware the County Executive requested that no new positions be included, we felt it was important that we do so. Criminal I.D. Techs are responsible for fingerprinting and photographing all arrests and detainees at the Sheriff's Office facilities. With the addition of the second inmate booking site at the new Yaphank facility, the current staff has been stretched very thin. This has resulted in a 70% increase in overtime for the unit over previous years. For 2015, these overtime payments are projected to top \$200,000 for this eight-person unit.

In addition to the high overtime, the staffing shortage is causing high stress levels on the current members of the unit, as they are constantly under pressure to work extra hours. BRO is in concurrence with this assessment and agree that it's necessary that these positions be added in the 2016 Sheriff's budget.

I'd like to touch also on maintenance contracts and software licenses. Increasingly, the Sheriff's Office is employing electronic and software-based systems throughout our facilities and work units as we seek to utilize technology to enhance the security and efficiency of our operations, and enhance the services we're able to offer people of Suffolk County, while seeking to keep our costs as low as possible. Along with these advancements come the associated maintenance contracts and licensing agreements for the use of proprietary software. Most notably among these is our Blackcreek Jail Security System on our Impact Police Records Management System. These items are not nice-to-haves, they are vital to our operation. A large investment was made by the County to put these into place. It's imperative that funds be allocated each year to maintain them, lest the investment go to waste. For this reason, we agree with BRO, that the cut to 3110-3160 of \$18,522 for software should be put back in the adopted budget.

In summary, and referencing the BRO recommendations, BRO estimates the permanent salaries included in the recommended budget are underfunded by 5 million, mostly in 3150, which is Riverhead Correctional Facility, and 3162, which is the Yaphank Correctional Facility.

In order to hire a class of Correction Officers in 2016 and keep all currently filled positions funded, less anticipated attrition, we recommend adding 3 million to 3162-1100 and 2 million to 3150-1100 in 2016.

Recommended overtime is \$915,000 less than the 2015 estimated amount. Based on contractual increases to the Correction Officers, the Budget Review Office estimates overtime is underfunded by approximately 1.5 million. We recommend adding 1 million to 3162-1120 and 500,000 to 3110-11 -- excuse me, 1120 for '16.

There is also, as I mentioned a short while ago, insufficient funding for the maintenance agreements for our computer software, so we'd recommend the 18,500 back into 3110-3160.

The County receives reimbursements for expenses related to incarceration of criminal aliens under the New York State Criminal Alien Assistance Program, known as SCAAP. The Revenue Code 4348, based on a grant award amount of \$1,447,000, the estimate should be decreased by \$247,000.

In regard to the last two BRO recommendations concerning substitute jail housing, the BRO recommends reducing funding for substitute jail housing by 100,000 in 2016, as we do not anticipate the inmate population exceeding the functional capacity. We feel that that's a risky move. We don't think it's prudent to reduce the recommended amount from 200,000 to 100,000.

The recommended amount is already 130,000 less than requested.

Our current inmate population, as of 10/19 of '15, stood at 1423. The system's functional capacity will hit its 1325 some time early next year, when we close the larger dorms. And at least 40,000 of the sub-object is also for ambulance services for inmates. Given these facts, we're requesting no change be made to the recommended budget in in this area.

And the final item has to do with pistol licensing fees. There's a recommendation to increase the current application fee, which has not been increased since 1993. For every \$10 increase in the application fee, an additional 7500 in revenue could be generated. An additional 150,000 in revenue could be generated if the application fee was increased to \$200, as it is in Nassau County. As we stated in last year's budget process, while we agree an increase in licensing fee is due, we do not endorse raising the fee to the levels currently charged by Nassau County, as we feel that a 2,000% increase is unwarranted and unfair.

That's the end of our formal presentation.

LEG. BROWNING:

Thank you for that, Mike. Does anyone have any questions? No? Actually, I was going to ask about the pistol license fee, is what? What's the renewal?

CHIEF SHARKEY:

It's \$10 now.

LEG. BROWNING:

It's \$10. And that says the gun dealer licenses, what's the fee on that?

MR. LIPP:

They're all the same.

LEG. BROWNING:

Oh, okay. So -- and Nassau County is something like 150, right?

CHIEF SHARKEY:

That's 200.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Oh, 200. Wow. From \$10 to 200?

MR. LIPP:

My favorite story about that is when John Ortiz called New York City up and asked what their fee was, and the woman asked him what his was, and he said \$10. Is it over \$300? And she said, "Does Suffolk County" -- "In Suffolk County, does everybody have a gun," because it's that cheap.

LEG. BROWNING:

(Laughter) So, me, I do think it's something that we -- maybe the Working Group could consider, but I can't see -- you know, maybe a \$50 -- you know, \$50 fee. But 200 is a little steep when you're used to paying 10. So that -- I guess that would be something we should look at, how much that would generate, what kind of revenue that would generate. But that would be the East End, because the Sheriff's do it on the East End, the P.D. does it on the west end. So it would be interesting to see what the difference would be, the revenue on -- if we even went to 50.

MR. LIPP:

We actually -- I believe, we put it in last year's Omnibus resolved clause. And we've had a discussion in the Working Group this year about the possibility of including it. But by including, I mean, you need State-enabling legislation. So if we included it, which I'm not saying we will, it would be a resolved clause, but it wouldn't have dollars attached to it, because we would still need to go get the State-enabling legislation.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

We have -- oh, so we have to get State legislation to -- oh, forget that.

*(*Laughter*)*

I don't know that's going to happen any time soon. Sorry. Maybe we can try. But any other questions? No one has questions? Everybody's getting kind of tired.

I would like to -- you know, I'll follow up. I know that I'd like to talk about, you know, the staffing levels. Obviously, the jail has expanded. And, you know, not just Correction Officers. You know, I see you have -- I believe there's a request for a Medical Assistant, or what was that? Okay, new positions.

CHIEF SHARKEY:

No. Under new positions, we require Criminal ID Techs.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay.

CHIEF SHARKEY:

Maybe there's something in there from the Health Department, I'm not sure.

LEG. BROWNING:

Okay. I did see something in here about medical. Okay. And you have Jail Cook positions. I know that you filled a couple recently.

CHIEF SHARKEY:

Yes.

LEG. BROWNING:

You still need positions filled?

CHIEF SHARKEY:

When we're done with our process, there will be one vacant position that's not -- that we've been rolling along with vacant.

LEG. BROWNING:

Okay. And, as you know, we still have a preferred list of people from Foley.

CHIEF SHARKEY:

From the Foley, yeah.

LEG. BROWNING:

And I appreciate that the new people that you brought --

CHIEF SHARKEY:

And we did, we did actually --

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Right.

CHIEF SHARKEY:

We brought on a few people from that list.

LEG. BROWNING:

And we thank you for that. So I guess no more questions. We'll be following up. Oh, I would like to talk to you more later about some of the staffing issues in the pods.

CHIEF SHARKEY:

Okay.

LEG. BROWNING:

It's not a budget issue. So thank you. District Attorney's Office is here. Ed? You're happy, you're done, you're good to go, right?

*(*Laughter*)*

MR. HEILIG:

I don't know if happy is the word.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Trying.

MR. HEILIG:

Yes. Well, I know it's late in the day. We'll try to be brief. Ed Heilig from the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office. With me is Craig Pavlik, who is in charge of our Administration and Finance Unit.

We just want to bring to the Legislature's attention something that we identified in the recommended Operating Budget that has to do with our permanent salaries allocation. We have identified a shortfall in the recommended budget in the permanent salaries line of just over \$600,000. We don't think that there is enough in the budget to cover our permanent salaries for the staff that we have right now going forward through the end of 2016. Part of this is because in the recommended Operating Budget, they identified \$1.4 million in turnover savings. We have never reached \$1.4 million in turnover savings. We budgeted 375,000 for turnover savings, so I think the difference is right there.

Budget Review Office did a great job in their recommendation. They're recommending that 425,000 be added back into our budget in the permanent salaries line. I just don't know if that's going to be enough. They had -- BRO, actually, originally identified over 580,000 in a shortage in the permanent salary lines there. I believe some of the assumptions they made were based upon resignations, retirements, hiring a new class of 10 new Assistant District Attorneys. We don't know if that's going to come to fruition next year, which would make the salary costs cheaper going through 2016.

So that's what we're here for. Everything else in the budget we're fine with, we can handle. Any reductions in the budget we could handle. It's just the permanent salaries that we're worried about reaching through the end of 2016. So I'll take any questions.

LEG. BROWNING:

Any questions? You're getting off real easy, so you are.

MR. HEILIG:

For once.

LEG. BROWNING:

You know, I guess the gentleman that was here, Mr. McGoldrick, you know, I would appreciate -- I'm assuming there's something you can do to help with that issue, I know there is, with what's going on in Huntington Station.

MR. HEILIG:

We're working on it. I'm not going to discuss strategies.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

No, I know.

MR. HEILIG:

We have -- here it's been identified as an issue with the police. We're going to do everything we can.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. Well, we appreciate that. Asset forfeiture, I guess let's talk about that. You know, Rob was talking about helping with technology and stuff like that. I mean, can you guys use asset forfeiture for increasing technology to help with license plate readers, that kind of thing?

MR. HEILIG:

As a matter of fact, we can and we are. We have outfitted some of the East End Police Departments, as well as some of the local town and village Police Departments with the LPRs. The Suffolk County Police Department is using their forfeiture funds for their LPRs, but we have -- Craig could answer this in more detail, but we've provided a number of departments with LPRs. Do you want to add anything?

MR. PAVLIK:

Yeah, I just want to add one thing. In addition to buying the LPRs, the District Attorney Office has also bought the servers required for the LPRs. So what it allows that to do is interface with all the East End departments to one particular server. So now Southold can share information with Southampton, Southampton with East Hampton, etcetera, etcetera. And they all tie into the Suffolk Police Department, so there's, you know, cross-intelligence going on there --

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Good.

MR. PALIK:

-- as opposed to each agency just having their own, you know, modicum of information.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. Thank you. So I guess there are no more questions, but I'm sure we'll be hearing from you more maybe throughout the process.

MR. HEILIG:

Great. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Thank you.

MR. PAVLIK:

Have a good day.

LEG. BROWNING:

Have a good day. Patrice, our Director for Probation.

DIRECTOR DLHOPOLSKY:

Good afternoon.

LEG. BROWNING:

Good afternoon. I hate it's that we have so many of you that it feels -- it's very difficult to say who goes first, and I was trying to go who did I see first come in the room, but I hope --

DIRECTOR DLHOPOLSKY:

Understood.

LEG. BROWNING:

You did the same thing, you sat in the same seat. So, Patrice, if you'd like to go ahead.

DIRECTOR DLHOPOLSKY:

I would basically just like to thank the County Executive's Budget Office for their work on our budget request, and also BRO for the work they put into the review.

As you can see, the amount requested has been reduced in terms of what is recommended. However, a good portion of that is due to a \$3.3 million difference in terms of payments for mandated State placements. There was disagreement or actually lack of information from the State on an adjustment to rates, and our budget prep was put in with the worst case scenario. That seems to have been avoided, so that accounts for a good portion of the discrepancy between our requested amount and the recommended amount.

Obviously, these are difficult fiscal times, and while I would certainly wish that there was more money in the budget for hiring, etcetera, obviously, our department will, as always, make our best efforts to deal with the fund -- what we need to do based on the funding available.

LEG. BROWNING:

Okay. And I'm looking at retirements. Do you know what your anticipated retirements are for next year?

DIRECTOR DLHOPOLSKY:

Not precisely. I mean, I'm certain we will have a few before the end of the year. The reason that I'm not completely aware of what next year will be is that we expect that the long-awaited POA contract will be completed some time before the end of the year. It is our belief that there are quite a few people -- yes, I think our union president is here.

LEG. BROWNING:

I see him.

DIRECTOR DLHOPOLSKY:

That there are a number of people who are holding off on any announced retirements until the

completion of that contract. So it is difficult for us to actually say how many people may leave. We've had six leaves so far this year, and we have another two leaving before the year is over, and then we'll see what next year brings. Obviously, we do have a large number of our staff who are -- I wouldn't say older, I would just say experienced.

LEG. BROWNING:

Well, likely is experienced, so -- and I wouldn't want to put Matt on the spot, but let's say your contract, you know, is ratified by the end of the year, what would you anticipate? Do you have an idea how many --

DIRECTOR DHLOPOLSKY:

Honestly, I have not heard that many people. I would certainly expect a number of retirements, but it's really impossible to say how many. We always have people who are discussing the possibility, but when push comes to shove, that does not always happen, so I would hesitate to guess.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

I know with the Police Department, they always say it's a magic number of 32. Do you guys have a magic number?

DIRECTOR DLHOPOLSKY:

A magic number of?

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Thirty-two years.

DIRECTOR DLHOPOLSKY:

Oh, average number of years?

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

No?

DIRECTOR DLHOPOLSKY:

No. We have a -- we have, what, 25 Peace Officers who will be 55 or over and have at least 25 years of service. Sixteen of those have more than 30 years of service. So 22% of our workforce is -- our Peace Officers are over the age of 55, or 55 or over.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. So, Budget Review, do you have any comments?

MS. MOSS:

If you look at Page 229 of our report, we kind of break it down. The Probation Department does have a special retirement plan, so they can retire with 25 years.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Right.

MS. MOSS:

There's 32 Peace Officers that will be eligible to retire with 25 years of service.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Regardless of their age? So they --

MS. MOSS:

Regardless of their age, correct.

DIRECTOR DLHOPOLSKY:

Yes, that have 25 years in our plan.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. So now it says here, authorized positions, 433; vacant positions, 97 in Probation.

DIRECTOR DLHOPOLSKY:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Of those 97 vacant positions, are they funded or no?

DIRECTOR DLHOPOLSKY:

No, there's no funding behind the vacant positions.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

No funding in any of those, okay. That's what I wanted to --

DIRECTOR DLHOPOLSKY:

Well, there may be funding behind a couple of them at any given time if somebody just left, but by and large, no.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. Any questions? No questions? Okay, Patrice.

DIRECTOR DLHOPOLSKY:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Thank you. Okay. Our Medical Examiner is here. I think he's thinking he was never going to get called. Okay. Good evening.

DR. CAPLAN:

Good evening.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Dr. Caplan.

DR. CAPLAN:

Good evening, Legislator Browning.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

So, okay, if you would like to -- you have something you want to read for us?

DR. CAPLAN:

Can everybody hear me?

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Yeah, we hear you.

DR. CAPLAN:

Great. I also want to thank the County Executive's Office and the Budget Review Office; and Linda Russo, who's my Senior Budget Analyst right here, helping us with the budget; and Craig also, from the Budget Review Office.

I would say that although we -- there is -- there is certainly some discrepancy in terms of what we asked for and what we recommended, and what was recommended from the County Executive's. In looking at -- in looking at all of the items here, and again, you've heard this a million times already today, the current financial restraints, given those, I think that we're in a decent position to address all these things.

I can say that probably the -- one of the main issues is the -- has to do with personnel and overtime. And to address that, we have a drivers -- more ambulance drivers positions, people that actually go out to the scenes, you know, and transport, you know, the deceased bodies to our office. We have put in a SCIN for that. And we anticipate that when that position comes in, which should be shortly, that should go a fairly long way towards alleviating, you know, the overtime issue. It may not completely erase it, but it will go a long way.

A couple of the other things that I wanted to emphasize is that we've been able to streamline some of the other anticipated expenses. In terms of contracts, since now we're fully staffed, the need to use per diem pathologists, you know, is not an issue anymore.

And, also, we're looking forward to, we're anticipating the hiring of our Chief Deputy Medical Examiner in January of 2016, and that's going to also, you know, be an important help, you know, to myself, as well as to my staff in terms of organizing our resources.

I also want to mention that one anticipated expense, there was a -- one of the things that is important to our office is histology services. Basically, that is when we perform autopsies and we look at slides under the microscope to assist in making our diagnosis, traditionally, we've been budgeted for two positions. We since have -- one person has vacated that position. But we have found that we've been able to do okay with the one full-time position, again, through a little bit of streamlining and also through -- actually, the person who left was instrumental in making some changes. That has increased our efficiency there.

So, you know, I would say that, overall, you know, with that drivers position being the main issue that we're looking to fill, we also have some SCINs for some other positions. But I think that, overall, this is a budget that we can live with.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. So is the morgue ambulance driver, is that a Civil Service?

MR. FREAS:

It's Civil Service, but it's noncompetitive.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. So it really shouldn't be that difficult to fill it, right?

MR. FREAS:

Well, you've got to find somebody who wants to do the job.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Oh, I think I do.

MR. FREAS:

Right.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. So, I guess, any questions, anyone?

MR. FREAS:

I did want to point out, and Dr. Caplan, just to be clear on that particular position, it's not like you can have one guy on the ambulance.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Right.

MR. FREAS:

So any -- so until he comes, until that new position is hired, and I tried to point this out in the review, his time, plus the overtime that he worked in the first place, all of that is now filled with overtime. Do you see what I'm saying? So his regular hours are filled with overtime, right, are filled with -- from the other drivers using overtime, and then the overtime that he worked anyway is also filled with overtime. He -- okay.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. I think I get you. Okay.

DR. CAPLAN:

Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

So, now I think the other question is really not much of a budget issue. I guess no more questions. Thank you, Doctor.

DR. CAPLAN:

Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

And we need to follow up on the cemetery issue.

DR. CAPLAN:

Yeah, yeah.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

I believe the Center Moriches Cemetery is working with you?

DR. CAPLAN:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay.

DR. CAPLAN:

We're making good progress with that.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. Thank you.

DR. CAPLAN:

Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

So -- and you said the SCIN form is signed for the ambulance driver?

DR. CAPLAN:

Yes, it is.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. Thank you.

DR. CAPLAN:

Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

With that, there are -- is there anyone else? County Exec's Office, no? You've got nothing to say. Wow. We appreciate that. So with that, I guess I will close the budget meeting. Thank you. Have a good night.

(*The meeting was adjourned at 4:22 p.m. *)