

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**Of the**

**Suffolk County Legislature**

**2017 Operating Budget Minutes**

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 18th, 2016 at 2:30 p.m., to discuss the matter of the 2017 Operating Budget.

**Members Present:**

***Legislator Kate Browning - Chairperson***

*Legislator Robert Calarco - Vice-Chair*

*Legislator Kara Hahn*

*Legislator Bridget Fleming*

*Legislator Monica Martinez*

*Legislator Leslie Kennedy*

*Legislator Tom Cilmi*

*Legislator William Spencer*

**Also In Attendance:**

*Legislator Tom Muratore - District No. 4*

*Legislator Robert Trotta - District No. 13*

*Legislator Sarah Anker - District No. 6*

*George Nolan - Counsel to the Legislature*

*Sarah Simpson - Assistant Counsel to the Legislature*

*Jason Richberg - Clerk/Suffolk County Legislature*

*Amy Ellis - Chief Deputy Clerk/Suffolk County Legislature*

*Josh Slaughter - Aide to Legislator Browning*

*Michael Pitcher - Aide to Presiding Officer Gregory*

*Alyssa Turano - Aide to Legislator Hahn*

*Liz Alexander - Aide to Legislator Spencer*

*Elizabeth Sutton - Aide to Legislator Fleming*

*Robyn Hellrath - Aide to Legislator Anker*

*Robert Lipp - Director/Legislative Budget Review Office.*

*Roz Gazes - Assistant Director/Legislative Budget Review Office*

*John Ortiz - Budget Analyst/Legislative Budget Review Office*

*Benny Bernice - Budget Analyst/Legislative Budget Review Office*

*Craig Freas - Budget Analyst/Legislative Budget Review Office*

*Katie Horst - Director-Intergovernmental Relations/CE's Office*

*Kerri Suoto - County Executive Assistant/County Executive's Office*

*Jason Hann - County Executive Assistant/County Executive's Office*

*Tim Sini - Commissioner/Suffolk County Police Department*

*Stuart Cameron - Chief of Department/Suffolk County Police Department*

*James Cerone - Sergeant/Chief of Department's Office - SCPD*

*Robert Cassagne - Chief of Support Services/Suffolk County PD*

*Donna Miles - Budget Analyst/Suffolk County Police Department*

*Anthony Papparatto - Chief of Staff/Suffolk County Sheriff's Office*

*Mike Franchi - Deputy Warden/Suffolk County Sheriff's Office*

10/18/16 - Public Safety Operating Budget Committee Meeting

Jim Bello - Lieutenant/Suffolk County Sheriff's Office  
Joe Williams - Commissioner/Fire, Rescue & Emergency Services  
Joel Vetter - Coordinator of Emergency Medical Services/FRES  
Robert Holley - Director/Suffolk County Fire Academy  
Ed Johnston - Deputy Director/Suffolk County Fire Academy  
Patrice Dishopolsky - Director/Suffolk County Probation Department  
Dr. Michael Caplan - Suffolk County Medical Examiner  
Lou Tutone - 1st Vice-President/Suffolk County Police Benevolent Assoc  
Jim Roddin - Trustee/Superior Officer's Association  
All Other Interested Parties

**Minutes Taken by:**

Alison Mahoney - Court Stenographer

**(\*The meeting was called to order at 2:49 P.M. \*)**

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Good afternoon. Sorry for the delay. We will start the Public Safety Budget Hearing. If everyone could please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator Kennedy.

***Salutation***

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

***Moment of Silence Observed***

Thank you. Okay. I don't think I have any cards. Is there anyone in the audience who would like to speak? I don't think I have anyone from the public on this one.

Okay, where do we start? There are a few issues that I have questions about. I guess, Joe, I see you're here. If no one minds, I'll start -- I'm never going to be right no matter who I start with, but I'd like to start with **FRES**. Commissioner Williams? And is Craig available; Craig Freas?

**MR. PERNICE:**

I'll get him.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay, if you could just tell us how you're doing.

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

We're doing fine. Looking at the County Executive's Recommended Budget, we feel that FRES can operate within the limits of that budget in 2017.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Well, that's my question. So the reason being, I know there was an audit done, and it seems like consistently every year your overtime budget is always understated. And I did have a conversation with our Budget Office, with Craig Freas, because according to -- if I'm not mistaken, Budget Review is recommending an additional 200,000; am I correct?

**MR. PERNICE:**

Four hundred thousand in '16 and 200,000 in '17.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. So Joe, I think the reason being is based on the audit and from what I've learned from our Counsel is that we do have to address the audit report, which I believe there's a 90-day requirement to have a response to the audit report, and staff members who are doing work that's not within their title. And I have asked Budget Review to kind of come up with a way is that -- because you're actually closer to a million dollars in overtime, I believe, than what the requested was. And I'd like to find out where that spot is, that we could have an adequate staffing for your department to address what needs to be done, but also is there a way to kind of reduce your overtime budget? And I know that's kind of hard because you don't know what -- a snow storm hits, we're done. However, that's all reimbursed, or most of it; correct?

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

Most of it but not all the time, only if you have a declaration.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. But Craig, I know we had a conversation with -- you know, with regards to their overtime budget?

**MR. FREAS:**

I'm sorry, I didn't hear what Commissioner Williams just said.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. As you know, we sat down and had a discussion about the overtime budget --

**MR. FREAS:**

Correct.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

-- and what the actual -- what the requested was and what the actual is. And trying to come up with that middle point where if we were to adequately staff FRES, they'll still need that overtime budget, but when we're not continually being, you know, understated on what the request is. And have we been able to come up with anything on that yet?

**MR. FREAS:**

You know, in the review -- not yet. In the review we talked a little bit about the different factors that go into FRES' overtime. There's a natural overtime in -- and when we're talking about overtime in FRES, we're pretty much talking about the communication center in FRES.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Right, correct.

**MR. FREAS:**

Right. You know, so there's a natural overtime that's made worse by vacancies in the communication room and we kind of tried to explain how that works in the review where it's \$90,000 for each vacancy, and if you fill a vacancy at least in the first year, it's \$90,000 because that guy can't be by himself. Correct me if I'm getting this wrong at any point. That guy can't be by himself for, let's say, his first six months in, he has to be trained by someone who's with him, whose shift then has to be backfilled by the overtime.

And then obviously EOC activations and mobile command post-employments affect him because the Emergency Services Dispatchers fill certain roles in the operation center and in the mobile command post when it's activated as well. Uh -- yeah.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. Go ahead, Joe.

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

I'd like to bring up the audit, being that you wanted to mention that. Is the period of time that this audit was made, and it was made and we did do -- we actually supplied an 11-page expedition of that audit.

We were without a Civil Service list; we could not promote, we could not do anything else or hire anybody. When we get an okay for a SCIN, it starts with the SCIN. We have to go through a period of time where we bring in interviews, we have to go through a period of time where we do a site test, and that sometimes takes over two months. When that person who we select finally is hired, they're on a six month probation period where they're not allowed to work the radio themselves. So from the time the SCIN is signed till the time the person goes on the radio, it's eight months.

We had spoken to Civil Service when we realized the list was running out. The test is given by the State; we requested a test, it took two months to schedule that test. That overtime was actually driven up by the number of people. In the last 18 months I have hired 18 dispatchers. Every time I've asked for a SCIN on a dispatcher I have them. Right now I'm sitting with five new dispatchers that come off probation in January who we have not been able to add to delete the overtime. I received a SCIN yesterday for one vacancy. What we've done with that, we'll be filling that and going through the same cycle.

The part I don't understand in Craig's write-up is that we're asking for \$400,000 more for this year. As of yesterday afternoon, going through my overtime budget, I am \$230,576 less than I was this time last year. I am still going over my budget because we're still hiring people, but I am nowhere near needing \$400,000 more in my budget this year.

Our projection for next year, the County Executive put in \$75,000 more, up to 700,000. We feel once the five people come on board in January to cut down on the overtime, that will significantly lower our overtime other than emergencies. We've taken a poll, we've spoken to people in our office about hiring, about the -- excuse me, about retiring. Two had expressed an interest that they may retire next year; that could change, it could be more. But what happens, we wound up in a cycle right there where we had 18 people, 19 people retiring within a short period of time. Thirty years from now somebody else will be sitting here talking about the same problem, because the people that we get hired today, after they put their 30 years in with the County, will be there.

Again, I understand and I appreciate trying to add something to my budget. But I think in all honesty, in the budget restraints we have now and the financial situation we have right now, I don't agree with those numbers. And we've talked about this and we went back and forth with this, and right now with the overtime budget, I understand why we want to cover that.

I think also, too, is that in the future we have had some discussions with the County Exec's Office, do we increase the number of people due to the volume of calls on a basis of adding more dispatchers? But we will still always have overtime, like you mentioned before. If I have 12 dispatchers or 14th dispatchers, I can't go down to 10 or 11 before I put in overtime because I have no need for the other ones. I'd like to go on the record that I don't agree with the statement that's made that we need \$400,000 this year.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay, and that's the issue. You know, we talk about dispatch and we know that, you know, you've been understaffed and there's -- never say never because we're actually doing the same thing with the 911 operators. You know, what happens when you become understaffed, and now the burden on the people who are working the mandated overtime, we don't want to see mandated overtime

only for emergencies. And we want to make sure that, you know, for the good and health of the people who work there, that they're not being pressured into work and to do more than what they're able to do. And that the only time that they're going to be mandated is for emergencies, like say that snowstorm that we could possibly get this year.

But there was, I believe -- and, you know, as far as the audit's concerned, that's a conversation we have to have a different day. And I thank you for at least addressing some of that, and hopefully next year things will be better. But I did look at over the past few years that, you know, the requested always is never enough and it always exceeds what the requested was. And we need to be sure that when we're doing our end of the budget, that we're not going to see the same thing repeat itself over and over again.

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

I understand. As a matter of fact, this particular year there were two additional dispatchers added to the number of people that has cut down on overtime. I can reassure you, we are having discussions about that. We're looking at where we have to be a year from now, three years, five years from now. Those are discussions going on and I know that will be tied to the financial situation of the County.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. And there are, I believe, there was a couple of positions that I think that there's dispatchers or supervisor dispatchers are doing some paperwork that are not within their title, that there would be lower paid employees who could be taking care of that; am I correct?

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

What that is, five years ago, four years ago we had a Senior Clerk -- a clerk typist in the radio room helping the supervisor do the scheduling. That particular person got promoted to our payroll clerk and became a Senior Clerk Typist. What we did, we took a supervisor out of the room and put them back to start doing that scheduling because it's important to have one person doing that scheduling. We did not backfill, we did not hire another person to hire that back. That person still works in the radio room for certain times. So what we did, we never filled the clerk typist in as the Assistant to the Chief of the radio room. That person still works in the room from time to time and we never filled -- when they're in that room, we never went out and hired another supervisor just to keep her out of the room or keep that person out of the room. So there was -- the situation there where there was a savings there of the clerk typist and another supervisor.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. And you don't see the need to have that position filled?

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

The supervisor position?

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

No, the clerk typist position..

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

The clerk typist, I don't see the reason because it would add costs. We have gone on for five years like this. There is a cost to the supervisor being in the room, but you deduct the payroll from the other one and the other two, it almost evens itself out. And it's not -- I don't see -- I don't see hiring another person to put that person in there.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

There's no overtime being used to fill in what that individual is doing?

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

No. Right now we sit with two supervisors in the room, and it's from the midnight shift. What happens, we have gone down to one supervisor in the midnight shift which was -- which does not create the overtime which is our lower shift, which is -- even on our normal dispatchers, I believe we work with 12 during the daytime and the afternoon and I believe 10 in the evening or eight in the evening.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. I think -- Craig, do you have any comment on this? Because I know you've really looked at it.

**MR. FREAS:**

We actually -- we looked at -- in our report we looked at overtime more going back as far as 2009 and the way that it's varied over -- for FRES and the way that it's varied. And for one thing, overtime, when we -- you know, we have an advantage over the department and the Budget Office, especially in our estimates because get to make them a little later in the year where the situation is more fully developed. And as we mentioned in the write-up, the overtime budget for the department was only \$46,000 under what had been requested for this year. So we estimated it and based on the -- can you give me one sec? And we saw it pretty much coming in this year less than last year, which is encouraging where I believe last year was up to 1.3 million, but closer -- but well over 800,000 and in the one to \$1.1 million range.

There's some very encouraging signs from what's going on in FRES. However, I don't believe that they're going to be able to -- because of the possible retirements and if those folks end up staying, then maybe they'll come in at 800,000, but I think it's much more likely they're going to be close to 900,000 to a million next year.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. So the bottom line is is that -- so you're telling me the supervisor has not been paid any overtime to do the work of that non-existent clerk typist anymore.

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

The supervisor has not been paid any overtime to do their work what -- what she's worked is overtime in the room, when they need a supervisor in the room she has worked in the room; but she does not get paid overtime to work in that room.

If I could also -- we have some numbers here that may help you understand. You know, the numbers that we're coming across this year when we're talking about the 2'17 budget is that these five people -- I've got Joel Vetter with me here, my Chief of Operations, he can explain to you what these five people actually mean to hours of overtime next year.

**MR. VETTER:**

So we pretty much consistently have a high weekly of about 36 sections which comes out to 288 hours. Our average without excessive sick calls is roughly 30 sections, which is 240 hours. In January when the five new dispatchers are released, that will remove 200 hours from that scheduled block, leaving a range of 40 to 60 hours of overtime due to sick calls and other unexpected activities. That would also be absorbed based on the one vacancy once that's filled, so we do have one vacant spot, somebody moved on to other Civil Service careers.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

I'm going to back off a little bit. I know Legislator Hahn had a question; do you still have a question?

**LEG. HAHN:**

I wanted to ask about the dispatchers, and this also applies to PD, 911 call operators. You said -- just correct me if I'm wrong here. You said that you asked for and got 18 SCINS in the last 18 months?

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

Yes. We've hired a total of 18 people the last 18 months, maybe a little closer to two years, within that period of time. And also we just got one yesterday, it would be a total of 19.

**LEG. HAHN:**

And how were they distributed? Did you ask for one a month, did you, you know, do six at a time --

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

What we tried to do --

**LEG. HAHN:**

-- or did you do them all at once?

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

Excuse me. What we tried to do in the past was that when we bring in somebody to train, for the first month or so, six weeks, two months, it's almost a training class where they're in class getting their certificates, getting their certifications. What that required me to do in the past was actually pull one to two people out of the radio room as trainers and backfill that with overtime. What -- so what we tried to do was actually try to hire them in blocks of five or six at a time, because looking at the overtime, pulling them out, looking at the added cost of the salary. What we did -- the last couple of things, like now we have a class of five. The one person we're hiring right now, we're going to hire that one person to bring us up and it will cost me some overtime to do that because I need to still have somebody training that person. What we did is that when we got the SCINS, we waited until we had a couple of openings and then we submitted them in, knowing that it wasn't -- we didn't wait nine months, six months, eight months, I don't know the exact time, but we submitted them when we had three or more.

**LEG. HAHN:**

We have to get ahead of this; I'm saying it to you, I'm saying it to Commissioner Sini. We have to get ahead of this problem. We cannot be behind the eight ball any longer on dispatchers and on our call takers. It is absolutely ridiculous that we are waiting around -- I understand that we have to have -- we should have classes of five, but we should have classes of five extra because they are so short. You shouldn't have had to wait until you had five more that go out. We need them. We have to get in front of this now. This has been a number of years where we have been behind the eight ball on the dispatchers and on the 911 operators. We have to get in front of it.

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

In all due respect, we are full now. I have one opening which I just got a SCIN for. I don't have any openings in my dispatch.

**LEG. HAHN:**

So maybe my comments only apply to 911 operators at this time, I don't know. But we can't have a situation where we're getting testimony about people can't go to the bathroom or can't take any time off, can't take a sick day because there's not enough backup for them. It may not completely apply to dispatchers the way it applies to 911 operators, but you have to understand our frustration, two years we have been hearing complaints about how we are not properly staffed here. And I want to apologize if it doesn't apply to the dispatchers at this moment, but we keep hearing it, we have to get in front of it and I will save my anger for when PD comes forward.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

*(Laughter)*.

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

I just want to say, you know, we -- as the Commissioner, I do feel that I'm the person that technically orders these people to work overtime. And I've seen what we went through, and I think we explained it before, the problem we have with no lists and everything else. And they were working exorbitant overtime, and I'll be the first to admit that, but I had no choice, I had to have somebody on that radio.

That situation is slowing down. We do see an uptick in the summer time where we see more people wanting the time off. Maybe -- we're looking at different avenues. I'm in a predicament where if you turned around to me and gave me five more dispatchers and I can put them on, but how do I justify those five salaries when I can say I can go down five people sick before I need to order somebody on overtime. Because then the question is do I really need those five people? And maybe that's my thinking, but it's tough to hire somebody and pay salaries and everything else and then when it gets down to you said that I've got 12 people working, but I can go down to ten before I put anybody on overtime. If I need -- I'm asking for what I need, so if I -- if we put 12 on, I need those twelve dispatchers working.

**LEG. HAHN:**

But mandatory overtime. You know, sometimes there's people who volunteer, but mandatory overtime, hurricanes? Major -- other major emergencies? Not the way you've regularly run the department with mandatory overtime, that's just unacceptable; and I don't know if it's happening in your division and I apologize. But what we keep hearing is so frustrating, that we haven't been able to get in front of this problem over the last, what is it, three years now?

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

More.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Well, right, but since that -- you know, when -- *(sigh)*. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Well, I know what you're saying. You know, we want to make sure that the people who are hired to do the job they're doing are doing only what they're supposed to do. And going back to the clerk typist, why should someone be working outside of their title? I'll give you an example. The Police Department, police officers cleaning bathrooms when they should but out on the street. That's what custodians -- that's why we have custodians in the County. So I don't know if you have the same problem, too, whether you have custodians coming in and cleaning up for you or do you have your own people in there?

You know, this is the thing, it's that I don't want to hear that somebody is doing overtime for something that they're not really -- it's not in their title. And if you're an employee who's been on the job for 15, 20 years and now you're doing something that an entry-level person could be doing at a \$30,000 salary, you're paying overtime; does it wind up costing us more to pay that overtime than to have somebody on payroll? And that's what we want to be sure of, that that's not happening, and I don't know that we ever really got that answer. And Robert? He puts his hand up to answer.

**MR. LIPP:**

So I'm going to go out on a limb here. So first of all, it's always more expensive -- well, not always, but usually more expensive to hire somebody new than overtime.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Right, we get that.

**MR. LIPP:**

Even if the person on overtime is making a lot more, that person's benefits are already paid for in the budget, it's implicit; a new person it costs more because of the benefits, number one. Number two, our analysis was basically based upon, you know, looking at the historical data and seeing there can be years that are up or down. So I'm going to say that I defer to the Commissioner. God bless him, if he could control his overtime, and he's saying he can, then I'm with him, we don't have the money to begin with. So I would say great, you know. In addition to that, over the last year I believe we have nine dispatchers.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Your mic keeps going out.

**MR. LIPP:**

So I defer to the judgment of the Commissioner.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. Legislator Fleming has a question.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Just to follow-up on that. So Robert, can I ask you how you arrived at the numbers? I think currently the FRES -- the OT is overtime -- is over budget, but it looks like you recommended a \$400,000 increase from the number -- I may be reading it wrong.

**MR. FREAS:**

In the estimate.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Okay. So that is -- okay. So close -- so more than a 50% increase in what they requested?

**MR. FREAS:**

In the estimate, I believe the estimate is the same as the -- as what was -- I think the estimate for the year was 700,000 or -- and as I said at the time, they were \$46,000 under the estimate in September, they have regular overtime that they have to cover and that's why we said add 400,000 on the estimate, they're obviously going to go over for the year.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

I guess it --

**MR. FREAS:**

We're talking about 2016, okay. They can't -- they're not just going to stop overtime in the radio room because the estimate says it's 700,000. I mean, they have to pay the guys if they're working overtime and it's going to -- so we said, well, you know, like I said, we have a real advantage where our estimate can be a little more accurate because we have more information and, you know, when I looked at it the way that I had been looking at it for quite a while, even though I was encouraged by the signs that it seems to be going down as more people seem to be permanently added, when I looked at the staffing over the past years they've got -- I think we've got 14 or -- you know, Commissioner Williams said he had 19 dispatchers. I went back -- and it might be correct, I might have been looking at something else where I had 14 since 2012. And that's really good news because we don't have so many who are retiring anymore once the last, I think it's two or three leave in the next year. It'll -- and we've replaced them, it should start going. Now, there isn't a

batch or a class of retirements that's going to happen for a while.

That being said, I'm a little more pessimistic about what the overtime is going to be next year because of how it's historically run, even when there's been a full staffing in the radio room. I know they're going to have a little -- never mind.

So when I look at the couple of different ways that I check it against myself and I see, you know, 38,000 biweekly in overtime in the radio room, times 13, times -- you know, I end up with 980 or something like that; that's just for the radio room, plus there's another little bit that the Fire Marshals do because they're doing other different things. If it's going to come down, as they said, I certainly hope so, but I'm dubious.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

So let's just look a little closer at that at the moment. We're a couple of months past where you first looked; what is the current overtime, Commissioner?

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

The current number right now, we're -- I can't give you the exact number, but I can tell you as of yesterday. What we did, we compared 2015 to 2016, that's been our goal all year long. We watched what we were spending last year was a heavy year on overtime, and right now --

**LEG. FLEMING:**

But first, just so it is in the right hook in my head; so what is current actual?

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

Current overtime? I don't have that.

**MR. FREAS:**

We can give you that, hold on.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Okay, great, so let's look at that. And then the five dispatchers, the new dispatchers, are they working now or are they still training? Are they answering calls?

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

They are working in the radio room with an assistant, they're not on a radio themselves. So technically they're not counting towards -- they're shadowing, they're not counting towards -- if I remember the number I had seen yesterday, it's little over \$700,000 that we spent on overtime.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

So current actual --

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

Yeah, currently, which we explained to them. And that's minus the five dispatchers that we just have in training right now, we had five other dispatchers that were hired last January that didn't get into the overtime rotation until July.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

But in -- could you answer the question in terms of the current five new ones? Are they working in such a way that they will be reducing overtime by permanent staff?

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

*(Shook head no).*

**LEG. FLEMING:**

No.

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

No.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Okay, so they will be as of when?

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

As of the first week in January, first or second week.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Oh, okay. So that's '17 already that they're going to start being available to reduce overtime.

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

Yes.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

And even with their not working, where are you trending at the moment with overtime? I think it sounds as though, from prior conversations, overtime is trending downward.

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

We are trending. The number that we constantly watch, the number I can give you, what we did, we compared yesterday's date to where we were on overtime last year and what we are this year. And the exact -- the number that came up, we're \$230,576 less overtime in 2'16 at that given date, as of yesterday, the 17th of October. Now, we still -- we acknowledge the fact that we're still over budget, but we didn't have the benefit of those other five dispatchers we hired in January until July, and without having the benefit of the other dispatchers.

We go through a little more overtime in the summer time, there is an upward trend on that. The overtime, if you look at October's overtime, basically it's going down. I kind of feel that we will be over this year's budget, we acknowledge that, but we're not going to be to the number that maybe is recommended.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

So I think we could put a finer point on that, that if we're now in late October and you're at 700 and overtime is trending downward and you've got these five new people coming on-line in January, I think 400 might be generous; it might be too high.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Overstated.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

It's overstated. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. Anyone else have any questions? Okay. So I guess we'll -- the work group will have a conversation with you guys and where they want to go with this number; if they want to change it, increase it, decrease it. You know, I don't know if it would help, Joe, maybe for you to be able to provide us with that information, the Public Safety Committee. You know, if you have a week or a few days where there's mandated overtime.

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

Well, the word mandated-- I know everybody says mandated, but let me give you an example of like what even happened this past weekend. Our overtime is given out voluntarily first.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Right.

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

We go down a list. This past weekend I believe we had three people call in sick, no volunteers. I had to mandate three people to work because we needed it.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Right.

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

So I know that people don't want to work when we're short that many people, which we're not anymore, but I understand what you're saying with the work, yes.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

No, no, and I get it, I understand that. When people don't want to work, then you have to make sure you have a full complement of people working. And that's where I know that Kara is saying, you know, we don't want to see that point. I mean, are your staffing levels the same as they've been over the past ten years or are you --

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

As far as ten years, I'd have to research that for you, but I do know we did add two more this year. And I know, I think we added a couple of more a couple of years ago. We still every shift have to work an overtime shift to handle the calls because we need more people in the room, and those are discussions that we are definitely having with the County Executive's Office looking towards next year. Again, we got two this year, we're talking about next year, see how we can do that. I think eventually it's something we'll all address. And I think the alarms are going up and we acknowledge that and we are getting a hundred percent cooperation from the County Executive.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

It's just -- you know, going back to what you said, when you have -- people are getting called to do overtime and they're declining the overtime, so now you have to mandate. And I think that's -- that's where we want to kind of get to that point where maybe the people who declined overtime, it could have been for family reasons or maybe they say, *You know what? I've already done "X" amount of overtime this week, I don't want to do anymore, I'm done.* Is that the reason why they're declining, or is it maybe for family issues? We don't have that information, but we want to make sure that, you know, it's for the health and welfare of the people who work there.

Because you know I've gone down there, met with 911 operators, met with the dispatchers. It's not the most pleasant place to work, and it's dark, it's dingy. And when you hear from some of them saying, you know, *I got a call. I needed some time off just to go take a breather, go outside, get some fresh air because it wasn't a pleasant phone call;* that sometimes that's not even available for them, that they don't even really get that time to do that. And I just don't want to -- because in the end, we don't benefit. It costs us when their health is affected and we don't want that to happen.

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

I have empathy, I know exactly what you're saying.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

I know you do.

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

I see them every day, I see those bad calls and I'm sure it happens in the Police Department. I see that they're expected to pick up that next call. We try to get -- you know, I acknowledge the fact it's a very tough job and it takes a special person to do it and I think they do a fantastic job.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Right, and we agree. But we just want to make sure that we're looking at their best interests.

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

Absolutely.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

So if we're having some back and forth here and not feeling so good, it's -- we have to do what's right by them. And in the long run, does it cost us when they start getting sick because of the excessive amount of time they have to work.

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

I understand.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. So I guess with no -- is there any other questions or any other issues? So we're good?

**COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:**

Yes.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay, thank you.

I know our Medical Examiner is here. I don't think that's going to take too long, so could we -- Tim, I'm going let Kara cool off (*laughter*), because I can tell you I've got one for you.

Good afternoon, Dr. Caplan.

**DR. CAPLAN:**

Good afternoon.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

So, how are you doing?

**DR. CAPLAN:**

I'm doing okay. How are you all doing?

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Good. You tell us how well your budget's going.

**DR. CAPLAN:**

Okay. Well, you know, I understand we're in a tight fiscal climate, but I would say that I do support, you know, the recommended budget.

10/18/16 - Public Safety Operating Budget Committee Meeting

I think that, you know, we have to do what we can do with our resources the best that we can do and, you know, to try to continue to offer those services. Basically, you know, we understand that periodically, you know, there may be some backlogs, but we deal with that with overtime as necessary and we try to use that judiciously. We also have a few different revenue ideas that we've been working with with the County Executive to try to improve that aspect.

So, you know, honestly I really -- I don't have any major issues. I am in support. And I think the most important thing here is that there's a flexibility, you know, that if we do need to use overtime we do, but we try to, you know, again, use that judiciously. So I really don't have any major qualms with the budget as it's recommended.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

*(Raised hand).*

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. I did want to ask Budget Review, the only thing I see different on your recommended changes in 2017 of 10,750, correct? And what is that?

**MR. FREAS:**

Correct. As you know, there are any number of fee changes in the recommended budget. During our discussions about the Medical Examiner's changes to fees, there seemed to be some confusion about what smaller part of it would be regarding conferences. So -- because we weren't -- because there was some uncertainty about that, I looked at their cremation clearance fees and the autopsy report fees. They've been in place for about 12 or 13 years, I believe, and a 25% increase over that time period in total didn't seem completely unreasonable. So we, instead of using the conference attendance revenue, we calculated revenue based on the cremation fee, cremation clearance fee and autopsy -- which really the cremation clearance fee and the expected number of those that the Medical Examiner's Office does in a year, and it's actually a small increase in the revenue and that's what that \$10,000 is.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. And I believe, Doc Spencer, you have a question?

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Hi. How are you, Doctor?

**DR. CAPLAN:**

How are you, Legislator?

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Good to see you again.

**DR. CAPLAN:**

Good to see you.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

I remember somewhere through the middle of the year we had approved some new Capital instruments that we borrowed for, I think maybe it was a mass spectrometer or --

**DR. CAPLAN:**

Yes.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

I just wanted a quick update. Did you get that new -- those new items in place? Are they working? Just to kind of, as you anticipated, from a Capital point of view in terms of equipment that you need, where do you stand? Are we -- are we rightly equipped in the Medical Examiner's Office?

**DR. CAPLAN:**

Yes, and I appreciate you asking about that, Legislator Spencer. I can tell you that we either have those items or are in the process of getting those. And one evidence, a good evidence for that is that I just spoke with the toxicologist a couple of weeks ago and because we have improved technology, we've actually been able to modify the way that we do screening for the toxicology. So, for example, where -- because at one time we needed to use solid tissues like the liver, for example, to be our general unknown screen because that is -- you know, requires so much work to get the tissue into a state where it can be analyzed. Actually, the new methodologies allow us to work much more with blood and it's just a much more streamlined process. So that has been a big help.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

So can I correctly deduce from that, I know at one point as you were kind of becoming acquainted that there was a concern of backlog with regards to processing, kind of our specimens in our crime lab and things of that sort. Is there a backlog now? Have we gotten through that backlog? Do you have the staff and the equipment that you need to catch up, and does this budget address those issues?

**DR. CAPLAN:**

Yes, I would say in general it does. Certainly, you, know from a toxicology standpoint, you know, it does and. You know, while we -- I think the only issue in terms of coming down, you know, in the future is that, you know, because there is some -- there's some pending legislation on the State level to reduce the time when we receive the forensic -- the sexual assault kits or sexual evidence kits, there's a bill on the table that has not yet been signed yet. But if that does get signed by the Governor, that will give us a 90-day turnaround requirement once we receive those new kits from law enforcement agencies. So, you know, that is -- that's something -- a potential concern. But as of right now, I would answer your question by saying that no, we do not have any significant backlogs in any of the forensic science areas.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Ninety days seems -- I guess it's all relative, but that seems like an extraordinarily long time. What, then, is a reasonable amount of time as far as that you wouldn't have concerns? What's the average turnaround for that type of processing, that type of evidence?

**DR. CAPLAN:**

Well, you know, it all depends on the number of samples that we receive. But with -- if it's a complete forensic science kit, you know, depending on the number of samples, that can be anywhere from, you know, a couple of weeks to a couple of months. Again, it depends on how many samples we receive in that kit. We can get everything from blood samples to hair samples to body -- other body fluids, so it does vary, it's a few weeks to a couple of months.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

I'm so sorry. I heard you say that if this new law goes into effect it would be 90-days, and then as you were explaining that it would take a couple of weeks to a couple of months, both of which are less than 90-days.

**DR. CAPLAN:**

Yes.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

So then what would be the concern about the legislation as far as if there were, I guess, a large number of --

**DR. CAPLAN:**

Yeah.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Okay.

**DR. CAPLAN:**

I'm sorry.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

That would push it.

**DR. CAPLAN:**

Right, I should have clarified that. The concern would only be if the volume of submitted samples, you know, got to -- and the number in each kit got to the point where it was difficult to achieve that timeline. But otherwise, yeah, it should not be an issue.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

And just to clarify. I know this is a budget hearing, and the reason I'm asking about these things is that, you know, I view the Medical Examiner's Office, you know, in terms of what your backlog is and looking at a budget as far as staffing and equipment, that would be important.

One final question. You had mentioned that you're looking at some ideas to increase revenue. And just -- I don't know if this is too early to kind of share, but I immediately have a concern when I see the Medical Examiner increasing revenue; is that victims? Where would you get revenue from? Are we going to charge maybe the perpetrators that we would increase fees? But I would hope just from a humanitarian aspect that we wouldn't take people who have been victims of crimes and increase fees. What would some of these revenue ideas, how would they increase revenue, where would these increased fees come from?

**DR. CAPLAN:**

Yeah, so to address that question. In addition to the cremation clearance fees that Craig talked about, the main source we're talking about is fees that would be for suspects, defendants that have, you know, been arrested or detained for driving under the influence. And if they are actually convicted of those, then there would be -- one potential source of revenue would be a fee for the processing of those samples.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Well, that seems like a reasonable place to look at. Okay, thank you. Thanks, Madam Chair. I'll yield.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

So it's not that you're doing a TV show?

**DR. CAPLAN:**

I'm sorry?

*(\*Laughter\*)*

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

That was Legislator Fleming. What did you just say?

**LEG. FLEMING:**

I thought the revenue was because we were doing a TV show out of the Medical Examiner. It's a joke!

**DR. CAPLAN:**

Oh, no. No, I don't have the makeup for that.

*(\*Laughter\*)*

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. So I don't think there's any more questions; no? Okay, thank you, Dr. Caplan.

**DR. CAPLAN:**

Thank you very much.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. And I'm kind of looking through the book to see, you know, what ones are going to be controversial or questioned.

*Probation*. I see that there's not too much of a difference between Budget Review and the County Exec, so I figure this will be a quickie.

**DIRECTOR DLHOPOLSKY:**

Good afternoon.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Good afternoon.

**DIRECTOR DLHOPOLSKY:**

Yes, we're comfortable with the recommended amounts in the County Executive's 2017 Recommended Budget.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. And Budget Review, I don't think there was any disagreements on your part; yes, no? I didn't think I -- I didn't see anything, correct?

**MR. LIPP:**

*(Shook head no).*

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

And just so -- any Legislators have any questions? No? You're free to go.

**DIRECTOR DLHOPOLSKY:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Have a great day. See, I thought that was going to be quick.

Okay. Do I see anybody from the District Attorney's Office; no? There's nobody here?

**LEG. TROTTA:**

They're staying away from here.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay, enough.

Okay, so we're left with the Sheriff's Department and the Police Department. I'm sorry, Tim, I think we've got a few for you.

The *Sheriff's Department*, could we -- do we have anyone from the Sheriff's Department? And while they're getting settled, Salary Contingency Fund. How much is in the budget for salary contingency? Because I know we just -- Probation just settled their contract. How much --

**MR. LIPP:**

We're looking it up now to make sure we give you the right number.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. The reason -- obviously you know the reason why I ask, is we just settled Probation, so obviously some of that salary contingency is going to come out for Probation, but also --

**MR. LIPP:**

The total amount in there is 8.7.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Eight point seven?

**MR. LIPP:**

That's the salary line. There's a couple of other things in there, but the 8.7 is for salaries.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

And what was the Probation Officers' contract, what was the --

**MR. LIPP:**

Well, I've got to tell you, that's news to me that they have settled. I had heard over a week ago that they were going to settle, but nobody told us as far as I know.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Oh. I guess I don't know -- okay, Katie? I thought they were ready, but --

**MS. HORST:**

I heard the same thing, that they had settled.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Settled what?

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Lou, do you -- can you?

**MR. TUTONE:**

They're just working out the language.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

*(Laughter)*. Okay, because I was just curious. I don't know what -- it was just out of curiosity. We have a Salary Contingency Fund, we do not have the Sheriff -- the Deputy Sheriff's contract has not been resolved. So Probation, I believe you guys came to an agreement, but I would -- I was wanting to know what the cost is to that agreement.

**MR. LIPP:**

Yeah, that's a good question.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

So we don't have that.

**MR. TUTONE:**

I think that's for Robert, isn't it?

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

He didn't know they settled.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Well, no. I know that they had come to some kind of an agreement, or am I wrong? Was there an MOU?

**MR. TUTONE:**

Yes, there's an agreement.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. I thought so.

**MS. HORST:**

I'm going to work on an answer for you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. So, but they haven't ratified yet.

**MR. TUTONE:**

No.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay, so then I'll wait for that.

Okay, I'm sorry. If you would like to go ahead.

**CHIEF PAPARATTO:**

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Legislature for affording us the opportunity to address our concerns for the 2017 Recommended Operating Budget for the Sheriff's Office.

We would also like to thank the County Executive's Budget Office as well as the Legislature's Budget Review Office for the time and effort they spent on a very comprehensive evaluation of the 2017 Operating Budget request.

We appreciate the Budget Review's Office report in that the 1000 series is underfunded for 2017. The funding shortage is largely due to the contractual raises for correction officers and potential

10/18/16 - Public Safety Operating Budget Committee Meeting

contract settlements for both Deputy Sheriffs and civilians. Budget Review has recommended an increase in the overtime lines. If additional funds were available, the Sheriff's Office would prefer the funds be applied to the permanent salary line to allow for a more aggressive hiring plan that would reduce overtime costs.

Additionally, not addressed in the Budget Review Office's Report are shortfalls in computer software and repairs to office equipment. These items are underfunded in the following appropriations: Computer software, 3110, 3160 - 50,000; 3151, 3160 - 37,500; repairs to office equipment, 3151, 3610 - 40,296; and 3162, 3610 - 29,033. The technology systems funded through these appropriations have their own costs associated with them in the form of equipment maintenance contracts and licensing agreements for the use of proprietary software. They include but not limited to the Black Creek Jail Security System used at both the Yaphank and Riverhead Correctional Facilities and the IMPACT computerized -- sorry -- and the IMPACT Computerized Record Management System used throughout the Sheriff's Office. This system is vital to the daily operations of the Sheriff's Office.

The total dollar amount of these represent less than one-tenth of 1% of the entire budget request. The impact this amount of funding will have on the overall budget is minimal at best, while the impact of such cuts to the operation of the Sheriff's Office could be very damaging. If anyone has any questions, we'll see if we can answer them.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. Does anyone have questions? Maybe I'll let Budget Review jump in, if you want to comment?

**MR. LIPP:**

We didn't mention it because they have a very large budget. They have a very large budget and he's talking 40,000 and change, so it really -- they could manage their budget.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. And going back to salary contingency, clearly Deputy Sheriffs do not have a contract yet. So, you know, I don't know how you can assume or make a guess on what their contract's going to look like. But I'm assuming there's probably enough money in there to --

**MR. LIPP:**

There's nothing we can say now, obviously, because you have better information than we do.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

No, I'm talking about the Deputy Sheriffs. Probation we know have somewhat getting close.

**MR. LIPP:**

Yeah, it's kind of hard to say because in part you don't know what they're going to do about potential deferrals, so even if they're offering them a large amount, I don't know. It's not clear, you know, what the impacts would be in what years.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Uh-huh. So, because I know we have AME's contract that's going to be coming up, too, next year, and I would hope that they're not going to have to wait six years for a contract. So I'm just hoping that there's enough money in the salary contingency to cover -- I can't imagine it's going to cover AME's contract.

But curiosity, correction officers, and I don't know if you have that number right now. Obviously the last contract is much lower, you know, start pay and everything from the previous correction officers. As far as a class is concerned, do you know how you're doing? You know, the people who

are taking the test, how many people are actually taking the test as compared to the previous contract, and how many people are declining once they find out -- because you have a conference with them. You don't -- I don't want to put you on the spot to give me answers now if you don't have them. You know where I'm going.

**DEPUTY WARDEN FRANCHI :**

Yes. We don't have that statistic, we could get it. I don't know if that question is -- you know, it's not directly asked by the Investigators, but they probably get a feeling. But we could probably get that information for you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

So when you start to hire, it's my understanding there's a conference that you have with potential candidates? When do you do that?

**DEPUTY WARDEN FRANCHI :**

Well, it's my understanding that the Personnel & Investigations Unit, you know, they send out a canvas letter, obviously --

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Right.

**DEPUTY WARDEN FRANCHI :**

-- to all the candidates. Those people that respond are brought in and it's ascertained whether they're still interested in the job, and at that point the process starts.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay.

**DEPUTY WARDEN FRANCHI :**

The details of that process, Chief, you could probably answer better, they're your command.

**CHIEF PAPARATTO:**

Well, basically, after the conference, sometimes they'll lose a considerable amount after they hear what the salary is. After that, they have to prepare their packets and then they're called in for their interviews, and then it ends up dwindling down from that point. We still end up losing people at the end when it comes down to the actual salary.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

So you do believe the salary is what's making people decline.

**CHIEF PAPARATTO:**

Yes. Basically, if you're a young person living at home with Mom and Dad, you could probably afford to take the job. If not --

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Right. So I really think it's important for us to keep an eye on that, for many reasons. I think we all know what happened in the city when they dropped the salary, and I don't want to see the same things happening here in Suffolk County. And I think corrections officers are definitely more at risk. So, you know, I just want us to be able to keep an eye on that, and I hope that -- I know the Sheriff does say in touch with me often and he'll be more than happy to provide me with the information. But I think, you know, for the Public Safety Committee at least, that we could continue to receive that kind of information; how many people do you know actually declined. And I think it should be a question; why do you not want the job? And they're going to say it's the salary, but we need to

know that. Okay?

So if there's any questions for anyone? No? Okay. Well, I guess no other questions, so I guess Budget Review has your statement, a copy of your statement, that would be helpful.

**DEPUTY WARDEN FRANCHI :**

Yep.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. Thanks very much.

**DEPUTY WARDEN FRANCHI :**

Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Last but not least. Are you calm, Kara?

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

This one's going to be the most.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

I know, this one's going to be probably the most questions.

**(Public Safety)**

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

The most money, too.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Kara's looking very calm.

***(\*Laughter\*)***

Commissioner, before we get into the budget, I was out of the country last week; however, I still pay attention to Newsday. There was an incident in Coram and police officers, rocks and bottles being thrown at them. And I read the article and at the end of the article it said *no arrests*. I can tell you, I was furious when I saw no one was arrested for throwing rocks and bottles at police officers, and I really am concerned about that. And I know this can be another conversation, but when these thugs, is what they are, are throwing rocks and bottles at police officers, someone should have been arrested. There should have been a message to these individuals who thought it was okay to do what they did. Somebody should have been arrested, I'm sorry.

**COMMISSIONER SINI :**

Yeah, we can have that conversation off-line.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Yeah. Very disturbing to read something like that in the paper.

So anyway, with that, the budget. So would you like to start? Maybe I'll cool down afterwards. I'm trying to keep Kara quiet, too. Go ahead.

**COMMISSIONER SINI :**

In general, we believe this budget prioritizes public safety. It's obviously a large budget, relatively speaking, to other agencies and in isolation it's a large budget. We appreciate the County

10/18/16 - Public Safety Operating Budget Committee Meeting

Executive's support and the County Legislature's support of law enforcement in this County, in particular the Suffolk County Police Department. And, you know, we think that this budget balances the need to give the Police Department the resources we need to achieve our objectives. The primary objective is to keep Suffolk County the safest, one of the safest counties in the country, and I'm looking forward to answering any questions that you may have.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. Any questions? Kara? 911?

**LEG. HAHN:**

Yeah. I mean, obviously we've been frustrated about the 911 call center and staffing and the ability to get ahead of it and not be always catching up, you know, and be shocked when someone retires or quits or calls in sick and then we have to go through a nine-month process to hire. I know we're supposed to be meeting soon, maybe we have that on the schedule, I don't recall.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Yeah, I think it's on the calendar.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Okay. But it's clearly been something that's been a problem for years, been a serious problem, actually can affect public safety if we don't have individuals operating in that center that are alert, comfortable, etcetera. I appreciate, you know, the steps you've taken since you've been here to try to help out, but I just think we have to get ahead of the eight ball on the staffing.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

We agree. And we thank you as well as your colleagues for advocating on behalf of the Communication Section. I think most of you have been in that section, I know you've been there, you see the work they do. It's a tremendously stressful job. They do a great job, their professionalism is unmatched. We have been doing our best to fill positions as retirements occur. I can go through all the staffing.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Yeah, but I think -- and we'll talk about -- when we have our meeting we'll talk about this, and I wish we had had it before, you know, the budget requests and everything, it just didn't happen. But we need to get ahead of it so that we're not filling after the fact. And if that means -- you know, I get it; I get what Robert Lipp said. But, you know, public safety has to come first and these -- the 911 Call Center can't be filled with people who are exhausted, frustrated, maybe angry, not able to -- you know, you know when you're that tired and that overworked, you're not at your top shape. And so we will -- you know, we'll talk when we have the meeting, I just couldn't go without mentioning it here. But I would like to --

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Yeah. I mean, it would take two seconds. We're basically at our budgeted amount with the exception of PSD Is where we have signed SCINS and it's just a matter of hiring. I do believe that going into 2017, as a result of the spotlight that this Legislature has put on the issue, we are going to be caught up and we'll be able to be more proactive and keep those numbers up. We're looking at this not as -- only as a way to increase morale and enhance public safety, but also to save overtime. By keeping the staffing levels at our budgeted amount, we believe we can reduce overtime close to half a million dollars. So this is something that you definitely have my partnership on and we can talk nuts and bolts at the meeting or prior to the meeting.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Okay. Then moving on to crime, crime fighting. How -- we have -- clearly this is the most expensive thing we do, I believe, and Suffolk County is protecting the safety of our residents, one of the most important things we do. How would you say you feel about the number -- numbers we have in patrol, sector numbers, per precinct? How do they compare over time with population, you know, with crime numbers, with the drug epidemic that we're facing, with the gang problems we have? Are there plans to, you know, increase -- I hate to just even be asking it given our budget circumstance, but we really -- I don't believe we've seen significant increases in sector numbers in decades.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

So generally speaking, it's our opinion that we don't have enough police officers which is why we advocated for such a large class in 2016. We now have 175 new police recruits in the academy and, again, we can't think thank the County Legislature and the County Executive enough for that support. We believe that'll be critical for our crime fighting mission. We also believe it will have a positive fiscal impact on overtime.

In terms of sector realignment, that's something that we can certainly work with this body on, doing a top-to-bottom assessment of our sectors. You know, it would be something where we would be looking at call volume, crime statistics and other criminal intelligence to determine, and it's certainly something that we can work on. We do take a look at sectors on an ad hoc basis as issues come up to make sure that we have the proper allocation of resources.

And in addition to sectors, to take a step back, sector realignment or addition is not the only way we can allocate resources. So we have two different main commands within the Patrol Section, we call it the 10 command and the 20 command. The 10 command is essentially the sector operators and the 20 command consists of specialized units such as Community Support Unit, Precinct Crime Section and our Gang Officers. And those folks we're able to assign them to tasks much more fluidly and based on need as opposed to sector car operators, who obviously their main function is to patrol their sector and answer 911 calls within their sector. Those Gang Officers or CSU officers, those Precinct Crime Section Officers, they're not chasing 911 calls and they're not assigned to a particular sector. So we do have resources within the department -- I just named a few, we have much more than that -- that we're able to dispatch in a certain -- in an intelligent way to allocate resources appropriately. With that said, I think there's some usefulness to take a hard look at sectors.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Do you think the class of 175 will be adequate given retirements expected?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

I think it's adequate if we consistently hire thereafter. We have 87 sworn retirements in 2016, which is below protection. We are projecting a hundred -- the budget projects 120 for 2017. So if we don't hire consistently thereafter, those numbers start not to -- they don't add up if we continue to see retirements. And we do expect to see significant retirements in 2018 as a result of contractual reasons. So the 175 I think is the shot in the arm that the department needed, and if we consistently hire smaller classes thereafter, I think we'll be in excellent shape.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Thank you. Oh, one more thing about cars. How are we on vehicles?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

We can always use more, but this is something we look at on a daily basis. We recently used a grant to purchase more undercover vehicles and we have --

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Can I jump in? Because I heard there was a recall on some of the new cars. Was it you guys or was it the Sheriff's Department? No?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

I'll take a look into it, but nothing -- the three of us aren't aware of that.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

In addition to the Byrne Grant where we purchased -- we're releasing vehicles, we'll have 30 more unmarked vehicles coming out which is important because of the narcotics enforcement. We keep a close eye on it and we're in decent shape.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. Rob?

**LEG. TROTТА:**

I just wanted to know the estimated retirements, but you said 125 did you say?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

So for 2017 it's 120.

**LEG. TROTТА:**

That's about right.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Thank you.

*(\*Laughter\*)*

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. That was it? Wow. Legislator Fleming?

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Thank you. I actually only have a couple of questions for Dr. Lipp with regard to the Police Department budget. But thank you all for being here and thank you for your hard work. I particularly thank you on behalf of the East End districts. I think everybody recognizes -- and also the community. I've gotten a lot of excellent feedback about how the new Police Department leadership is interacting not only with the East End departments but also with the community as a whole. I think you're moving in a really good direction and I really appreciate it.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

We appreciate the support.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Can I ask you -- oh, sorry. Can I ask you just with regard to two different issues. First of all, the Traffic Violations Bureau revenue. In your review you mention that you think it may be over-estimated and I'm wondering to what extent -- to what impact would we see if that is, in fact,

overestimated and changes are made there that reduce revenue.

**MR. LIPP:**

Well, the TVB revenue is part and parcel part of a bigger issue and that's the last two years. In a good sense, you know, we've been increasing fees to try to have a recurring revenue; in a bad sense there are several instances of fees that on various factions are not very pleased with, so that's a problem.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

I'm just asking you about the TVB.

**MR. LIPP:**

Okay. So the TVB provides over \$46 million in revenue to the Police District. The problem there is a couple of years ago when we made some changes, one was we moved the revenue from the General Fund. They needed the money, so in that limited sense that was a good idea. The difficulty, though, is that the previous dollar amounts for revenue in the Police District were sales tax or property tax, those were sum certainties. You know, they got every dime, okay, so there was no question then about what the amount of revenue is. Now once they added the TVB revenues, that became problematic because you see they're up to \$40 million and we're saying it looks to us at least that it's overstated. I'll be the first to admit that the data on the TVB revenues are not that great because of continual changes in terms of fees and in terms of functions and programs that they have. So it really is hard to track it, but that's another reason why it's problematic that in any given year you could have a surplus or a deficit. So for instance, coming into this year I believe this is almost a \$7 million deficit in the Police District in part because of funds like that and one other fund, which is a real favorite, is the fire alarm program. I'm sorry, false alarm program.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

So you're attributing the deficit in that funding -- in the funding to those two fees; the revenues are not coming in where they were projected to come in?

**MR. LIPP:**

That's part of it. The other thing, I believe, the main other culprit I'll say, for lack of a better term, is overtime; we didn't budget sufficiently for that, that seems to be always an issue.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

And can you just talk a little bit more about why you're saying TVB revenues are hard to track, and why you feel they're overestimated.

**MR. LIPP:**

Well, they're hard to track because of continual changes. So when you're looking from one year to the next, the revenue might go up or down because there's an increase in a fee or a program, and it's only been a few years that we've had that program. And then you have the problem, for instance, with the red light cameras, that there's a decay rate associated with people learning how to adjust which could be a good thing.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Yeah, that's not a problem.

**MR. LIPP:**

Yes. But my perspective here that we're talking about is not the service but rather the dollars being brought in. So I apologize if you thought otherwise.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Of course not. But I think it is important, especially the new programs that might need tweaking like the TVB, that we should be realistic.

**MR. LIPP:**

Yes. And if you look up on the screen, not a direct answer to any question that you had, though, is this is like sort of a summary of the big ticket items that went into the Police District for the recommended 2017 budget.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

What page is that on, Robert?

**MR. LIPP:**

This is our own personal background file, I don't think we have this page. We'll look to see if it is.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

I couldn't find it. If you could provide me with that.

**MR. LIPP:**

Yeah. So you can look at the status of funds and you'll see information about it, like bullets, but you won't see this table.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Yeah, if you could get me that table.

**MR. LIPP:**

Or maybe not.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

All right, just moving on then. My other question is with regard to the 72 officers whose funding is coming from the General Fund as opposed to the Police District. And I understand that the rationale is that that comports better with their actual staffing. I just wonder if you could describe that for us from your perspective, from the perspective of Budget Review.

**MR. LIPP:**

Well, what we've been saying about it when asked is -- first of all, we make note that one of the big items just on that actual chart that I was just showing -- and I know you can't see it, I apologize for that.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

I really can't see it now.

**MR. LIPP:**

It's a plot against you.

**(\*Laughter\*)**

I'm only kidding. But the point to be made, though, is our view -- okay, number one, there are 72 net positions going from the Police District to the General Fund. I believe the total is 79 going one way and 70 others, that's a net of 72. We have always viewed that as that's a department decision. You know, far be it from us to say who belongs to what unit or how many people. So that's always a slippery slope for us, we try to stay away from that part.

10/18/16 - Public Safety Operating Budget Committee Meeting

That being said, there are commands, and up on the computer is the list of commands that exists. So there are General Fund commands and there are Police District commands, which start over here. And the question is, you know, how many people belong in each bureau, or command I should say, and one being the General Fund, the other being the Police District. So for instance, Detectives would be in the General Fund and the numbers of people that are there, maybe some of them being transferred over from the Police District to the General Fund with the anticipation of promotions because maybe they need more Detectives. That being said, I am sort of uncomfortable talking about whether or not that 72 net positions being moved is appropriate or not, that would be a discussion, I would think, for the Police Department.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

That's fair. So, Commissioner?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

So we essentially take a look at the position and we determine whether or not it's a General Fund position or a Police District Fund position based on where they're providing services. So for example, Detectives; not all Detectives are General Fund or Police District Fund, it depends on what they're doing. So a Narcotics Detective would be someone who would be General Fund because they're providing services throughout the County; a Squad Detective in the 1st Precinct would be a Police District Fund Detective; regular patrol within our precincts, that's going to be Police District; Aviation is going to be General; Police Academy is going to be General. And so it's based on -- we basically do an analysis of what they're doing, where they're providing services and then we characterize them accordingly.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

So the 72 or the 70 -- minus.

**MR. LIPP:**

Seventy-nine minus seven.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Seventy-nine minus seven.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Yeah, so what happened here was as we create new commands and transfer people and promote people, their command will change and so we'll have to adjust our payroll. And then budget -- the County Executive's Budget Office took our payroll and based these decisions on our payroll.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

So you feel that your payroll supports the County Executive's recommendation?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Yes, it's taken directly from our payroll.

**LEG. FLEMING:**

Okay, great. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

I think we had a couple of more people who had questions. I do believe -- let me ask you, ShotSpotter; you did make a recommendation or a request for ShotSpotter, correct?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Yes.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. And I do believe you're quoted as looking at grants and whatever.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Yes.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

I believe in Nassau County, they use Asset Forfeiture Funds to pay for ShotSpotter. What's the chance, at this point in time?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Certainly to fund the program entirely by Asset Forfeiture would not be possible in 2017.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

A portion of it?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

That's something I'm open to and something I'll work with you on.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. If you could, that would be very helpful.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

Do you have a ballpark?

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Yeah, if we could get a ballpark? So obviously I think myself, Legislator Martinez, a few of us would like to see it.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

As we get through our budget process on this end, if we have an idea I of what you think you can do, we'd have a better idea of what we think we need to do. That would be helpful.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

I would first want to just make sure that as a result of it being taken out of the budget, that it's property use Asset Forfeiture money.  
And then from there, assuming that it is, we can talk about numbers.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Because I believe Nassau completely it's Asset Forfeiture, isn't it; if I'm not mistaken?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Yeah, but maybe because they started it with Asset Forfeiture. Now we've used Operating funds.

**D.P.O. CALARCO:**

They always -- they started by acquiring the system and they own and operate the system and they paid for the personnel out of operating but they acquired all the additional assets that went with it, including expanding to have video that goes along with it through Asset Forfeiture.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. I think I had, Tom, you have a question?

**LEG. CILMI:**

Yes, thank you. So Commissioner, as somebody up here said, the Police Department is obviously one of the largest departments, from an expense point of view at least, in our budget. The largest, I guess, being our Department of Social Services, but as we know, a lot of that is funded from other levels of government. So I wanted to ask some questions relative to that fact.

First of all, a couple of years ago when we approved the police contract, it was suggested to us that we were going to save money as a result of that. The budget in the Police Department is -- what is it recommended for in 2017?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

2017 is --

**LEG. CILMI:**

Six hundred eighty, if I remember?

**MR. LIPP:**

Six hundred fifty-two million, point nine; 653 million.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay, 653 million. So if --

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

That would include benefits.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay, that's important to know. If we were to --

**MR. LIPP:**

Just so you know, it's just the Police District. The Police Department also has a General Fund and a Fund 102 piece.

**LEG. CILMI:**

And so what does all of it add up to?

**MR. LIPP:**

I'll get back to you in a minute.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Roughly.

**MR. LIPP:**

I'll say --

**LEG. CILMI:**

Eight?

**MR. LIPP:**

I'll say 700.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Seven hundred million.

**MR. LIPP:**

I probably am wrong.

**LEG. CILMI:**

So -- that's okay, as long as I have a rough idea. So Commissioner, if, if -- I know it's a huge if -- but if we were to be able to save 5%, let's say, in your department, that's \$35 million if it is 700 million. Obviously 35 million, on an annualized basis, goes a long way towards helping us reduce structural deficit, and 5% on the surface doesn't seem like a heck of a lot to ask a department to save when, you know, we're constantly sequestering more than that from some of our other General Fund departments.

So I guess my question to you is do you have a projection in terms of when we'll start to realize some savings, if we haven't already, from the police contract that we recently agreed upon? And in addition to that, what other savings are you looking at from an expense point of view for your department?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

So the number one item that I can manage as a Commissioner is overtime. If you look at the budget, over 95% goes to personnel, which is largely dictated by contracts over which I have no control. I do have some ability to manage overtime. And if you look at the other expenses, whether it's equipment, supplies or contracts -- first of all, it's a drop in the bucket; and secondly, we're bare bones there as it is. So what we can do as a department is do our best to manage overtime.

So in terms of the new PBA contract, we've hired under it in 2013, 2014, 2015 and now in 2016; 40 officers in '13, 102 in '14, 106 in '15 and 175 in '16. So there's a savings on all those.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Is that like 400 or so? I tried to do that math quickly while you --

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

It's about 400, yes.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

It's a little over 400. So we have savings on those officers. You know, we have retirements each year, so we're essentially replacing more expensive police officers with less expensive officers. But what we need to do is reduce our personnel shortage overtime, because that's where we'll be able to see a significant savings.

If you -- we project that essentially with each new hire at this point in time, we're saving a -- we're avoiding filling an overtime spot at top pay. So you have a new officer who either is being paid on straight time or OT, but either way it's cheaper. And we're talking about over 50% of the time that that person is working, they're filling a spot that would otherwise have been filled by a top cop on overtime. So that's significant savings. We're talking several million dollars as a result of hiring 175 new police officers. And we have to make sure that we're managing overtime responsibly, so we recently rolled out Suffolk Stat in the Suffolk County Police Department, which is a technology that allows us to track overtime in real-time, based on a daily basis. We have key performance indicators that we look at to make sure we're staying within our realistic boundaries and we're looking at other ways to save money. For example, we incur overtime on occasion as a result of monitoring prisoners in our precincts. We're looking to hire more PDA's, Police Detention Attendants, to do that work as opposed to police officers. We are hiring in the Communication

10/18/16 - Public Safety Operating Budget Committee Meeting

Section appropriately so that we can reduce overtime; we project hopefully by a half million dollars in 2017.

We're rolling out several different initiatives that we hope will have a positive impact in overtime by making police officers more efficient, reducing call volume. Now, it is true, of course, that most of our overtime is personnel shortage driven, but oftentimes we'll have arrest overtime or other overtime and by making our officers more efficient, we may be able to curtail that as well. So the Tele-Serve Program that you launched in partnership with the Police Department, the 1060 program and the false alarm law all can help contribute to reducing costs for the Police Department.

**LEG. CILMI:**

The -- speaking of overtime specifically, the -- if I recall correctly, the overtime that was -- the actual overtime in 2016 is expected to blow past the estimated or the budgeted overtime in 2016. What are we projecting for -- what does the recommended budget project for 2017?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

The recommended budget for 2017 is \$32,656,820.

**LEG. CILMI:**

And how does that relate to what was budgeted for in 2016?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

The budgeted amount --

**LEG. TROTТА:**

Forty-five million.

**MR. LIPP:**

Thirty-two point eight.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

That's correct.

**LEG. CILMI:**

So we budgeted 32.8 in '16, you're budgeting -- we're budgeting about 32 in '17.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Right.

**LEG. CILMI:**

What are we expected to hit in '16?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Forty-five million.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Forty-five. So do you -- so your thinking is that by adding the additional police officers and through these variety of different management programs, the alarm management program, the Tele-Serve, you'll be able to reduce the need for overtime to the extent that you think you'll be pretty much in line with what we budget, or what's been recommended anyway budgeted for?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Yes, I think it's realistic. I think of course it's going to be challenging, but I think it's realistic. I

10/18/16 - Public Safety Operating Budget Committee Meeting

think what we need to do is when we get these 175 cops on the street, we need to do a very thorough top-to-bottom assessment of all of our commands. You know, the thing is every time --

**LEG. CILMI:**

Because it's effectively like a 28% or so reduction.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

It's \$10 million. Well, it's more than 10 million from the actual in 2016.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

It's like \$13 million. And I do believe that the new class will generate several million dollars, whether it's five million, six million. We're anticipating a significant savings as a result of that new class and we need to make sure that we're managing every single aspect of our budget, including special event overtime. We're going to be utilizing police auxiliaries more aggressively, we're going to be utilizing PDAs, as I mentioned. We're going to do a top-to-bottom assessment of the department. As much as sometimes we benefit from specialized commands, we have to take a hard look at what we can afford in that respect. And now when we have that 175, think of it as like a chess board; we now have the pieces where we can move around and try to manage that budget. Right now, you know, it's nearly impossible because everything's personnel shortage.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right. So one last thing I wanted to talk about, and it's something that you really don't have any control over today, Commissioner. When we allocate for pension obligations in the County, do we allocate per district? In other words, do we -- when we -- Robert, when you tell us we have a 230 or 260, or whatever the number is up to in terms of our pension obligation, and what is the total obligation in 2017? Forget about amortization; if we paid the whole bill, what would it be?

**MR. LIPP:**

Okay, we're looking that up right now. But the bottom -- it's our Employment Benefits Section. What happens in terms of the retirement bill is it's broken up into ERS and PFRS -- PFRS, the Police Firemen Retirement System and ERS, just everybody else.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right.

**MR. LIPP:**

So then we would allocate it. So for instance, in the Police District as well as the General Fund, there are some PFRS staff members and ditto AME, that kind of thing, so it's sort of a hybrid.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay. So our pension obligation, then, is allocated appropriately to the police -- you know, the correct amount is allocated to the Police District and is being paid for out of the Police District?

**MR. LIPP:**

Correct. There are -- there's some pension funds in any fund that has personnel in it.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right.

**MR. LIPP:**

So the total bill is broken up into perhaps at least a dozen lines in the budget.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I see. And when we pay the --

**MR. LIPP:**

So we're going to be paying 154 million -- sorry about that -- in 2017 recommended, which includes -- which nets out over 30 some-odd million -- I'll save 35 million in amortization. So that's over --

**LEG. CILMI:**

I'm sorry, I lost you. So the total bill was like 180 something million?

**MR. LIPP:**

The total bill is 154.4 million.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay, and we're amortizing 30?

**MR. LIPP:**

That would add to it by 30 --

**LEG. CILMI:**

So the total bill's not 154 million; the total bill is 180 something million.

**MR. LIPP:**

Correct, but that's -- in other words, you'll see the 150 and change in the budget, you won't see the other.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right, and I understand that. But the bill is 180 something million dollars.

**MR. LIPP:**

Correct.

**LEG. CILMI:**

We're amortizing 30 something of it.

**MR. LIPP:**

About 35.

**LEG. CILMI:**

About 35 of it.

**MR. LIPP:**

The problem with that is we're also paying debt service on previous amortizations.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right, I recognize that, and that brings me to my next question. The debt service that we're paying, does that -- does that likewise get apportioned across the districts or does it come strictly out of the General Fund?

**MR. LIPP:**

The amortization is giving credit to the General Fund and the Police District only.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay, which is where the bulk of it is.

**MR. LIPP:**

Correct, but they get all of the benefit, those two funds, of the amortization or borrowing from State Retirement System and therefore they get all the obligation when it comes to repaying it.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right, okay. And I would imagine, whether we look at the debt service on the amortization or we look at the pension bill as a whole, I would imagine that a much greater percentage of the bill is attributable to the Police District than to the General Fund.

**MR. LIPP:**

So if you look on the screen, if you will, you'll see --

**LEG. CILMI:**

I will.

**MR. LIPP:**

-- what the ERS and the PFRS are and the total amounts of amortization by year. And assuming you can see it --

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay. So total amortization in 2016 is 44.7 million? Now, is that -- that's not debt service, that's how much we borrowed, basically.

**MR. LIPP:**

So you're asking to see the next chart that we have.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Well, no, hang on, don't go away from this chart yet. So within that total amortization or the amount of money that we borrowed in 2016, or I should say not borrowed, really, but deferred in 2016 -- 19.1 of it is related to the Police District?

**MR. LIPP:**

Not exactly, because the Police District has Police that are in the PFRS, it also has AME employees, for instance, too, or some of the people that Commissioner was talking about also. So it is a hybrid, so you have these two bills and then we have an apportionment or the County has an apportionment of how many people are in each fund that relate to either of those two, ERS or PFRS.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay. But just looking at that chart, then, my statement that the bulk of our pension obligation comes from the Police District is incorrect.

**MR. LIPP:**

Yes.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I guess by sheer numbers of employees, is that --

**MR. LIPP:**

Especially since there are a lot of police in the General Fund, too; we'll call it headquarters, for lack of a better term.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right.

**MR. LIPP:**

You're going to see a fair number of PFRS in the General Fund.

**LEG. CILMI:**

And a lot of the higher paid, I would imagine, would be in that..

**MR. LIPP:**

Yeah, like Detectives, sure.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right.

**MR. LIPP:**

But most of the Police District will be PFRS, but not all.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right. Okay, what's the next chart that you were going to move to?

**MR. LIPP:**

This is one of those other charts that I just simply love (*laughter*). So you have the -- the amortization is in the first column and --

**LEG. CILMI:**

Because you're a glutton for punishment.

**MR. LIPP:**

I wouldn't answer that.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Go ahead.

**MR. LIPP:**

Okay. Then you have the term and the interest rate associated with each year. Once we had the new enhanced program that we opted into in 2014, the payback period became 12 years from 10 years. And you can see what the annual debt service is and, as a result, the total cost to the County of each of those. So basically it's -- so here we are this year where we're borrowing 44.6 million in 2016, and only next year will that start to show up over 12 years as to the debt service to pay back.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay. We're having a conversation about the Police Department and I don't really want to burden the Commissioner with -- and his staff with listening to a conversation about pension in general, so I'll defer my questions relative to that to another time. But thank you.

And Commissioner, obviously, you know, whatever you could do to save us. I know you're -- we have been looking for ways to increase your revenue, which is not something I'd like to do, I would much rather look at the expense side. Whatever you can do to help us reduce costs, obviously

10/18/16 - Public Safety Operating Budget Committee Meeting

without sacrificing the level of service that we need to have which is painfully, you know, apparent more and more these days, we appreciate it. So thank you.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Doc.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

My questions were relating somewhat to ShotSpotter, and most of them were answered. But just briefly, I know that ShotSpotter, the program in and of itself, we lease the equipment; currently we have a lease agreement with them?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Yes.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

And the equipment that's currently installed, if we abandoned that, would the company -- do we own that at this point, or they would all be just taken back? Do we ever at some point?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

I'm looking at the contract right now, but I believe we would forfeit the equipment. I don't think we have any ownership over the equipment.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

No, we don't.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

They take it all back.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Okay. I know that in my district there's been some concern with ShotSpotter as far as it living up or doing what it said it was going to do, but I also see that it being another tool and I know that some colleagues support it. Do you have -- as far as a priority and looking at the existing budget, do you have an opinion regarding ShotSpotter, Commissioner?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Just to answer your previous question, *"Pursuant to contract, ShotSpotter shall retain ownership of and all rights to all components of the system, including hardware components and software."*

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Okay, thank you. Is this something -- I'm just -- your opinion weighs heavily because I see some benefits. And I guess my real question is -- because we've expanded it, there's been -- I think there's a learning curve there and I don't want to miss out on the utility and back away too soon. Is there any opportunity, are we looking to renegotiate, perhaps, our contract that we can maybe get a better deal to get the equipment?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Yeah, I've been in contact with the company. We also have worked with the company to identify grant opportunities, I'm not done with that process. A lot of the grants are not suitable because they prohibit supplanting your budget, and this would clearly be supplanting. But there are some opportunities that we're still looking at and, you know, I'll keep this body in the loop on our progress

there.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

And my last question is relating to -- I was just listening to the discussion you were having with Legislator Cilmi, and saying this as someone who isn't an advocate working with both the Police Administration but also with the rank and file of the officers who, you know, have supported me, and I've worked with them. So I say this, that I want to make sure that the officers always have what they need and know that they have my full support as a Legislator. But I also know that when we're looking at the budget overall and people are willing to pay for public safety, but there are concerns of just with the contract and the differences in cost between Sheriffs and police officers, and I know it's a very delicate point there.

Are there initiatives that you can see that can help us? You know, he mentioned the 5% savings. I know overtime is an issue, I know getting more boots on the ground is always important. Looking at contracts like ShotSpotter, can you -- are there things that you guys are working on internally that could address just really the cost and make sure our officers are well equipped and well compensated, but organizing it where you can help us in this very difficult budget situation.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

One of the major reforms we implemented when the new leadership team came into the Police Department is a complete reengagement with our Federal law enforcement partners. And we haven't seen all of the fruits of that -- of those initiatives yet, and what I'm referring to in particular is potential for seizing more asset forfeiture money. I could tell you that the Federal government owes the Suffolk County Police Department several millions of dollars as I sit here now, so that's a very good thing. You know, it's -- that will allow us to pay for new initiatives in certain instances and that will certainly help with our budget issues.

I think it's very important that not only this body but the people of Suffolk County understand that the number one priority of this Police Department is to ensure the residents' safety, and we would never make a recommendation or go along with a recommendation that we think jeopardizes public safety. Certainly we're bombarded with the 24/7 news cycle and social media and it often feels that crime is up; crime is down 5.8% year-to-date compared to 2015 which experienced historic lows. And we need to keep fighting that fight and we need to make sure that we're dedicating appropriate resources to the issues. And leveraging relationships is certainly a way that I think in the long run will save money. You know, we're fully engaged with all the Federal law enforcement agencies, including the FBI, as well as local agencies. I've had several meetings with the East End departments where we're sharing technology and ideas and collaboration is the name of the game, and one of the cornerstones of this administration is collaboration. So we'll continue down that path and I think we will see not just an enhanced public safety model, but I think we will see cost savings either in direct cost savings because of the leveraging of relationships or because of an increased amount of asset forfeiture money coming into the department.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

Well, I appreciate that and commend you on those numbers. And, you know, I have mixed feelings just being a Legislator in a district where, you know, we've seen one of the best neighborhoods in the country, in my opinion, that we still are seeing some teen murders, and I share that with another Legislator that she's seen an uptick there. So it's hard to be able to process and celebrate that as long as we have that because there's still a massive perception out there. I know you're doing your best, and you have been extremely open to that.

Just the very last part of that question I'm asking. I know one of the proposals under consideration, there is some revenue sharing that goes on with our public safety budget and some of our villages that maintain their own police force. And, you know, being a Legislator that represents five

10/18/16 - Public Safety Operating Budget Committee Meeting

villages -- four? You know, I hope that, you know, we don't break those agreements of the revenue sharing to try to make ends meet at the end of the day where we have small police forces that really, their constituents are paying into for public safety and I hope we don't go back on those agreements, that would be really important.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

The proposed 2017 budget does not go back on those agreements and increases revenue sharing compared to 2016.

**LEG. SPENCER:**

I think that's important because I think that we might save a couple of dollars then, but we're going to have to fill that void. And I think that sometimes it's painful to give away any dollars, but I think sometimes what we get in return in terms of collaboration and the community officers that are in these villages, you know, I think that there's a bigger cost to that than what we're sharing. Commissioner, thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

No problem. I know there's a couple of more, but I know that there was a promotion, there's some promotions this morning, and I know that the SOA had a retirement event last week. It was quite a few sergeants, so I'm assuming that you know how many of the retirements there were out of the SOA. And I'm curious, is the promotions -- the promotions that you had today, that ceremony you had today, is that backfilling all of the retirements that have occurred? Because it was quite a few Sergeants and that's one of the ones that I always see that we desperately need.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Sitting here right now, I can't say that the number of promotions equal the number of retirements. But, you know, we take a hard look at our vacancies. We hook at a supervisor-to-officer ratio, we look at what the best practice recommendation is by the Department of Justice among other organizations, and we talk to our Precinct Commanders who that's the best source of information, to let us know the level of supervision they need in their precinct. And we'll be taking -- we'll be taking a hard look at that in the next few weeks and we'll make sure that we have the proper level of supervision.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. Well, apologies again that I couldn't be there this morning. And I have to say, I'm very pleased JoAnn McLaughlin is somebody I have nothing but the ultimate respect for. So I'm very happy to see that she's moved in to where she's at.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

And for those who may not know, the Chief is the second female in history to make Chief, so.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Who was the first?

**LEG. TROTТА:**

Donna Engel.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Donna Engel.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Oh, that's right. God. Oh, I hope I don't bump into her (*laughter*). She'll be saying, *How could you forget me so soon?*

There is a gentleman in the room, Mr. McGoldrick, I believe his last name is, from Huntington, and he earlier mentioned that Huntington actually has information. He said that he FOILED for information and that the Huntington community is number three in manpower with the Police Department. I know Tom and I both spoke with him and as far as what the taxes were, you know, that people are paying in the Huntington community versus other towns, I actually have the numbers that we'll be happy to give to him. But again, I question how he got the information he got, because it looks like Brookhaven is thirty-one point -- 31.6% of the budget, it comes out of the Town of Brookhaven. But how do you determine when -- obviously you're looking at the precincts and what precincts fall under each town, not every town has as many precincts, but how do you make a determination when you have a graduating class and how many officers to send to a precinct? Because I know that the 7th Precinct geographically is the largest, and the 5th Precinct and the 3rd Precinct and I believe the 1st Precinct are probably some of the busiest. So can you kind of give us a little bit of FYI on that?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Sure. So obviously we look at our manpower in each precinct and then determine what we need, prioritize the resources coming out of the academy based on that. So we look at, among other things, crime with a particular focus on index crimes; call volume, how many 911 calls are coming in; criminal intelligence, which would include the number of calls coming through our new 852-NARC hotline regarding drug activity; and population, geographic size of the precinct. Those are some of the major factors that we would take a look at.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

So when he's saying that Huntington is number three in manpower, would you agree with that?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

I don't know off the top of my head where it stands in terms of manpower. Mr. McGoldrick is an outstanding partner with law enforcement, he's an outstanding advocate for his community and I've worked with him on several issues and I appreciate his partnership and look forward to his continued partnership; that doesn't mean we always agree (*laughter*). And the 2nd Precinct, there's been a particular focus on Huntington Station, and what I think Mr. McGoldrick gets right on this is there often seems to be these upticks in crime and I think the people of Huntington Station, as well as the Police Commissioner, we don't want to see these upticks anymore. So if you look at the numbers in Huntington Station, the crime numbers, they're outstanding, but that doesn't make residents feel good when they have a short period of time where they see a spike in crime.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

But that's every community, it happens everywhere.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

It happens in several communities, not in every community.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Well, I can tell you where they are (*laughter*).

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Right, I know you can. The second -- you're talking about the 2nd Precinct in general; it actually has the lowest crime rate than any other precinct. Now, that doesn't necessarily mean anything. We'd have to look -- you have to look at that and look at call volume and look at criminal intel and look at our manpower there, look at geography and the size of the sectors. And this is something that I've told community members, I think including Mr. McGoldrick, in 2017 we're going to be taking a hard looking and making sure that we're properly allocating resources. But what's important for residents to understand is that in the meantime, it's not as if we say, *Oh, we hope we*

10/18/16 - Public Safety Operating Budget Committee Meeting

*have it right.* We make sure we will allocate assets to particular areas that deal with crime based on the intel and based on the numbers.

So we have several different commands that are Police District wide that I can put in a particular area, whether it's Highway Patrol Bureau commands like the Safety Section or the Site Section or the new FAST team that we created, we can do targeted narcotics enforcement, we can have criminal intelligence do work in a particular area. So we right now have the resources to get it done. My goal as the Commissioner moving forward is to find the most sustainable and cost effective strategy to get the job done.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

And that's -- when I hear him say that they're number three in manpower, I kind of look at it as, *Okay. Well, that's what's in the precinct, but that's not counting* -- that's your 10 command, correct? So you have the other commands that are in addition to those commands that are in the community that he may not be aware of; correct?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Right. So recently in Huntington Station we've dedicated members of the SITE Team, members of the Safety Team and members of the FAST Team to the Huntington Station area, and they've done a great job. But when you have a robbery or when you have a murder that rocks the community, and Huntington Station is a very vibrant, civically-minded, wonderful community and they're not going to stand for that and I respect that. We're going to be taking a hard look at allocation of resources to make sure we're deploying assets in a sustainable -- in the most sustainable way as possible. But in the meantime, we have made strategic decisions to place assets where they should be and I'm confident in our plan as it stands right now.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

No, and I appreciate that and I certainly agree. I think that's what you're doing, and to have the other commands that are fluid and able to move around is what we really need. But I believe, Monica, you have a question?

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Yes. Good afternoon, Commissioner, Chief. Just a quick question; it's more of, I guess, clarity. This SNUG money, they come in as a passthu; are you aware of the SNUG?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Yeah, the SNUG grant.

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Yeah. So how are those funds allocated and where does it go and what does it do?

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

I think it's a Federal grant program. It passes through the Police Department, but I believe it's an independent agency that does the work. I can certainly look into it and get more details for you. I don't know all the ins and outs at this moment.

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Please, because I know that Wyandanch, I think, has --

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Yes, we only have one SNUG location at this time; it's a pilot program and it's in Wyandanch.

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Yeah, I did see the article in Newsday. So if you can get me that info, I'd greatly appreciate it.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Sure.

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. I don't believe there are any more questions. I know that we have been trying to set up a time to sit down and talk and I keep saying the longer it takes the bigger the list is getting. The mental health issue that I have discussed with you, and I know that you were going to get back to me on that. I'm hoping that we'll have a better complement of officers to address that issue and those types of calls, but I guess that will be a hold off til our next meeting. So I guess now we're going to have a couple of more things to talk about, especially with the Coram incident. Like I say, I just -- that was a little troublesome when I read about that. I think we need to send clear messages that that kind of behavior is not acceptable, no matter who you are or the situation. If you're out of control and you want to assault police officers, it's not acceptable.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

So we obviously take the assault of police officers extremely seriously and, as I said, I'll talk to you off-line.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

And for the record, my silence should not be confused as any sort of agreement with any of your statements regarding this matter.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

No, and I understand that. I think we do need to have a better conversation and I know you can give me more information at another date. This is not the time to do it anyway. Do you have a question?

**LEG. MARTINEZ:**

No, I just have a comment. I just want to say thank you for all the work that you're doing in my district. Just like Huntington Station, you know, my community has been rocked pretty much. And I know that you're working tirelessly and endlessly to make sure that, one, those who have done this, you know, are brought to justice; but two, making sure that this never happens again, not only in my community but definitely in the entire County of Suffolk.

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

And we can't tell you how much we appreciate your partnership and we know that you're out in front dealing with this issue and we're forever in your debt.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. So with that, there are no more questions, so thank you, Commissioner, Chief Cameron and Cassane.

10/18/16 - Public Safety Operating Budget Committee Meeting

**COMMISSIONER SINI:**

Cassane, yes, and thank you. And in all sincerity, the Suffolk County Police Department appreciates the support. This Legislature has always supported law enforcement and the Suffolk County Police Department and we thank you very much.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Thank you. So Budget Review, do you have anything else that you need give us?

**MR. LIPP:**

Adjourn sounds like a really good idea.

**CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:**

Okay. Because I guess -- actually, we have another committee, so don't go anywhere. So we will adjourn the Public Safety Committee and Doc's turn is next.

*(\*The meeting was adjourned at 4:51 P.M. \*)*