

**PUBLIC WORKS & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE  
of the  
Suffolk County Legislature**

**Minutes**

A special meeting of the Public Works & Transportation Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York, on **May 29, 2003**, to discuss the matter of the Capital Budget.

**Members Present:**

Legislator Joseph Caracappa - Chairman  
Legislator Brian Foley - Vice-Chair  
Legislator Andrew Crecca  
Legislator William Lindsay

**Members Not Present:**

Legislator George Guldi

**Also in Attendance:**

Legislator Angie Carpenter - District #11  
Legislator Lynn Nowick - District #13  
Alexandra Sullivan - Chief Deputy Clerk/Suffolk County Legislature  
Bryan Galgano - Aide to Presiding Officer Postal  
Jim Spero - Deputy Director/Budget Review Office  
John Ortiz - Budget Analyst/Budget Review Office  
Kim Brandeau - Budget Analyst/Budget Review Office  
Nicole DeAngelo - Intergovernmental Relations/County Executive Office  
Charles Bartha - Commissioner/Suffolk County Public Works Department  
Richard LaValle - Chief Deputy Commissioner/SC Public Works Department  
Leslie Mitchel - Deputy Commissioner/SC Public Works Department  
Tedd Godek - Suffolk County Architect/Department of Public Works  
Ben Wright - Director-Sanitation Division/Department of Public Works  
Bob Shinnick - Director-Transportation Division/Dept of Public Works  
Bill Shannon - Director-Highway Division/SC Department of Public Works  
Laura Conway - Director-Finance Division/SC Department of Public Works  
Read Vail - Finance Division/Suffolk County Department of Public Works  
Linda Brandolf - Finance Division/SC Department of Public Works  
Tom LaGuardia - Building Facilities Division/Dept of Public Works  
Lou Calderone - Buildings and Grounds/Department of Public Works  
All Other Interested Parties

**Minutes Taken By:**

Alison Mahoney - Court Stenographer

(\*The meeting was called to order at 2:09 P.M.\*)

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

Okay, seeing that this is a hearing, we can proceed without a quorum. So I would ask Commissioner Bartha and all those who you would like to invite up to the table to join him.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

I will start with Read.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Commissioner Bartha and friends

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

And friends because he has many, many friends.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Friends of.

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

Commissioner, thank you for attending. We, of course, have Budget Review's Report on the Proposed Capital Program and '04 Capital Budget. I would like to give you this opportunity to comment on both the County Executive's Proposed Capital Program and Budget as well as Budget Review's Report as it relates to your department and anything else you'd like to discuss.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Well, the biggest item of our concern was certainly the schedule of funding for the jail which we had the opportunity to meet with yourself, Bill, and some others this morning, so we appreciated that.

Otherwise, we're particularly happy with BRO's recommendations of restoring some of the funding that was not included in the County Executive's budget, reprogramming it probably would be a better way to put it. And there's one item in the sanitation area, Sewer District 18, the engineering money should be included next year.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Do we know what item number that is, Charlie?

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

What project number, Charlie, Ben?

MR. WRIGHT:  
8126.

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:  
8126.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:  
That's the Hauppauge Industrial Park and a lot of this is being driven by the Hauppauge Industrial Association which is interested in expanding the plant as well as treatment area. So it's community driven. We have basically a feasibility study that's under way now and we would anticipate being able to move into the engineering phase

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next year. Now, as a Sewer District, it's separately taxed and the cost of this would be raised within the district through both the user fees and connection fees.

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:  
Legislator Lindsay.

LEG. LINDSAY:  
Budget Review suggested that it be 21,900,000 be moved from subsequent years to 205; is that --

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:  
That would be the construction money and that's good. We should have -- there should be --

LEG. LINDSAY:  
I don't see any planning money or has that already been allocated?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:  
No, there should be -- what we're asking for is -- how much?

MR. WRIGHT:  
One point six million.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:  
One point six million in planning money for next year is what we had requested.

LEG. LINDSAY:  
And it isn't anywheres now.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

No, that's correct.

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

Anything else?

LEG. LINDSAY:

No, I'm finished. Did you hear that? Project 8126, there's no planning money, 1.6 million in 2004.

LEG. FOLEY:

And which project is that, Legislator Lindsay?

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

It's improvements to Sewer District No. 18, in the Hauppauge industrial area.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Just in case you had any questions.

LEG. FOLEY:

There is a question of the issuance of the bonds or the issuance of the funding for Sewer District 18, Capital Improvements; how is that paid for?

MR. SPERO:

Sewer District Bonds. You've got the Capital Budget?

LEG. FOLEY:

Lou, we may have a question for you too, so.

LEG. LINDSAY:

I know it's a separate funding source, Jim, but we would issue the bonds under the Capital Budget?

MR. SPERO:

That's right. And they're relevant, it would be specific to that district because that's a separate taxing entity. I just want to see if there's any money on it.

MR. VAIL:

I don't think so.

MR. SPERO:

No.

LEG. FOLEY:

Is that it?

LEG. LINDSAY:

Thank you. That's all I have on that.

LEG. FOLEY:

Are you giving an overview, Commissioner, or fielding questions?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

That really was -- I had indicated that the jail was our biggest concern. If anyone who was anticipating meeting the schedule that the State Office of Corrections has laid out, we really need the planning money next year, but fortunately we were able to have that discussion earlier today. Other than that, we're really just here to answer questions on any of the projects, where we stand.

LEG. FOLEY:

Yeah. If I may, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

Absolutely.

LEG. FOLEY:

Thank you. If we can go to transportation, particularly Bus Shelter Program along with the purchase of buses. If we could first hear from the Budget Review. Jim, it's my understanding that the County Executive did not include in the budget any monies for the purchase of new buses; is that correct?

MR. SPERO:

Yeah, that's right. I think it was all put in subsequent years.

LEG. FOLEY:

It was all put in subsequent years. It's my understanding that the

department cannot wait until subsequent years to purchase new buses; is that not correct, Commissioner?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Well --

LEG. FOLEY:  
Mr. Schinnick?

MR. SCHINNICK:  
That's correct. We have buses that are currently ready for replacement.

LEG. FOLEY:  
Okay. Was any explanation given by the County Executive's Office why did they did not include what the department had recommended for the proposed Capital Program?

MR. SCHINNICK:  
Well, I can't speak for them but I do know --

LEG. FOLEY:  
No, I know you can't. But I said did they --

MR. SCHINNICK:  
But I do know that --

LEG. FOLEY:  
Did they mention to you why they didn't include it?

MR. SCHINNICK:  
We have -- we're filing for grants currently to get the money to support the purchase of these vehicles, so those grants weren't in place at the time.

LEG. FOLEY:  
That hasn't stopped us before, though, from putting it into the Capital Program, so we couldn't use that as a reason not to put it in. Just if I may, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:  
Sure.

LEG. FOLEY:  
Jim, if you could just give us the overview of how much money was not included that the department needs in order to meet the mass transit needs of the County.

MR. SPERO:  
Well, for this particular project we recommended advancing \$9 million to 2004; 300,000 in 2005; about 3.9 million in 2006; and also adding an additional 18.3 million in subsequent years.

LEG. LINDSAY:  
What project number is that?

MR. SPERO:  
This is 56558.

LEG. FOLEY:  
Okay.

MR. SPERO:  
We would be adding \$33 million, if you wanted to have the program show the actual amounts of money you're going to be spending over the time period.

LEG. FOLEY:  
Now, the record should reflect how much of that is reimbursed by the Federal Government?

MR. SPERO:  
Ninety percent.

LEG. FOLEY:  
Ninety percent. So there's a very small cost to the County, local taxpayer to purchase these buses.

MR. SPERO:  
That's right, the actual -- the serial bond aspect of it.

LEG. FOLEY:  
And none of that amount is in the proposed budget; is that correct?

MR. SPERO:  
Thirteen million is in subsequent years.

LEG. FOLEY:  
All right. Now, the way that's -- Mr. Chairman, the way that's outlined, Mr. Schinnick, the way that Mr. Spero had outlined the recommendations, is that in keeping with the department's request?

MR. SCHINNICK:  
It is accurate, yes.

LEG. FOLEY:  
Okay.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Legislator Foley, you should know that the working group has added that back.

LEG. FOLEY:

Thank you, Legislator Lindsay; it's encouraging to hear that. With those additional dollars, are we doing anything differently, lower diesel emissions, are we looking at hybrids? How -- you know, one of the areas that I do agree with Legislator Alden in the past is how are we moving -- what are we going to do over the next number of years to look at ways to reduce these fossil fuels or reduce the air pollutants and use more innovative approaches?

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MR. SCHINNICK:

These are diesel powered buses, however, the engines are much cleaner than the buses that they're replacing. If you know an older bus or a garbage truck, an old diesel vehicle, you will see black smoke, you don't see that coming out of the newer vehicles now. And they will have filter equipment that will work with the ultra low sulfur diesel fuel coming in a few years to even clean them more in terms of emissions.

LEG. FOLEY:

Also, the purchase of these buses, though, are they all the same size, are you looking at having some smaller buses to complement the larger fleet? Because there's always the perennial issue of going down some more town-like residential roads with the large buses; what are we doing in regards to that whole issue? Because we know there are some major routes or some active routes on residential roads.

MR. SCHINNICK:

Yeah. The basic plan is to replace buses that are in service now and the majority of them will be 35 foot units, those are appropriate for their application. We are looking at the possibility of using smaller buses and they very likely may be in the purchase order as well.

LEG. FOLEY:

Where do we stand with bus shelters, as far as the program?

MR. SCHINNICK:

In terms of the program, we've requested money to continue at the current financial pace each year and that money that we requested

stayed in the County Executive's recommendation.

LEG. FOLEY:  
Which is how much?

MR. SCHINNICK:  
Currently we have a bid date of July 9 for the next order of bus shelters.

LEG. FOLEY:  
How many bus shelters are we looking at?

MR. SCHINNICK:  
Approximately 20.

LEG. FOLEY:  
Twenty, which is what, 250, 250,000?

MR. SCHINNICK:  
It's probably going to be in that range.

LEG. FOLEY:  
And again, it's a 90/10 split; is that right?

MR. SCHINNICK:  
That's correct, yes.

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(\*Legislator Fields entered the meeting at 2:20 P.M\*)

LEG. FOLEY:  
Okay. We spoke last -- earlier -- well, at the end of last year about having a less utilitarian design to these things and have a little style to them. And the design that we've seen, for instance, on Montauk Highway in Islip which is in the charge of the State DOT and other areas of the County and on the Island, I've seen different bus shelters other than the ones that we've used. And you gave us a presentation in the past about different designs that you were looking at and you were going to, in fact, move to purchase. So what can you tell us about this latest bid for early July and what kind of shelters should we expect to start seeing on the side of our roads?

MR. SCHINNICK:  
Instead of the anodized aluminum look, the silver look, these will be

dark, the metal portions will be dark powder-coated with glass enclosures instead of the plastic which has a tendency to cloud over the years; you'll have a very nice look. And the roofing will be of two styles, one will be a barrel-type roof which is just an arched roof, that would be more appropriate on the main roadways, industrial areas; and the other one would be a hip type roof which you'll just have -- how can I describe it, I'm not an architect, but a short roof --

LEG. FOLEY:

We get the picture; very good.

MR. SCHINNICK:

It will be attractive.

LEG. FOLEY:

Fine. Just one final point on that. As you know, and we've worked closely on it and your cooperation has been appreciated, behind the 6th District Court in the Village of Patchogue as a major destination point for buses and there are two shelters on South Street that the village had installed years ago which are in terrible shape now. There's two newer County ones of the old design but I would same formally request if those two are on South Street could be included; maybe you've already done that, that would be great news.

MR. SCHINNICK:

They are on the list.

LEG. FOLEY:

Very good. See that, I'm glad to hear that. It makes my day. Very good. Thank you.

MR. SCHINNICK:

You're welcome.

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

Brian, you did pretty good in your book today, huh?

LEG. FOLEY:

Right, very good.

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CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

Okay. Any other questions for the Commissioner or any other members of the Department of Public Works at this point in time? Of course,

Commissioner?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

I would just want to make it clear that we're hoping that the Legislature adopts the reprogramming that BRO recommended, particularly in the highway projects, there's a number of projects there, the strengthening and improving County roads, the special pavement markings, the thermoplastic markings.

LEG. LINDSAY:

What number, Charlie?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

5014, 5037, 5072; there really are a number of projects there and for good reason, BRO had recommended the reprogramming which we support.

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

Commissioner --

LEG. LINDSAY:

5037 did you say?

LEG. FOLEY:

Which one is the thermoplastic markings?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

That's 5037.

LEG. LINDSAY:

What was the third one?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

5072.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

Commissioner, how are we doing with equipment with relation to Highway Division?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

You should be --

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

It's been a concern of the Legislature over the last couple of years with relation to moving forward or buying certain types of equipment. I know Legislator Foley has been a champion with regard to moving forward and purchasing roadside clean-up equipment, mowers and things of that nature in an attempt to beautify the landscape of County

roadways which unfortunately, especially this year or the earlier part of the year with all the rain, it's going to be a tremendous problem and is already starting to become a tremendous problem. How is the

department doing with relation to equipment in that capacity and what are your comments with relation to the budget and the subject?

LEG. FOLEY:

Well, the biggest problem we have with equipment right now is the paint machine. Our paint machine dates back to about 1985 and we will be -- I believe the resolution that's before you now, before committee, provides for buying a paint machine as well as some other things. It's a very major expenditure but that's also -- no sense of me getting into how important that is, you understand that.

Other equipment that we've bought within the past year on the relatively inexpensive side is some automated litter removal equipment which has worked out very well, we've been able to coordinate that with our mowing operations and it's working out very well, particularly in the areas on service roads that are a little bit difficult and could be dangerous to be hand-picking. So, I mean, I'm happy to say that with your support, the -- our whole fleet of equipment, snow plow trucks is in the best shape it's ever been and the Capital Program I believe continues that. I'm just looking for the --

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

Alison, I need a copy of those minutes, that comment for my literature; no, I'm kidding.

LEG. FOLEY:

It's for the public record.

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

It's a joke, it's a joke.

LEG. FOLEY:

How about the tall grass on the sides of the roads now, is there -- I know you're probably behind schedule, but Nicoll's Road, for instance, and some of the other roads. I see the center median is taken care of but the sides aren't, so -

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

I will make it a point.

LEG. FOLEY:

Yes, please; also on the Sunrise Highway Service Roads, same thing.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Yeah, this is always a tough six weeks, we'll take care of it.

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

Commissioner, one other point I guess I will bring up and put on the record. It's been a concern of ours, and you and I have had multiple discussions about it as well as Mr. Wright, and that is the problem we face with grease disposal in the County.

(\*Legislators Carpenter & Nowick entered the meeting at 2:27 P.M.\*)

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I know the situation is really at this point going nowhere other than maybe some private business people have brought to us some ideas of what they would like to do in conjunction with maybe some space the County might be able to make available for them, possibly current Bergen Point facility or other possible locations throughout the County. In your estimation, for a study to review the possibilities of that happening, would you be able to off the top of your head give us an estimate, a dollar amount as it relates to doing a study of that magnitude which would basically be a site selection type of study? Just maybe give us some sort of round figure so that we can discuss it as we move forward with the amendments to the Capital Budget.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

I will give Ben two seconds to think about that and let me just address that a little bit in general. There are two private initiatives that are well under way which I think will pretty much address that problem. We are in a related problem, the scavenger waste capacity of Suffolk County, of our ability to keep scavenger waste, we are initiating the environmental impact statement for constructing a facility in Yaphank. There's --

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

For scavenger waste.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

For scavenger waste, right. And that the Capital Program does not include any funding for construction. We have the funds for the

environmental impact statement, the Capital Program doesn't include anything for construction in any year.

The reason I didn't bring that up is that it's really -- I'm focusing on the budget aspects, the one year budget. We will finish the environmental impact statement over the next year and next year we'll speak to you, hopefully, about the scavenger. But Ben, can you answer Joe's question?

MR. WRIGHT:

We had -- the staff study that Charlie had mentioned was a recommendation from --

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Ben, why don't you come up.

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

It's a short walk.

MR. WRIGHT:

The scavenger study that Charlie mentioned was the result of a report that was written and completed around 1999 and that report which included site selection type of treatment, etcetera, was \$140,000, so I would expect that since this is a smaller scale that it would probably be less than that amount.

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

Okay. In your estimation, you believe that's a prudent course for the Legislature to set forth upon with relation to the problem at hand,

that we start this process of a study as it relates to grease disposal?

(\*Legislator Crecca entered the meeting at 2:30 P.M.\*)

MR. WRIGHT:

Well, the two projects that Charlie mentioned on the private side, one is in the permit process right now and it could be within a month or two that it would opened up.

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

Where?

MR. WRIGHT:

It's in North Lindenhurst. It would -- they've got an existing facility now that pretreats certain waste and then discharges to the sewer system at Bergen Point. With the grease removal facility that they've got -- going to get permitted, they would take the grease out of the waste and it would be basically sanitary waste that would go into the system, the grease would then be taken someplace else. I can't comment on what that might cost, I still think that it's going to involve some complaints from restaurant owners about the increased cost of grease disposal. But from our point of view, it's had a lot of negative effects down at Bergen Point and that's why the administrative order came out.

**CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:**

We understand the problems that grease poses for the equipment at Bergen Point and what it's done to it and why the Executive Order had come down through the Commissioner. We're just trying to in any way, shape or form start ball rolling so that there is a process and that it's not so expensive to business owners starting now and increasing as the years go on for this process of not only accepting grease, treating grease and doing it locally where it doesn't have to be trucked to Newark as we know it's being done in certain instances now. Commissioner?

**COMMISSIONER BARTHA:**

Under any of the scenarios, we prepared a brief report with our own staff that we looked at a County project and the County project, the grease itself -- it's really a separation process that we go through -- the grease itself would still be trucked off the Island by us. So it's basically who's less costly and is the facility going to be available. And our cost analysis showed that we were basically going to be competitive with the private sector. Ben, you can elaborate on that.

**MR. WRIGHT:**

I believe the lowest cost was say eight cents per pound or something like that and we were ten cents a pound for the removal process, you know. So it's still a difference when you get down to how many gallons and pounds you remove from each restaurant, but it was more expensive for us to do it.

**CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:**

Legislator Fields.

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**LEG. FIELDS:**

We were -- I missed the beginning of this, I just kind of caught the tail end. You're saying that the cost would be once you have the grease to truck it or do it, but what about to build a facility that could handle that? Don't we have to pay for that under your scenario?

MR. WRIGHT:

Yeah, it would be paid for but the tipping fee would be what would reimburse, you know, wherever the funds came from.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

We would be charging --

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

What Legislator Fields missed earlier --

MR. WRIGHT:

Yeah, the grease will still have to be disposed of but it --

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

-- was that there is a private entity moving forward and it's just about to be permitted in North Lindenhurst that I wasn't aware of. I know that they asked to maybe possibly do it at Bergen or another county piece of land. The news that the Commissioner just indicated to me about a private entity moving forward with -- it will be a separation area, a separation facility or a disposal facility?

MR. WRIGHT:

No, separation; it still would have to take that grease and dispose of it elsewhere, but it's a much smaller volume than you're dealing with now.

LEG. FIELDS:

But what I'm asking -- there are a couple of questions. If it's cheaper than what we have now is one of the questions, but the second question is it possible at all for the County to be able to process grease somehow? You're saying it would still be trucked off the Island; is that --

MR. WRIGHT:

We can only --

LEG. FIELDS:

Why is that?

MR. WRIGHT:

We can only process it by building a facility. In order to destroy it you would need a different kind of incinerator than we have at Bergen Point, there is some other mechanism to --

LEG. FIELDS:

But I guess that's what I'm asking; is it possible for us to have -- we had had discussions a couple -- this goes back six months, maybe more, where actually someone came to us, somebody wrote a couple of letters and said that they would be willing to build something that could treat this. I guess I'm wondering are they willing to build

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something that can burn it also and that we can process it here on the Island if we were able to give them, let's say, the land and let them build a facility.

MR. WRIGHT:

If that was Russel Read, they were proposing to put separation units at Bergen Point in the scavenger building and then take the separated grease and bring that to one of their other facilities in New Jersey.

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

There were actually two proposals.

LEG. FIELDS:

There were, yeah, I don't remember the second person's name.

MR. WRIGHT:

Yeah, that's the only proposal that we had -- you know, we met with them and they got a proposal to us.

LEG. FIELDS:

Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

Any other questions or comments; Commissioner?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN CARACAPPA:

All set? Okay, the hearing is adjourned.

(\*The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 P.M.\*)

Legislator Joseph Caracappa, Chairman  
Public Works & Transportation Committee

