

CAPITAL BUDGET MEETING
of the
PUBLIC WORKS and PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Minutes

The Public Works and Public Transportation Capital Budget Meeting was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, Smithtown, New York, on Wednesday, **May 26, 2004** at 2:00 p.m.

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MEMBERS PRESENT:

Legislator Peter O'Leary
Legislator Andrew Crecca
Legislator William Lindsay
Legislator Daniel Losquadro
Legislator Ricardo Montano
Legislator Angie Carpenter
Legislator Brian Foley

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ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Mea Knapp - Counsel to the Legislature
Jim Spero - Director of Budget Review Office
Charles Bartha - Commissioner - DPW.
Richard LaValle - Chief Deputy Commissioner
Leslie Mitchel - Deputy Commissioner - DPW
Bob Shinnick - Transportation Division - DPW
Alexandra Sullivan - Chief Deputy Clerk of the Legislature
Lance Reinheimer - Budget Review Office
Joe Muncey - Budget Review Office
Ben Zwirn - County Executive's Office
Robert Carlino - LI Contractors Association

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MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Donna Catalano - Court Stenographer

(* THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 2:12 P.M. *)

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Good afternoon, all. I'll call the meeting to order. If you all will rise, please, for the Salute to the flag led by Legislator Carpenter.

SALUTATION

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Thank you very much. Before we begin the presentation by the Commissioner of DPW, we have a card here filled out by a Robert Carlino. Mr. Carlino.

MR. CARLINO:

May I sit at this large table?

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Sure. If there is anyone else wishing to address the committee before we have Commissioner Bartha come up, I would ask you to fill out a card. If not, just signal to me, I'd be happy to acknowledge you. Okay. If you would, sir, identify yourself for the record and make sure the mike is turned on, okay.

MR. CARLINO:

My name is Rob Carlino, C-a-r-l-i-n-o. I am the Executive Director of the Long Island Contractors Association. Okay. Shall I begin?

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Yes.

MR. CARLINO:

Okay. Ladies and gentlemen of the Legislature, of the Public Works Committee, I come before you today bearing some grim news. A study prepared for the Long Island Contractors Association by the Institute for Infrastructure and Asset Management at RPI has a number of shocking findings. Let me outline them for you briefly. You are more likely to die in a crash on a County road in Suffolk than in any other suburban county of New York City or any county in

the State of New York for that matter. The number of fatalities among the suburban counties surrounding New York, in Suffolk County, is almost double that of the surrounding counties. In fact, Suffolk accounts for 57% of all highway fatalities in the suburban counties of New York. Drunk drivers cause crashes, reckless drivers cause crashes, speeders cause crashes, but all counties have those. What makes Suffolk County so different? Regrettably its roads are in worse shape than nearly all others. Suffolk spends an astonishingly small amount per capita on road repairs and road safety. Eight dollars a year in Suffolk versus \$80 per year on state roads and \$40 a year in neighboring Nassau County.

Ladies and gentlemen, we must find a way to cooperate and work together to save the lives of mothers, fathers and young people who are being killed on our Suffolk roadways at an alarming rate. The study you have before you paints a sober picture of roads and road safety in Suffolk. One, more than 25% of Suffolk roads are deficient and in need of major repair. That's twice the rate of state highways. That would include both state highways in Suffolk and in Nassau. Road congestion is increasing faster in Suffolk than in any other suburban county. A full 55% of our roads are now congested. There is one fatal crash each year for every ten miles of County highway. What causes this? We know the answer. Maintenance that is deferred to make savings in tight county budgets.

As Legislators, each year you make choices; more money here, less money there. That's your job. But decisions that sometimes make good sense for a year or two often grow exponentially into monstrous problems that are highly resistant to being solved. Fortunately, we believe there is still time for Suffolk to make the type of changes that will save lives. The problem has not yet grown to the point where we can't solve it, but we can't wait, we need to begin today.

A five year plan of road improvements and increased road safety programs would allow Suffolk to make life saving changes in an orderly and cost effective matter. Such a plan would include such items as resurfacing to increase skid resistance, constructing more guide rails and median barriers to prevent cross-overs, installing more reflectorized highway paving markers and striping to increase safety, adding or lengthen turning lanes to cut congestion and to improve safety, Reengineering older roads to soften curves and to increase driver visibility. If Suffolk acts now, a five year plan of road improvements can save lives, prevent serious injuries and bring conditions on Suffolk roads on to par with roads in other suburban counties. Deferring this work much longer could mean Suffolk will be so far behind that it would be almost impossible to catch up.

We know what needs to be done as do many of you as well. The Long Island Contractor Association stands ready to work cooperatively with you towards solving the problems created by deficient roads and in creating a sane and sensible plan for action to save lives. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have. Next to me is an acknowledged expert from Albany. His name is John {Chaffer}, he is the former Chief Engineer of the New York State Department of Transportation and head of New York State Thruway Authority. He has worked intimately on this report as well and will have any technical answer -- any technical answer you may need for your questions on the report. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

All right. I have a comment just to -- I mean, we have to have an opportunity of course to digest this report. We're seeing it for the first time. And in light of fact that we do need sometime to do an analysis of this particular report, I would welcome questions from my fellow committee people, but perhaps it would be appropriate that you come back at a later date for purposes of addressing in more specificity and detail the issue that are raised as a result of this report.

LEG. CARPENTER:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CARLINO:

Sure. We would like to do that.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Yes. Legislator Carpenter.

LEG. CARPENTER:

I have to say I agree with the Chairman. I think it would most inappropriate for us at this time having not seeing this before a couple of minutes ago and listening to what you said, to make any comments whatsoever on this really.

LEG. FOLEY:

Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

I will comment, however, it might appear to be appropriate to you that you are appearing here today when we're addressing the Capital Budget for the years '05 through '07 -- the programs for '05 through '07 and the budget for '05. Legislator Foley.

LEG. FOLEY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to thank Mr. Carlino for giving us this informative presentation on the results of the research that he and his organization have undertaken. Certainly this information we'll need to review, digest and have you back in a short period of time. I would say on the record that this could assist us and hopefully will assist us in making some determinations in the development of our Capital Program. And no doubt, when the -- when the Department of Public Works gets a copy of this they can not only review it, but be prepared to respond to some of the findings of this report so then we can make the determinations on how we're going to approach the Capital Program vis a vis our highway system.

But I think one -- one fact that Mr. Carlino points out and something that we have been speaking for quite some time whether present committee or past committees, that's the fact that there are more and more motorists on our roadways, be they village, town, county, state roads. The fact of the matter is that we have allocated over a period of years additional monies for high accident locations. So these are things that are on our radar screen. At the same time, we need to have a Capital Program that also addresses those issues, and this report, even at first glance, will help in that regard. So I want to thank you Mr. Carlino for bringing this to our attention.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

I thought I said those exact same words. A little bit differently, of course.

LEG. FOLEY:

That's correct. That's one of the benefits of being on the committee.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Yes, it is. Something of note worthiness, I believe, is because we are addressing the Capital Budget and Program for the years -- the upcoming year, I think it's notable that in the proposed

Capital Program for the years '05 through '07, the proposal from the County Executive cut some \$11 million for highway projects. So that's something that we have to look into. And after speaking with the Commissioner of Public Works, perhaps get into more detail and specificity with respect to those cuts that have been made or proposed to be made by the County Executive, as I said before, totalling some \$11 million worth of cuts in his proposed Capital Program for the years '05 through '07.

MR. CARLINO:

Legislator O'Leary, that's very important. In closing, let me add that it's not about the \$11 million, and it's not about the Capital plan for this year, and it's not about the Capital plan for three years from now, it's about five and ten years from now of beginning to develop a way to address these deficiencies. And usually at budget hearings people talk about dollars and cents and how much is this going to cost and how much do we have and how much can we afford, do we have any cash, do we have the bonds, where's the money going to come from and all the usual budget questions. But this report for the first time to my knowledge details what the cost of not doing highway improvements means in lives. And it's quantifiable, and it's measurable and it's comparable to other comparable counties, and there's statistics to show you what happens when you don't have safe roads. People die. And that is the ultimate point of this study. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Thank you. And we will be in touch. I will have my aide get in touch with you for the purposes of scheduling you for a Public Works Committee Meeting for purposes of speaking in more detail to this matter. Thank you, Mr. Carlino. Is there anybody else who wishes to address the committee? I have no other cards. Hearing no one, Commissioner Bartha, if you will, or if you won't.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

I have no choice.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Good afternoon, Charlie.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Good afternoon.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Would you care to make some statements regarding the proposed Capital Budget and Program for '05 through '07?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

There are a number of projects which we believe would serve the County well to be included in the program. If you would like, I will go over those.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

If you would, please. Indicate the project number so we can refer to it in our handouts here. By the way, before you begin, Commissioner, I just want to commend Budget Review in doing an outstanding job in putting together this report on the proposed Capital Program and Budget. It makes our job a lot easier for purposes of scrutiny and analysis. So good job, Jim. You did a really good job, with this.

MR. SPERO:

Thank you, and thanks to a great staff we have in the Budget Review Office.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Yes. I totally agree. Commissioner Bartha.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

I'll start with the highway area seeing as we just had a presentation on highway. I would like to indicate that I just received this report immediately before the meeting myself. I'm a little disappointed to receive it in this format and form immediately before the meeting. The trend -- last year we spent more than in either of the prior three years, is what this report is showing on County roads. And as far as -- I think you have to be very careful looking at this. A lot of this is relating to state highways.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Are you referring to the report that Mr. Carlino just eluded to?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Yes.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

I wouldn't bother with that particular report at this particular time, Commissioner. We are going to address that issue at a later date.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Okay. Thank you. In highways, Capital Program 5060, which is DPW Informational Services, that's a -- basically our computerized end of the operation. We looked for \$400,000 in 2005. That would allow us to expand the GIS applications that we have built for the road system in Suffolk County to extend it to both the buildings and the sanitation area. But even more importantly, where we would see an immediate reward, I believe, is something that I'll call intelligence snow plowing. We spend about \$2 million a year on snow plowing. And I believe that through computerized routing of the snow removal vehicles and the vehicles to apply salt, that we will be able to save a considerable amount of money. I mean, if we were able to save 10% a year, we would be saving \$200,000. One hundred thousand of the 400,000 we asked for would be to start developing this computerized system. So, I mean, I think we would see a very good return on that.

5095, that's a project on Pulaski Road, County Road 11. We had asked for \$500,000 of design money in 2005. We already have the design underway for this section of roadway, but what we want to do is there's a bridge in that -- within that reach, we would like to include the bridge in that same design in order to be able to do the construction all at the same time.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

It's not included in the proposal?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

No. 5539, Wicks Road corridor study and improvements. The design is underway. The right-of-way acquisition funds, which we had programmed for 2005 have been eliminated and construction funds pushed to subsequent years. We believe that funding should be as requested.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

What's that amount?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

I don't have the amount. 5539.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Is it the 520,000?

LEG. LINDSAY:

If I might, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Yes, Legislator Lindsay.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Charlie, I have \$3,750,000 in subsequent years. You want to move that forward, right?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

I'm going to defer to Bill Shannon.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Wicks Road, County Road 7, corridor study and improvements.

MR. SHANNON:

5539, the right-of-way, we had scheduled \$250,000 additional funding for the right-of-way in 2005. And we had asked for 3,750,000 in 2006. Now that was pushed out. So the three million, seven hundred fifty would have to go back into 2006.

LEG. CARPENTER:

If I could. So you are saying that \$250,000 needs to be added in five, correct?

MR. SHANNON:

Correct. The BRO's recommendation shows 3,750,000 going back to 2006, so that's correct.

LEG. CARPENTER:

All right. So the three seven five goes into six. All right.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Capital Project 5561, it's Long Lane in East Hampton. That's a road that is deteriorating, the leaching basin system is failing. We are proposing in 2007 both design and construction funds, which is not included.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

And the recommendation of BRO on this, on 5561?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

I believe they have it in subsequent years, and we have in '07.

MR. SPERO:

That's correct.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

We're a good team.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Next.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

5563, that's County Road 83, Patchogue-Mt. Sinai Road, from the Expressway up to Route 112. We have proposed two phases to rehabilitate that section of roadway before it deteriorated too badly. One phase of it was to be funded in 2005, and the other phase in 2007. We would like to see that restored.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Legislator Losquadro.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

If I may. I know there's also another project 5548, which tied into the \$400,000 that was already allocated for planning. And I see it's a substantial figure out in subsequent years and that it was removed under the current proposed budget, it's over \$37 million. Would the removal of that from subsequent years, I would have to imagine that a large portion of that would be allocated towards the County Road 83 and 25 intersection, would the removal of that

for subsequent years necessarily preclude us from possibly working with the state at some point if monies became available, being that it intersects with a state road? Does that do anything to us by removing that from subsequent years?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Bill.

MR. SHANNON:

No. If funding became available through state aid or through joint partnership with New York State, then we would be able to revisit this in subsequent budget deliberations. I don't see that as being a problem.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

And 5563, the one you were just speaking to, that you would like to see restated.

MR. SHANNON:

Yes. That's a routine rehabilitation similar to the stretch that was currently underway, just we wanted to finish that segment from the Expressway northerly. So we phase it out over time to keep the cost down. But we do think it's important to proceed with that resurfacing and that rehabilitation.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Thank you.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

5806, that's a bascule bridge -- the draw bridges that we have. We had requested design funding in 2005 specifically for the Quoque bridge to evaluate and design improvements and repairs to the electrical and mechanical systems. It's not a structural issue, but it is an electrical and mechanical issue. Project 5815 relates to painting of County bridges at various locations.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Commissioner, let me interrupt for a second. The projects that you are raising now, are those you want us to consider to restore in the proposed --

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Right. And it's not every project that has been cutback. I'm just giving you my wish list, most important.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Fine.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

So 5815, the painting of bridges at various locations. The years 2005 and 2007, the funding was eliminated in those two years. We would request that the funding that was requested be restored. 5850 is rehabilitation of various bridges and embankments. That project -- we have about 70 bridges County-wide, and this reduces the funding cuts in half from -- in 2005 from 600,000 to 300,000. And bridge maintenance is something that we feel strongly you're better off spending the money today and avoiding larger expenditures in the future.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

I noted with respect to 5858 that the 600,000 was for seven bridges, 300,000 for six. How do you figure that?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

I'm not sure that was our figuring.

MR. SHANNON:

I never shoot from the hip Mr. O'Leary, but I would say that probably the extent of the repair necessary in 300,000 is much less than the other side. But I can give you a better -- I can answer your question more thoroughly tomorrow.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

It just jumped off the page, you know? Six hundred for seven and reduced to 300 for six. But you're probably correct, it's the extent of the repair -- or rehab being done. All right, Charles.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

The buildings area. Capital Project 1623, it's a roof replacement project. We believe that's important to continue to repair the roofs. We have the County buildings in what we consider pretty good shape right now. Roofs are critical to maintain them in a good shape. 1659, was

for the elevators and electrical system supporting that in the Dennison Building. We would like to make safety upgrades to that. Capital Project 1715, is what we call the power plant in Riverhead. We have had an ongoing process of upgrading that power plant, and this would be the final phase of that funding. It has not been included.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

The final phase of the project.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

It relates to the cooling towers to support the air conditioning in the Riverhead County Center.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Well, we're at the final phase, and the final phase has been taken out in the proposed Capital Budget?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

I don't have the full document.

MR. SPERO:

It's not included. The project was discontinued. So this was about almost \$2 million, I guess, that's needed to complete the project.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Okay.

MR. SPERO:

The cooling tower is about 30 years old and is due to be replaced. And actually, repairs should be done. Joe Schroeder just filled me in a little bit this morning. Apparently, we're doing the absorption chillers, they're being rebuilt in that unit, and they won't work properly if you don't have a good cooling tower. So this project is essential to the --

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

I thought the Commissioner made mention of the fact that we're in the final stage of this project and the funding has been removed.

MR. SPERO:

That's right.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

What sense does that make? I mean, we're in the final stage. So there has been monies put into this, and we're in the final stage and the monies have been removed from the proposed Capital Project -- Budget?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

You are asking me. You should ask -- that's a Budget Office question. Maybe we didn't make it clear enough to the County Exec's Budget Office when we were discussing this.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

1715. Okay.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

1760 is the elevator safety upgrades for buildings other than the Dennison Building. We believe this is very important, obviously. It's a safety item. 1765, is building 50, the MIS Building. The HVAC system there had been scheduled for major improvements, and has been moved to subsequent years. It may not be prudent to wait for subsequent years for that.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

You are on a roll.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

1133 is really the continuation of the Riverhead County Center project. That addresses some needs in the Surrogates Court. If the Riverhead County Center project goes forward, we think that segment of it should go forward, you know, in a series. We would like to see that restored. That's if for buildings.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Legislator Lindsay for a comment.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Mr. Commissioner, when you were a child, did you ask for a lot for Christmas?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

No, but I'm making up for that now.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

I wasn't about to ask you, Charlie, to prioritize these things, but obviously, they all a priority, right?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Well, I really have dropped out ones that are low priority. These are -- we believe these are important. And if there's a target that we can only include X number of dollars, we would be glad to work with Jim and his staff on that or anybody you designate. I was just warming up for the sewage treatment areas.

The sewage treatment plant is a very severe duty facility, and the incinerators are the most severely tested of them. At Bergen Point, the incinerators are not operating right now, have not been operating for some time. We are looking to get one operating temporarily to buy us time until we get them -- get new ones installed. What we are proposing is a different type of technology, a fluidized bed technology, which is more energy efficient, much simpler to operate and better air emission results. That project has been split, instead of building two new incinerators at the same time, he proposes we build them in different years.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Is there a project number on that, Charlie?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

8180.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

8180.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Also at Bergen Point, the changing state regulations with respect to the disinfection of sewage, typically we chlorinate. Now the degree of dechlorination after you chlorinate is going to be

increased drastically. We have done a pilot project using ultraviolet light which has been used elsewhere in the country, and it's been very successful. There's an annual cost savings of \$210,000 a year with a UV system versus a chlorination -- dechlorination system. The cost of this UV system installation is about \$900,000. That's the current cost of the chlorination system. So the new system will save us about 25% of the annual operating cost. And we also talked about the Sewer District 21 Sewage Treatment Plant. That handles the flow from the SUNY Campus as well as several other small communities. But the SUNY Campus uses about 80 to 85% of that capacity. SUNY has expressed --

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Project number on that.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Excuse me.

MR. SPERO:

8121.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

And that would be no cost to the County, because the expansion portion is strictly -- would be paid for by SUNY. They pay a prorated share of any improvement for both the engineering and the construction. So we believe while it is difficult to pin SUNY down, we think that project should be included.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Okay.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

That's all I have.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

That's it?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

That's it. Any questions?

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Any questions from the committee? No. Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Thank you.

LEG. FOLEY:

Thank you, Commissioner.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Any comments from BRO regarding the statement from the Commissioner?

MR. SPERO:

Just in general, many of the things the Commissioner points out were highlighted in our report for additional funding and/or rescheduling of funding. So the Budget Review Office is almost 100% in agreement with the items the Commissioner has pointed out.

LEG. FOLEY:

Just one area, if I may, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Legislator Foley.

LEG. FOLEY:

Has the BRO report reviewed and analyzed the bus shelter program? Is it funded?

MR. SPERO:

Yes.

LEG. FOLEY:

And by how much? Which page?

MR. SPERO:

Page 337 in your report, 162 in the County Executive's Program. The proposed program includes \$325,000 annually for the purchase of street signs and bus shelters and 650,000 in subsequent years.

LEG. FOLEY:

All right. Street signs and bus shelters. What's the break down between each? Mr. Shinnick.

MR. SPERO:

We didn't break it down that way.

LEG. FOLEY:

I'd like to say whether or not there's a certain level of continuity in the number of shelters we're putting up annually, or whether there's a way we can actually increase the number.

MR. SHINNICK:

Bob Shinnick. It's 100% bus shelter.

LEG. FOLEY:

So all that money --

MR. SHINNICK:

It's a category, signs and shelters. These funds are 100% shelters, but also included is the engineering services needed to implement that.

LEG. FOLEY:

Right. So for 325,000, that translates into how many shelters?

MR. SHINNICK:

Up to 30.

LEG. FOLEY:

Up to 30. So at one time we were putting -- installing roughly 20 or so, and we have ramped that up, forgive my pun, up to 30 shelters; is that right?

MR. SHINNICK:

That's correct.

LEG. FOLEY:

So expect to have around 30 per year. And again, is this a 90/10 split of monies?

MR. SHINNICK:

Yes, it is.

LEG. FOLEY:

Is there -- just through the Chair, if I may, what would it take in order to increase that number again from ten -- if we went from 20 -- to your credit, we went from to 20 to 30. How can we go from 30 to 40?

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Get more money.

MR. SHINNICK:

That's the answer we would give.

LEG. FOLEY:

Well, we can do that. But usually it's not just money. What they've said in the past, Mr. Chairman, is that it's also an issue of staffing. So I would just like to know whether it's simply a function of money or whether it's also staff.

MR. SHINNICK:

It is a time consuming project. We'd have to allocate more money and identify more sites.

LEG. FOLEY:

The identification of sites, I think, would be probably readily apparent.

MR. SHINNICK:

What we are proposing to do is a passenger count analysis as to where people board the buses to be able to look next at the tier of locations where shelters should go so we can determine on the basis of actual ridership figures rather than what we know to be the more active bus stops.

LEG. FOLEY:

Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Just a comment, Bob. On the public transportation proposed Capital Budget and Program, there are three projects that have been proposed. You are on board with them, their satisfactory as far as the funding of same?

MR. SHINNICK:

They are represented just the way we put them.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

They are? Okay. Legislator Losquadro.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Yes. Mr. Shinnick, that ridership number study you referred to, is that going to be system-wide?

MR. SHINNICK:

Yes, it will be.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Okay. When do you plan to undertake that?

MR. SHINNICK:

Next year.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Thank you.

LEG. FOLEY:

Mr. Chairman, if I may. Just on the issue of bus shelter. There still is a continuing problem with the maintenance of some of these shelters on County roads. You know, East Main Street in Patchogue there seems to be a continuing problem there. Just for the sake of the committee,

but also if you can give us an update, even though I didn't give you a heads-up on this, you know, under the New York State Highway Law, the townships have responsibility for the maintenance of the County right of ways. What are we trying to do to ensure that the towns are -- by maintenance, I mean picking up the litter, there's overflowing liter baskets etcetera in the area, and it makes the bus shelters look rather unappealing for those who are patrons, who utilize our buses. How are we trying to encourage the townships to be more attentive to their responsibility of our bus shelters since they are on the County right of way -- County right-of-way, which is there charge to maintain?

MR. SHINNICK:

We actually only have a handful of shelters on town roads.

LEG. FOLEY:

No. No. No. These are the ones on County roads, and the towns have the responsibility under New York State Highway Law to maintain them. So they have a series of -- I call them litter baskets, whatever you would like to call them -- that are not being emptied on a regular enough basis. So there's an overflow situation, and it gives the whole -- our whole bus system, you know, a black eye, when in fact it's not our doing. And we should try to encourage the towns to -- if they have to increase the number of times that that particular contractor goes down that street to empty those baskets, I mean, it's as simple as that. So how do we keep a handle on this thing?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

I would like to go over that, you know, with you.

LEG. FOLEY:

Not just the particular, but also the -- let's say general policy, if you will.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

What we are doing is we are looking towards issuing an RFP where we would have a shelter installer install -- install and maintain them in exchange for being able to put up advertising on them in the County. It would at least be revenue neutral and possibly the County would get some revenue. But the main objective would be to have more shelters and to have them maintained not by the County.

LEG. FOLEY:

By virtue of the fact that under the law, particularly if the shelter are on town roads, but even if the shelters are on County roads, the townships supposed to be maintaining the baskets that are just two feet away from them literally. And what's happening is these things are overflowing.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

To tell you the truth, I'm not familiar with that section of the law.

LEG. FOLEY:

Okay. That's what I've been told over the years. So we will have a follow up on that. Thank you. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Very good, Legislator Foley. I have a question, Mr. Shinnick. The appropriation that's being made with respect to bus shelters, is that for construction of new shelters, not the rehab of old ones?

MR. SHINNICK:

It's actually both. It's the majority, the overwhelming majority of new locations. But if a shelter is that old or in that condition that it needs to be replaced, we will replaced it. If it needs considerable replacement of parts, they will be replaced. The current project we have now will be replacing some of the -- the {Lexan} on them.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

So it's rehabbing some the existing ones. How many shelters do we currently have throughout the County?

MR. SHINNICK:

The County currently has about 80 in its ownership. And there's at least another 150 to 200 that are either there by private sector, advertising firms, town have put them in, civic associations, but the County has installed approximately 80 shelters.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

So there's close to 300 shelters throughout the County, but we're responsible for only about 80

of them?

MR. SHINNICK:

That's generally correct, yes.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

And the responsibility of the other 220, approximately is the various private entities that --

MR. SHINNICK:

It would go to whoever installed the shelter. Where there's a maintenance agreement by some of the towns with companies that put shelters roadside, the arrangement is that that company will do the maintenance at the site. But in other cases, the towns themselves will install their own shelters.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

What I'm getting at is what Legislator Foley raised. Who is responsible for maintaining the 220 shelters that are up throughout the County for purposes of litter? Is it the town according to law? Is that what you're saying?

LEG. FOLEY:

That's what I've been told.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Certainly anything that's -- the only ones that could possibly be the County's responsibility are the 80 that Bob indicated we had installed. That -- actually, I want to review the law, because that wasn't my understanding, and I may have missed something here.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Okay. Well, obviously, it's something to look into then. Maybe we can at a later date get back to the committee on whose responsibility is it to maintain the cleanliness of those particular structures. And not just the 80 that we have obviously responsibility for, but the other 220 that are scattered throughout the County.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Those would be the respective towns, because they would have issued a permit for their installation. The ones on County roads are our's. That's what we'll talk about. We will get back to you.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Okay. Very good. Thank you. Any other questions from the committee? Thank you very much, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Is there anyone else who wishes to address the business before us today with respect to the Capital Budget and Program for the years '05 through '07? Hearing none, okay, this meeting will be adjourned. Thank you very much for your attendance.

(* THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 2:55 P.M. *)

{ } DENOTES BEING SPELLED PHONETICALLY