

**OPERATING BUDGET MEETING
OF THE
PUBLIC WORKS and PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

Minutes

The Public Works and Public Transportation Operating Budget Meeting was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, Smithtown, New York, on Friday, **October 22, 2004**, at 9:30 a.m.

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MEMBERS PRESENT:
Legislator Peter O'Leary • Chairman

Legislator Brian Foley

Legislator William Lindsay

Legislator Lynne Nowick

Legislator Ricardo Montano

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ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

James Spero • Director, Budget Review Office

Rosalind Gazes • Budget Review Office

Charles Bartha • Commissioner of Public Works

Richard LaValle • Chief Deputy Commissioner DPW

Leslie Mitchel • Deputy Commissioner DPW

Bob Shinnick • DPW

Alexandra Sullivan • Chief Deputy Clerk • Legislature

Bill Faulk • Presiding Officer's Office

Maria Ammirati • Aide to Chairman O'Leary

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MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Donna Catalano • Court Stenographer

(* THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 9:46 A.M. *)

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Good morning, everyone. We'll start the meeting of the Public Works Operating Budget with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator Lindsay. Please stand.

SALUTATION

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

I don't have any cards, so I'll invite the Commissioner of Public Works, Charles Bartha, up for comments regarding the proposed 2005 Operating Budget. It's all your's, Charles.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Good morning.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Good morning.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

First, I would like to introduce the new Chief Engineer for Highways and Waterway Structures for the department. I had sent around a notice to the different Legislators. But Bill Hillman is here for first experience at a Legislative meeting.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Did Bill just get out of school? He looks so young.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

Only compared to me he looks young. Bill has many years of experience, but he still has many years left. So you will have plenty of time.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Welcome aboard, Bill.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

With respect to the Operating Budget, the recommended budget prepared by the County Executive, basically it addresses the needs that we have. The biggest change we have is in the handling of the jail. Everyone has been very concerned about keeping the jail on schedule, the jail design and being able to administer the construction work as well as continue the aggressive Capital Program we have in the highway •• in the buildings area we have right now.

So we have •• we asked for four new positions and to be able to fill all of the existing vacancies in those divisions, being building design and facilities engineering. You may recall that last summer I made a presentation over here in conjunction with the County Executive's Office when DASNY was considered for the work. And I indicated at that time that two positions as well as keeping everything filled would be sufficient.

The County Executive asked that we make absolutely sure that we had sufficient staff and opened the door to ask for additional. And at that time, I increased our request to four people. As I said, it's important that they be filled early. And the way it's been funded with turnover savings is we will be able to fill those positions immediately in January, and we are in the process of filling the vacant position now. Some have been filled, others became vacant during the course of the summer, and we're in the process of filling them. So we agree with that as presented. I know there was some confusion in working with the BRO staff as to how many people we had asked for. That's why I figured I would address that.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

So what you're saying, Charlie, is that the four is sufficient?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

That's correct.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

We have a report, a very thorough report, I might •• I want to take the opportunity to congratulate and thank Jimmy Spero and his staff for putting together a very thorough and comprehensive review of the recommended Operating Budget. But the department identified 11 positions necessary for that particular •• but you are now back to four.

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

The department never identified that. That was some internal conversation that we had. As I

said, what I had indicated in the summer was two, and then we were given the opportunity to increase that, and we increased it to four. Some of that need during the construction phase will be handled by •• of course, that's a short term need •• will be handled by using the consultant staff. And then there's at least one of those positions in that total figure you are referring to, was anticipating promoting one of the individuals in the department, which can be handled through a desk order process. So I'm very comfortable with what's been presented.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Okay. Any other comments?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

No •• yes, I'm sorry. Thanks for reminding me.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Had you had an opportunity to review the report submitted by BRO?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

BRO? Not thoroughly. I just received it yesterday morning. In the transportation area, the S •92, which is the route out by Riverhead•Southampton that we've had a lot of conversations about earlier in the year, additional funds are necessary to keep that route operating.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Okay. Would you care to comment, Charlie, on the snow removal budget?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

I think it's been increased significantly. In the past, we have overrun the snow budget. In the past it was built on a ten year average, which you have such an increase on cost over ten years. Now we're based on a five year average, which I think is much more reasonable. And the five year average is why it's increased, because we have had several severe winters.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Okay. Legislator Lindsay.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Charlie, you said you need additional funds for the S•92 route, how much?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

I believe about \$400,000. Yes.

LEG. LINDSAY:

And that's to expand the service or is that a new route?

COMMISSIONER BARTHA:

It's to continue the present service, which was expanded in the summer, in the middle of the year.

LEG. LINDSAY:

I see. Okay.

CHAIRMAN O'LEARY:

Any other questions from the committee? Anyone else care to make a comment? Hearing none, thank you so much. Meeting adjourned.

(* THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 9:53 A.M. *)