

***OPERATING BUDGET MEETING***

***OF THE***

***PUBLIC WORKS and TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE***

The Public Works and Transportation Operating Budget Meeting was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, Smithtown, New York, on Tuesday, October 20, 2009 at 9:30 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Legislator Brian Beedenbender - Chairman  
Legislator Steve Stern  
Legislator Ed Romaine  
Presiding Officer William Lindsay

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Gail Vizzini - Director - Budget Review Office  
Lance Reinheimer - Assistant Director - BRO  
Gil Anderson - Commissioner of Public Works  
Tom Laguardia - Chief Deputy Commissioner - DPW  
Louis Calderone - Deputy Commissioner - DPW  
Bill Hillman - Chief Engineer - DPW  
Bob Shinnick - Transportation - DPW  
Ben Wright - Sanitation - DPW  
Patrick Skip Heaney - Commissioner - Department of Economic Development  
Cheryl Felice - AME  
Dot Kerrigan - AME

**MINUTES TAKEN BY:**

Donna Catalano - Court Stenographer

(\*THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 9:45 A.M.\*)

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

All right. We're going to get started. Rise for the Pledge led by Legislator Stern.

**SALUTATION**

Okay. Thank you. I don't have any cards. Barbara, any there any cards? No? Okay. I guess we will start. Gail, would you like to -- I know we're rushing you -- would you like to give any sort of overview or discussion, and then, Gil, I'll give you the same opportunity and then I have a couple of questions and we might have some others from the presentation. I see that we have a large majority of the Public Works staff here to answer any questions that might come up. So, Gail, fire away.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As yesterday, I just need to moment to boot up.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Okay. You got it.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to brief the committee on the Budget Review Office Review of the 2010 Operating Budget. I'll confine my comments primarily to the Public Works portion. The major issues in Public Works are staffing, reliance upon overtime and increasing appropriations for the use of fees for services or consultants.

Briefly, as of September 20th, the department had 991 authorized positions of which 144 or 14.5% were vacant. A decrease in vacancies compared to 2008 of 35. The recommended budget abolishes transfers of 19 positions and does not include two new positions requested by the department. Among our recommendations, there are several longstanding vacancies which we believe could be abolished. One is the vacant never-filled Public Works Capital Project Manager. It's a Grade 35, it's in Building, Design and Construction. This was originally envisioned to be part of a new Capital Budget process which didn't really require the department, I guess, to fill the position ultimately.

We're also recommending that the duplicating machine operator in the print shop be restored, and that when appropriations are available, the position be filled in light of the large backlog of work in support services. The two new positions that were -- that were not included are two Office Symptoms Technicians, Grade 17, for transportation to address the anticipated installation of the AVL, Automated Vehicle Locator in 2010.

There are sufficient salaries, so if we are to restore the two -- create the two technicians, we could probably do so without additional appropriations. Overtime in Public Works continues to grow. They're more dependant on overtime salaries and outside consultants to compensate for the number of vacancies. In 2009, Public Works negotiated 26 engineering contracts totaling approximately \$12 million and executed over 48 term consulting agreements and 16 individual project agreements all while managing 166 separate Capital Projects valued at over \$200 million.

We believe that based on historical data and the reliance upon overtime that this particular -- in the aggregate, overtime should be increased to reflect the historical expenditures. We're recommending that that line be increased by \$480,000. If it's not increased, then it would -- the cost would probably be taken from salary lines which would further deteriorate their ability to face vacancies. Other line item recommendations that we're making are rather modest. We think that perhaps snow and ice removal supplies should be increased by about \$250,000 in light of historical expenditures.

Fees for services. The actual, which is the way we budget in the Operating Budget for our

consultants and other contracts, the actual 2008 expenses were \$480,000. In '09, the estimate was only 252,000. The reason is the County Executive reserved 65% of the original \$720,000 to mitigate the potential sales tax shortfall in the current year. For 2010, the department actually had requested \$915,000, and the Executive has included 515, which is 104% increase over what they were able to manage with in 2009.

As far as Southwest Sewer District, I want to bring to your attention that in 2009, Southwest made a transfer to Assessment Stabilization Reserve. They're basically paying back the previous loans. That 2009 transfer was \$24 million. The 2010 transfer back to Assessment Stabilization Reserve is \$39 million. They're well on their way to paying back their obligations. They have approximately \$37 million still to pay off, which could be next year's payment. After that, they've made Assessment Stabilization Reserve whole. We've made some recommendations that consideration be given to paying for some of their -- future capital expenses partially with cash. And that's it.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Gail, I have a couple of questions. One, just to follow up on the last thing that you said there, paying with cash would certainly be the preferable option. But won't that be somewhat mitigated if we actually begin doing the outfall pipe which is planned for in the Capital Budget? If we were to appropriate the \$50 million, I believe, that in the 2010 budget for the pipe, wouldn't that kind of bring the Southwest rates -- or their debt back a little bit and kind of mitigate their ability to pay with cash?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Well, for every \$50 million we bond long term on an annual basis, the debt service is about 4 million. But what's happening here is unless other expenses at southwest go up to like 30, 40 million, we want to keep their level of expenditure flat. So we'll certainly be in discussions with the County Executive's Budget Office in terms of the prudence of doing -- you know, what we're talking about is like ten or 20 million, certainly not 50 million for, you know, the 2011 portion of the outfall pipe.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Right. Because I remember we had discussed I think during the Capital Budget Hearings earlier this year that if Southwest Sewer District were to pay everything off, their expenses would go way down and then all of a sudden, they would go right back up. What they would end up doing, because they have the sewer -- the 3% protection, is they would pay back a bunch, and then they'd take it all back out Assessment Stabilization, because the rate would spike all the way up due to their new expenses.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

It's definitely something we need to plan for and measure how we're going to do this.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Okay. Gil and Lou, if you guys wanted an opportunity to say anything, I'd like to give that to you.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

Thank you. Obviously, the Department of Public Works understands the uncertain economic conditions that, you know, the Legislature and the County Exec are faced with. We intend to continue to provide our core mission as well as provide for the public safety, which is, you know, our prime goal. The only real questions we have with regard to the budget -- with regard to the report itself are the recommended abolishment of the Capital Project Manager position, which we have gotten approval to obtain and we are in the process of looking for someone to fill that vacancy right now. As well as -- we're a little unsure about the recommendation for the two energy engineer positions. There was an energy engineer and an energy computer specialist that was recommended. And, you know, obviously, we were not aware of that. We would like a little more input on it. We have two great guys on the Javed and Mike Monaghan, and you know, would expect their input in the discussion as the positions are developed.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Okay. Thank you. Legislator Stern had a few questions. Gail, did you -- go ahead.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I did overlook the energy component. The Legislature actually created energy engineer with -- you know, basically sending a message to the department to focus on energy savings because there's such a large expenditure. And, you know, Javed was promoted into the engineer series, well deserved. Our concern simply is that we continue to have an emphasis on energy conservation and energy consumption in the County. So therefore, we thought the most straightforward way to do that would be to recommend, you know, recreating an energy engineer for that focus.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Gail, would this reflect -- I'm trying to think back to the Capital Budget, and I remember, if I'm correct, that we did about -- is it \$600,000 or something like that we put in the Capital Budget for the purposes of Countywide energy efficiency? I don't want to call it an audit, but it was an efficiency program.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Yes. There's about -- you know, Gill correct me -- I think the numbers are -- 2.6 and 3.6 million in 2010 in the 1664. We augment it because we wanted to demonstrate that we are prepared to match stimulus money. So I know both budget offices are very concerned about attracting as much stimulus money as we possibly can. And although that's not the primary reason, ours is that we continue to have an emphasis on, you know, the consumption of energy in our County facilities and how they can better manage that.

**MR. CALDERONE:**

Can I speak on that? Listen, we can always use -- absolutely, the more help we have, the better off we are. Promoting Javed, I just want you to know, is because, you know, that's kind of a dead end title. Javed is still doing I'll say 85-90% of his work is related to energy. But if, you know, you guys want to approve an energy engineer, we can always use another engineer. I don't want to dilute the CPM though. Let me go back to the Capital Program Manager that -- Mr. Lindsay, you remember I said about a year ago, someone -- I think it was you that asked why we didn't have them then. At the time, we didn't feel -- we really didn't need them and I don't want to waste the money. We are interviewing as we speak. With the jail now being in full blown construction, we could really use the CPM also.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Lou, in terms of this Capital Project Manager, I remember Bill Hillman saying to me at some point in the past that -- we were talking about the stimulus money. In a normal year, we do about \$20 million worth of highway work. And now, because of stimulus dollars, and just in addition to that that fact that so many Federal programs and Federal dollars are hitting at the same time regardless of the stimulus, I think it was almost 90 or 80 or -- it was quadruple, it was more than that, more than 90, so I guess that would part of it, that we have, I mean, two major County road projects, Portion Road in Mastic in terms of -- plus all the other projects you're trying to get forward.

**MR. CALDERONE:**

Absolutely. I say CPM when I was referring to the jail obviously because that's the -- one of the largest projects. We have over -- we have like \$200 million even in buildings projects going on, you know, at any one particular time. So, absolutely, he'd be helping out with that, highways and sanitation for that matter.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

All right. I guess this would be a good time to segue into the County Executive's Budget recommends an eight person team, this oversight group. I guess this title, this project manager, would be the head of that group.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

No. The group that's in question is the consulting management group out of the Highway Engineering Division, that was created because of the amount of workload that we have right now, not only because of our ARRA, but the Federal program that was in place before this. The CPM, we envision, is more of a free-floating, you know, person who will be able to monitor the progress of all the projects individually. The folks you spoke about, the eight people in the consulting management division, their task is to monitor -- monitor consultants and make sure that the projects move around, so they're more on the ground.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

I was just going to say, you're talking about -- the Capital Project Manager will be somebody on the site looking and talking to the people, and this consultant team will be somebody in the office trying to manage the paperwork?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

The CPM -- and, Lou, I'll let you speak more on it -- the way we envision it is the CPM takes a fee view to make sure everything is moving, and then the consulting management people are actually the day-to-day, you know, projects, where they are, you know, who is working on it, what their progress.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

How does the formation of this eight person team affect your ability -- I mean, these people are presumably doing something now. I'm assuming -- actually, I know they're going to be doing a lot of what they're still doing now even when they're moved, but how does this affect your ability as the Commissioner and your department to get things done? I mean, obviously, we'll approve the consultant management, but what about what they're doing now?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

Well, this -- really these guys have been doing consulting management for a while. What it does is it reduces our ability to do in-house design. You know, we had to do one or the other, and we said, "Look, we can get more bang with our buck right now having these -- especially give the federal funding, the ARRA and everything else that's out there to make sure these -- that's where they focus. And, you know, design will be done as it can be right, but right now we have bigger fish to fry, and they meet more immediate needs with the Capital Program.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Okay. Legislator Stern.

**LEG. STERN:**

Is there someone that serves as the project manager over at the jail project now?

**MR. CALDERONE:**

Yes. Yeah, there is. When he serves as project manager, he's the project manager for all. You know, we have a project manager, Jay Abbot, who oversees all construction. Then, of course, we have a Clerk of the Works that is responsible strictly for that project, including a construct manager that we higher.

**LEG. STERN:**

So why would we -- why would we pursue a project manager to manage the project manager?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

It's not only going to be to oversee Jay, this is looking, again, globally at all the projects that we're involved with. As Lou mentioned, specifically in buildings, we have 160 projects that are ongoing at this time. And it will be his task, he will be tasked with making sure that, you know, all the projects move along as intended.

**MR. CALDERONE:**

To be quite frank, we had two projects, Jay Abbot and a guy named Jimmy Mangelli, two guys, we had two that oversaw all construction. They couldn't keep up with it. Jimmy Mangelli retired a year and a half ago. Now we're down to one. It's basically a matter of numbers. One project manager cannot handle all the projects that we have. That's really the bottom line. That's right. They'd also be -- they'd also oversee design.

**LEG. STERN:**

So what you're saying then is the gentleman who is the project manager over the jail isn't just the project manager for the jail, but project manager for many other projects ongoing at the same time.

**MR. CALDERONE:**

That's correct.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Lou, who is the guy that we met when we toured the jail?

**MR. CALDERONE:**

That was Dennis, that was the Clerk of the Works.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Okay. All right. Gail wanted to respond and then the Presiding Officer had a question.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

The only thing I wanted to say was that had we known that there was approval to fill the position and that the department was actively recruiting, we would not highlighted it. I just want to point out that each and every year when we do the Operating Budget, we ask the Executive Budget Office for an update of what positions have you approved for filling. We've done that September 21st and October 7th. To date, we have not received any response.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Mr. Presiding Officer.

**P.O. LINDSAY:**

Just to cut to the chase here. We're trying to give you positions in an energy consultant that probably the executive isn't going to fill, and we're trying to delete a position that he will fill.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

Well, I mean, our question on the energy was more, you know, where the two energy positions came from.

**P.O. LINDSAY:**

I know you're talking about apples and oranges, but the fact of the matter is if we put a position in the budget and it doesn't get filled, I mean, it doesn't mean anything.

**MR. CALDERONE:**

You're right. The last thing on the positions, because it all plays into this, we're also abolishing a Chief Engineer's position that was in the facilities management section. That's where the energy person would be. So, I mean, just numbers, putting away titles, we're losing a body there. So, you know, that's why you've really got to look at the whole picture, big picture look, you know, when you're -- when we, you know, look at all the positions we're abolishing versus what we want to, you know, pick up.

**P.O. LINDSAY:**

Okay.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Legislator Romaine, I know you wanted to go next, but I cut off Legislator Stern, so I'm going to let him finish.

**LEG. STERN:**

I wanted to see what your thoughts were regarding the transfer of IT positions and what affect, if any, that will have on your department.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

We've been advised that the folks from DPW who are now being transferred IT will -- they're primarily -- their primary duties will still be with the Department of Public Works, and there should really be no significant change in that.

**LEG. STERN:**

So not a big issue for you?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

No.

**LEG. STERN:**

Okay. Going to the issue of consultants; consultants versus vacancies, I'm wondering if, Commissioner, you or BRO has any idea -- you know, like you had said, you know, you can look at the numbers, but it really has to be a macro overview to get a true picture of what's going on here. I'm wondering what kind functions, what kind duties are formed by the consultants that even if, you know, there are several other positions that were filled in the department would still be going to outside consultants in the areas of specialization. I know we were talking about the dredging and, you know, that was an issue that we spent a lot of time on.

You know, it seemed to me -- I was able to glean from the conversation that, you know, we just don't have that expertise, that that's the kind of thing that would always go to outside consultants, particularly because of the process that we need to go through and we need specialists to take us through that approval process. I mean, to me that sounds like we would haven't that personnel, you know, even if you started filling, you know, vacancies within the department.

I'm wondering to get a true overview here, you know, outside consultants -- we'd be pursuing outside consultants under any circumstances. Does anybody have a feel as to, even if we fill, you know, certain positions, what the true picture of our reliance on outside consultants would still be?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

Hazarding a guess, I would say that, you know, certainly in issues like dredging, you know, when we had the long term -- Vector long term plan, things of specialty, we will always need those, but even -- even things as -- I don't want to say mundane -- but the general civil engineering aspect, we will always need consulting services to, you know, prepare the plans whether we get 50 -- you know, fill 50 vacancies of the full 200 and change, it's always going to be out there.

You know, we unfortunately -- we did have, you know, the retirements last year and we've had some staff that didn't pass, you know, the provisional testing. You know, we're continually in discussions with the County Exec's Office to try to fill the vacancies that are out there. But I think no matter how many people you get in there, you're still going to have some reliance. Quantifying it, off the top of my head, no, I have no real -- you know, I couldn't even hazard a guess.

**MR. CALDERONE:**

Just to add a little bit more to that, you know, again, construction, you know, there are ebbs and ways, you know, it's an up and down cycle. So sometimes you don't want to have all in-house staff

anyway, because as things slow down, you know, you start looking at, God forbid, layoffs. But my point is even on the construction side of it, you're still going to need construction managers, they basically compliment our Clerks of the Works. You know, construction is so -- so detailed today and so complicated today that you really need, you know, more than one set of eyes on a project. And it just makes the project that much better.

**LEG. STERN:**

Going back to the jail, that's really the origin of my question, why we have a project manager on such an important and such a large scale project that also has other responsibilities over projects. You had mentioned a position in the print shop. I'm wondering, you know, what kind of backlog is there in the print shop? You know, what is the need for filling a vacancy there? What's the real picture there?

**MR. CALDERONE:**

It would definitely help. We have a backlog. Again, that's another cyclical type of thing depending on time of the year, that kind of stuff. We get backlogged, we usually cover it. We've had no problem, I could say that, covering overtime. You know, it's -- could we use the position? Yes. Is it absolutely necessary? In a priority-type of order, I don't think it's our highest priority, and, Gil, you correct  
Me if I'm wrong.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

I agree with Lou on that.

**LEG. STERN:**

Thanks.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

No more Legislative newsletters, that's got to save a lot of printing. All right. Legislator Romaine.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Yes. Just to follow up. I'm just curious about the print shop also. Obviously, there is a backlog from time to time; is that correct?

**MR. CALDERONE:**

That's correct.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Is any work so important that it takes priority over the backlog and gets pushed to the top of the pile? Does a call get made and does certain work get pushed to the top of the pile?

**MR. CALDERONE:**

No. Usually -- no. As far as I know, as work comes in, it's in the same order, it goes out in the same order it comes in.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Good. I may draft legislation to actually codify that, to prevent anyone from jumping ahead of the pile that might have caused the backlog and then saying, "This work has to get done tomorrow. Bring people in on overtime." Was there any instance in the past year where overtime was authorized for the print shop for someone to come in and get something done, like letters to employees that might have been sent by the Executive Branch?

**MR. CALDERONE:**

You mean because of jumping ahead of somebody else?

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Yes.

**MR. CALDERONE:**

Not that I'm aware of.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

There wasn't a request by the Executive Branch to have a letter to be sent to employees that had to be done and you had to bring in people on overtime to get that done?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

Not that I recall.

**MR. CALDERONE:**

I'm serious, Ed, not to my recollection.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Okay. That's okay. I'll provide you the dates and times of the letters. Moving on. Let's talk about snow and ice removal supplies unless that's been addressed. I'm told that there is not enough in the recommended budget for a winter that might be a bad winter for snow and ice removal supplies; is that correct?

**MR. CALDERONE:**

I'm not trying to be funny, but it's the definition of bad winter. You know, as everyone knows here, you know, some winters we come out of the winter, we spent half our budget. Some winters we spend half our budget by the end of -- you know, like, by December 31st. I think we're going into the winter with the appropriate amount, you know, based on just historical data

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

I'm looking at a report from Budget Review that says that you may be \$250,000 short for snow removal supplies. And you're looking at the same report, so, I mean --

**MR. CALDERONE:**

We could very well be. You know, really, it's a crystal ball thing. You know, if someone could tell me how much snow we're going to definitely have --

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

What happens when -- let's say we have -- let's hypothetically say, and I don't like to ask hypothetical questions, but if we had a very bad winter or not even a very bad winter, but let's say an average winter, which I assume Budget Review's recommendation is not based on a bad winter but an average winter; is that correct, Gail?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

It's based on historical experience as well as the department's August update.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

So historical experience. Let's say based on historical experience, Budget Review proves to be correct, and I understand it's not an exact science, but history does give us a guidepost, and we're \$250,000 short, that's a quarter of million. Where would that come from? How would you make that up?

**MR. CALDERONE:**

We'd probably have to come here and beg for the money.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Actually, what would happen is where there might be a surplus during the course of the year, it would be transferred over to cover the expense.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Okay. Let's talk about staffing. You have 191 -- excuse me -- you have 991 authorized positions as of September 20th, 2009; is that correct?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

Correct.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

And 144 or 15 1/2% are vacant. How many of those vacancies -- vacant positions are funded in the budget for which the residents of Suffolk County pay taxes for? Can Budget Review answer that question? Of 144 positions that are vacant, how many are fully funded in the budget where Suffolk County taxpayers are paying taxes for?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

We can look at our turnover savings and give you an idea of how much there is in appropriations to fill existing vacancies.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

What I'd like to know -- if you can't give that to me today, I'd appreciate an e-mail by the end of the week, how much of the 144 positions that are vacant are fully funded in the budget, which means that taxpayers would be paying for those positions but not receiving the services.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

It's not going to be a lot, because in our presentation to Budget and Finance, typically -- turnover savings, which is the money that we save by not filling positions, is relatively low in this -- in the 2010 recommended budget. Typically, Budget Review would be telling you there's 16 to \$20 million to fill vacancies.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

I've got it real simple. It's the 2009 Budget I'm interested in, okay? The 2009, as of September 20th, you indicated there was 144 vacancies. How many of them are funded in the budget on which the tax levy is based, okay; sales tax, whatever, that Suffolk County residents are paying taxes for?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Well, again --

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

If you could get me a number by the end of the week, I would appreciate that. I'm not interested in turnover savings, I'm interested in how much the taxpayers are actually paying for these positions. I assume for the ones that are fully funded and filled, we're being taxed for them. How many of the ones that are vacant are we being taxed for?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Well, we can tell you how many vacancies there are, and we can tell you what portion of that money has now become fund balance to offset taxes in 2010.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Could you do an analysis of the 144 positions?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Sure.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Thank you. And that's all I want to know is how much is being -- how much are taxpayers being taxed for for those positions that are vacant. And I think you understand where I'm going on that

one. Thank you.

To follow up. Okay, we have 991 authorized positions of which 144 are vacant. In 2010, we're going to have a similar number of positions, Gail? Authorized.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

It's going to be 19 less than the 991, which would bring you to 847/

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

So you'd be down to 847?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

Correct.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

And that's sufficient for the work ahead that you have?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

As I stated earlier, we will continue to, you know --

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Do the best you can with what you have. How does this impact on projects and things of this nature with less staffing? The last time I looked at the Capital Program as well as the Operating Program, Public Works was one of the more active departments in County Government. With the diminution of staff, what does that mean in terms of -- I think people are talking about the jail -- this will be my last one.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Legislator Romaine, they just handed it to me with the timer while you were speaking, and I didn't know why they gave it to me. You can speak as long as you like.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

This will be my last question. What I'm concerned about is the impact on the department on projects getting done. We could talk about the County Center, we could talk about jail, we can talk about different road projects. I'm concerned about the Department of Public Works' ability to execute the projects that we have funded in both our capital and our Operating Budgets. I'm concerned about things of that nature. I'm also concerned with the amount of overtime? What is the percentage of overtime that you are dealing with now in your department as -- in terms total salary versus the percentage of overtime that is paid? Gail, can you answer that question? Again, if you could get it to me by the end of the week, I certainly would appreciate that.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

We will check that for you.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Thank you. And lastly, what percentage -- and this is probably a guesstimate that I would ask -- if you could give me one, and if you can't, I fully understand -- what percentage of your work is now done by consultants as opposed to staff?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

Are you speaking about planning or are you speaking about overall?

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Overall. Throughout the department. And if you can't give me a guesstimate, I can understand that. But you understand what my concern is. I'm expressing my concern that as our staff diminishes, we go and we rely on private consultants to do work for us. And having been in

government for a while, obviously there's a symbiotic relationship that sometimes exists between consultants and other aspects of nongovernmental issues that come up; golf outings, et al, etcetera, and I'm concerned about that and how that relates to that and whether there is a deliberate effort to rely more on consultants than experienced staff.

We talked in our Budget Working Group about succession planning. I'm concerned that there is not -- that we are losing enough experienced hands in the department to make sure that the department can adequately evaluate work that is being done. That's my concern. I'll just express that and thank the Chairman for his courtesy.

**MR. CALDERONE:**

Can I just say one thing to address -- you know, before Gil gives you that number, Legislator Romaine, remember, it's a snapshot in time though. That ratio is a moving target depending on the workload.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

I understand that completely. But, you know -- I'll just say this. Having looked back 20-25 years ago, I think that we relied less on consultants to execute work and more on in-house staff. And we had a better handle on Public Works projects. And this is no reflection on your staff, it's that we had a better handle because we had more in-house expertise and we didn't have to rely solely on the judgement of others in the private sector to move public projects forward. That's my concern.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

If I may. With regard to your statement that the choice for consultants might be due to anything other than our need, it is specifically -- we specifically take advantage of their services because of our need. Irrespective of staffing, which has really been in a downward turn for more than a decade, we've been losing people, granted, if you go back -- and I had the privilege of dealing with Public Works back in the '80s, there were significantly more staff, they gave out -- they did a lot more work in-house, but similarly, they didn't do as much work as we're doing right now. We have a huge Capital Program, you know, which is growing as we speak. You know, I just want to make sure that everybody understands the reason we chose consultants is because of their expertise and because of our need.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

I haven't implied otherwise. If other activities happen, they happen. I understand your need for consultants to execute your large variety of projects. I'm just concerned that we don't have enough in-house expertise. And as each year goes by, that expertise diminishes, people retire, vacancies aren't filled. And as a result, the department, I feel, could do better with more in-house people, that we might do a lot more projects at a cheaper cost in house if we had certain expertise that we now are lacking.

I'll give you a perfect example. I think Assistant Civil Engineers, we could certainly use more of in the Department of Public Works. In my frank opinion, I think your department is too large. I think your department should be a Department of Public Works and not a Department of Public Works and General Services. I don't think your department should be involved in purchasing, quite frankly. No offense to yourself, but organizationally, I think it would make you a more effective department. And I think General Services; printing, purchasing, things of that nature, fleet management would be better handled by a General Services Department. But again, that's something that is a prerequisite of the Executive to organize his departments as he sees fit. And I'm not going to challenge that. But I just feel that that more effective in accomplishing your core mission.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

While I won't go into the discussion about whether we should have General Services under us or a separate thing, I would like to, you know, stress that while we agree with a need for additional staffing, we will always need consultants because of their expertise. I don't believe that you'll ever get to a point where you'll enough staff to manage the work that we have right now without the

consultants in the program.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Okay. Thank you. And, Legislator Romaine, let me just say, they handed me the gavel, I wasn't trying to cut you off. I would never do that. Presiding Officer Lindsay wanted a word.

**P.O. LINDSAY:**

How are we doing with the stimulus project, guys?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

The highway construction, we're in very good shape. All our -- all our projects are either underway or have been put out to bid right now.

**P.O. LINDSAY:**

How about the resurfacing of the service road?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

We've awarded -- I know we awarded one, I believe we went out to bid -- Bill. Bill Hillman can tell you about the second. I don't know where we are. I know we went out to bid, I don't know whether we awarded that one as well.

**P.O. LINDSAY:**

I know that we rushed that through trying to get some people back to work. And here we are, we're approaching the winter now and we still haven't started them, you know?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

Yeah. The last one -- the last one was audited. Part of the whole ARRA Program was that, you know, randomly projects were going to be audited. Our project was audited to make sure it met all the Federal standards, and it was found to be fine. And we have gone out to bid with that.

Our other three highway project are underway as we speak. We're now in discussions about what do to with -- you know, we have -- we've gotten such good bids on these projects that we're anticipating doing another project under this. Bill's team, the Highway Engineering, as well as all our staff, have done an incredible job to get, you know, the ARRA projects out as well as everything else we've got going on.

**MR. HILLMAN:**

As the Commissioner said, all four projects have been let. Three of the projects, the two reconstruction jobs on County Road 4, Commack Road; County 67, Motor Parkway have gone out and the contractors have been awarded. They are in the process of mobilizing. So those two jobs in particular, the construction is beginning and -- before the winter.

The one resurfacing job has been awarded. And it's a lot of asphalt, so with the weather coming in, it's probably going to begin in the spring. The other jobs are reconstruction, so drainage, installation and things like that, doing that sort of work now is appropriate. However, a very large resurfacing job, starting them up at this moment probably isn't the wisest move.

**P.O. LINDSAY:**

Didn't we anticipate -- I mean, when the appropriations came through here, we anticipated them being done this summer. Is that -- is the delay as a result of the Federal audit or of us not being able to engineer it or what?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

No. There was never an intention, you know, based on what we knew to be the Federal process, of completing all the projects over the summer. As Bill said, two of the projects are reconstruction, and we anticipate that most likely any of the work would begin -- most of the work would begin next

year. Now, there's the usual shop drawings and everything else that have to be -- all the paperwork that has to be done. The resurfacing, we expected to -- we had hoped to do both of the resurfacing projects; the one on the LIE -- the two on the LIE. The one that was audited did hold up our ability to do it this year.

**P.O. LINDSAY:**

So it wasn't our fault?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

Correct.

**P.O. LINDSAY:**

Because it was portrayed to us that we'd be able to do the resurfacing project this summer.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

Correct.

**P.O. LINDSAY:**

And if I'm not mistaken, that's 20 million plus in roadwork.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

Yeah, between the two of them.

**P.O. LINDSAY:**

It would put a lot of people to work. But that was because of the Federal audit.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

Correct.

**P.O. LINDSAY:**

Okay.

**MR. HILLMAN:**

Yeah. I'd just like to add that we did -- the Highway staff did produce the plans in the timely manner, submitted them to state DOT on time within the schedules. This is just the Federal process for releasing the funds and getting the projects authorized. Ultimately, State DOT and FHWA authorize us to move to construction. We cannot budge until they tell us.

**LEG. STERN:**

In fact, in order to have those projects qualify for Federal stimulus money in the first place, there would have had to have been at a certain point on our end to qualify.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

Correct. What they considered -- what was estimated as -- originally pushed as construction ready really meant that we had to be ready for construction authorization, what the Feds claim as construction authorization by a specific date, which we were.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

I just have a couple of other questions real quick. Just to follow up. Legislator Romaine had asked BRO for a report about the vacancies. I would like that as well, Gail. But I would imagine it would have to also reflect positions that were filled at some point this year and then left, because if the taxpayers were taxed for something that was filled in January but is no longer filled in October, then I think it's important for us to know as part of that report that there was somebody there but they have left and we haven't filled them yet.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

We will give you a copy.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Okay. Thank you. There are a couple of other questions. The budget includes funding for 60 public safety vehicles, is that enough?

**MR. CALDERONE:**

Yeah. We projected that, you know, with the mileages -- you're talking about Public Safety? I don't have it right in front of me.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Well, there's \$1.5 million for vehicles, and I guess the note had indicated at some point that that was for Public Safety.

**MR. CALDERONE:**

Yeah, that's correct. Yeah, that's a sufficient amount of vehicles.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

And I remember this time last year we were talking about excess police vehicles waiting to be put into service, and they're all in service.

**MR. CALDERONE:**

Well, yes, they're all in service, but remember, you know, everybody -- people don't realize there's a three, four month waiting period. You have to have a certain amount of vehicles on the ground ready to be --

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

I understand. That isn't a criticism. We've taken that into account those are vehicles in service.

**MR. CALDERONE:**

Absolutely.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

We talked about the project management unit. My other question was about the red light cameras. There's \$6 million in the County Executive's budget in revenue for that. Where are we in that process? I guess -- I know the RFP was out; is that correct?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

Yes. And we've received -- I believe we've received -- well, I don't know if I can talk about it. We have received bids.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

You've received bids. And is there -- has an open date come? Have you opened them yet?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

We have opened them. They've been --

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

And when do you have to award a contract? Because I don't want to have you talk about things you can't. But when would you hope to award the contract?

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

I believe it's the first of the year we -- well, I'd have to get you the exact date we are looking at.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Okay. But from a departmental perspective, we believe that we can award this contract, and they

can have something in place to meet that revenue projection that's contained in the budget for 2010.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

I believe so, yes.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Okay. And my last question. We talked a lot about outside consultants, and that seems to be the topic of the past several months and I guess the next few weeks too. The budget -- there's two funds, and I was trying to look at this in the budget. Fund 1490 and Fund 1493. 1490 is Public Works Engineering, there's \$6 million. And 1493 is Design and Construction for \$2 million. Is that the outside consultants or is that just the general work that the department is doing? I just pulled it out of the budget, I don't really have a context for it, but. They were lower than last year. I know that. But I don't know what that refers to. I'm assuming it's regular engineering work. Because -- are those payments to people that are bidding the projects that we put in the budget? Fund 1490 and 1493.

**MR. CALDERONE:**

Well, you don't have -- you're talking forty-five sixty, 456? That's fees for services, non employee.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

There's a fees for services that's like \$600,000 in the budget, and then there's this line. Hold on. I'll tell you the line in the budget, because I saw it this morning. It's on Page 884. Let's see, it just says "DPW 1490."

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

It was 1450 did you say?

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

1490.

**COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:**

1490.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

I mean, if you don't have the answer now, that's okay. I'm not suggesting anything. I'm just saying that I heard a lot about how much money we spend on consultants, and the number gets bigger every time I hear it. Gail.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

1490 is the designation for Public Works Engineering. That is the subtotal of all personnel, equipment, supplies, etcetera, for that unit.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Then I withdraw all of that. I understand. Okay.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

1493 also --

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Same thing.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Yeah.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Okay. Thank you very much. All right. Let me see, did I have one more? Oh, Gail, in your report -- and this is just my last question. In your report on Page 72, you're talking about all the funds. Specifically in reference to the Suffolk County Sewer Assessment Stabilization Fund. In the first bullet point -- in the second bullet point, excuse me, you mentioned that the recommended budget does not establish a Suffolk County Sewer Assessment Stabilization Fund, but instead, deposits a quarter cent sales tax in 477 and then transfers money back. And that last sentence of that bullet point says such a treatment does not comply with the legislation. My question would be is it that we didn't give enough money or that there's a fine point in the law that we think we didn't follow?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

It's the flow of the money. I mean, it ends up where it's supposed to, but the -- if you interpret the law literally, the money was supposed to flow through 477, but it doesn't.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Okay. It's a flow, not a total objection?

**MS. VIZZINI:**

Correct.

**CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:**

Okay. All right. I don't have any further questions right now. If anybody else doesn't have any questions, we stand adjourned. Thank you very much, Gail. Thank you very much, Gil.

(\*THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:35 A.M.\*)

{ } DENOTES BEING SPELLED PHONETICALLY