

## **SUFFOLK COUNTY CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION**

### **MINUTES**

A meeting of the Suffolk County Charter Revision Commission was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York on February 7, 2008.

#### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Robert Braun  
Roger Clayman  
Arthur Cliff  
Ronald Devine  
Saul Fenchel  
Victor Fusco  
Kathy Giamo  
Thomas Germano  
Jacqueline Gordon  
Marlene Israel  
Steven Kenny  
Maureen Liccione  
Dennis McCarthy  
Edwin Perez

#### **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

William J. Lindsay, Presiding Officer  
Renee Ortiz, Chief Deputy Clerk  
George Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature  
Gail Vizzini, Director of Budget Review Office  
Terrence G. Pearsall, Chief of Staff of the Legislature  
Christine Malafi, Suffolk County Attorney  
Legislator Lou D'Amaro, Seventeenth District  
Justin Littell, Aide to Leg. D'Amaro  
Joe Dujmic, County Executive Aide  
Neal Capria, Presiding Officer Aide  
Bill Shilling, Presiding Officer Aide

#### **MINUTES TAKEN BY:**

Diana Kraus, Court Stenographer

**(THE MEETING COMMENCED AT 1:56 PM)**

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

I'm going to start. There are a couple of people out of town but there are a few people that said they would be here, they're not here as of yet, which is disappointing, but I know everybody has a grueling schedule so I'm not going to wait for everybody.

This is the first meeting of the Charter Revision Commission. And the Commission is charged with reviewing all the existing provisions of the current Suffolk County Charter and to suggest changes and draft revisions and make any other recommendations you see applicable.

The Commission is expected to hold a minimum of two public hearings where citizens of Suffolk County can make suggestions as to how our charter form of government can be improved. The past Charter Review Commissions have created subcommittees to interview County officials, department heads, etcetera and to research specific areas of government. These committees submitted their findings to the full Commission for discussion and deliberation and throughout the process the Legislature will provide technical assistance and clerical staff support to assist you on your mission.

Our Legislative Counsel's Office and our Budget Review Office will also be available to help. Our Counsel will be in in a few minutes. Our County Attorney, Christine Malafi, is here. She's going to just chat with you a little bit today. And the County Executive was supposed to be here today but he got tied up and he promised me he'd be at the next meeting to have dialogue with you as well.

As the Suffolk County Legislature is committed to reduction in paper use and moves to an aggressive electronic format, you'll find that the current Suffolk County Charter can be assessed on line at any time. That's the reason for the lap tops in front of you. If you see the screen saver on, just touch the pad and the Charter comes right up. The lap tops will be available to you every time you meet. If for some reason you do want a paper copy of the Charter, just let me know before you leave and we'll make sure that you got one. It isn't just you that we're picking on. We're trying to eliminate paper here. We no longer do our agendas in paper. Everything is done electronically. Over the last two years I got a report that we used over four million sheets of paper and we're trying to eliminate that and save a lot of trees and a lot of resources.

On behalf of the citizens of Suffolk County I want to thank you all for volunteering to serve to the Charter Revision Commission. We'll look forward to your report and recommendations.

Right now I have Renee Ortiz, who is our Deputy Clerk for the Legislature; is going to officially swear you in. So, Renee, if you could come forward in the middle of the horseshoe and if everyone could rise and Renee will issue the oath.

**Oath administered by Chief Deputy Clerk Renee Ortiz (to solemnly swear to support the constitution of the United States of America and the constitution of the State of New York and to faithfully discharge the duties of the office as a member of the Suffolk County Charter Revision Commission)**

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

I thought we would start by introducing ourselves to each other and to the people that are in the audience today. And the stenographer asks that you use the microphones when you talk. They're in front of you. There's a little switch on the top. All you have to do is push that forward and your microphone is on.

So we're going to start and go around the horseshoe this way. And I'll start with myself. I'm Bill Lindsay. I'm the Presiding Officer of the Suffolk County Legislature. And I will be chairing the

meeting just for today and then it will be turned over to you folks entirely. If we could start over here with Dennis. If you could use the mike and if you could introduce yourself, you know, where you live in Suffolk County and a very brief synopsis of who you are.

**MR. MC CARTHY:**

Thank you, thank you, Bill. Dennis McCarthy. I'm from Bluepoint. And I served on the last Charter Revision ten years ago now. Very happy to serve again. I was an Assistant Deputy County Executive in the Cohalan, LoGrande and six months of the Halpin administration. So I look forward to serving. Thank you.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Thank you, Dennis, for serving and your experience will be very, very helpful to us. Steve.

**MR. KENNY:**

My name is Steve Kenny. I live in Remsenburg, Town of Southampton. I just term limited out of a position as Councilman in the Town of Southampton. Before that I served as the Planning Board Chairman in the Town of Southampton.

I currently teach Economics at Suffolk County Community College and have served in a variety of boards including the Nature Conservancy and hospital and Cornell Cooperative Extension where I was President. So I have both a good amount of broad experience in attracting non-profits and public agencies in the County. Thank you.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Thank you, Steve, for your service.

Marlene.

**MS. ISRAEL:**

Yeah. My name is Marlene Israel. I'm Vice President of Public Affairs at John T. Mather Memorial Hospital. I live in Mt. Sinai. This is my first public board so I'm delighted to be here. Thank you.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Kathy.

**MS. GIAMO:**

I am Kathy Giamo. I have a history of 35 years in the real estate community. I served as Senior Vice President of a public company Rex and Realty Corporation. I also have served on numerous boards both the Nature Conservancy as well as many not-for-profit. I also served on the transition team of the County Executive Steve Levy and also as Supervisor of the Town of Brookhaven Brian Foley. Right now I am a resident of Hauppauge. I also am -- I have a real estate consulting group.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Vic.

**MR. FUSCO:**

My name is Vic Fusco. I live in Lake Grove, New York. I've lived there for approximately five years. I serve as Chair of the zoning board in Lake Grove, which was my first public service. I serve on a number of community boards including Long Island Occupational Environmental Health Center, the Council for a group called Unsung Heroes, Helping Heroes. I serve on the Lupus Alliance Board, several other boards. I'm an attorney with a practice headquartered in Woodbury, New York. Primary focus is disability. I also do a radio show in Nassau County called Labor Lines.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Thank you, Vic.

Saul.

**MR. FENCHEL:**

My name is Saul Fenchel. I'm a partner of the law firm of Segal, Fenchel, Petty, which is of counsel to a civil law firm Kopel, Martone and Reisman. These firms are concentrated in the areas of tax certiori and condemnation. I've been special counsel to various municipalities. I'm a resident of the Town of Huntington and have been a resident for over 30 years. I've served on the Guide Dog Foundation, the Conservation Board of the Village of Lloyd Harbor and on the Board of The Friends of the Arts. I look very much forward to serving on this board.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Thank you, Saul.

Ron.

**MR. DEVINE:**

My name is Ronny Devine. I reside in the Hamlet of Bayport in the Town of Islip. I presently serve as the Assessor of the Town of Islip for the past nine years. I've also served in different municipal and charitable functions. I have formerly served for nine years in the Suffolk County Industrial Development Agency serving as the Chairman of the agency. I also currently serve as the Chairman of the Islip Housing Authority located in Oakdale. And am currently involved in several different charitable organizations and not-for-profit organizations in Bayport in the Town of Islip. And I appreciate the opportunity to be here and I thank the Presiding Officer. I'm sort of an adversary to my colleague over here Mr. Fenchel who does tax certiori against our town.

**MR. FENCHEL:**

Pleasant colleague.

**MR. DEVINE:**

Pleasant colleague. We'll have fun while we're sitting here. We'll have some fun conversations. Thank you.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Artie Cliff.

**MR. CLIFF:**

Good afternoon. My name is Artie Cliff. I'm a retired sergeant from the Suffolk County Police department 38 years of service. The last 22 of which I was the President of the East Superior Officers Association representing 500 members in bargaining from sergeant up to the ranking chief of the department. I retired in July of '05. I live in Sayville with my wife and my two little ones. And I'm looking forward to this. Thank you, Bill, for selecting me. And I've been on the Suffolk County Salvation Army Advisory Board since 1994.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Roger.

**MR. CLAYMAN:**

I'm Roger Clayman. I'm the Executive Director of the Long Island Federation of Labor. I live in Port Jefferson. We work with local unions in Nassau and Suffolk County and we got involved in public policy in almost all the towns on Long Island and learned a lot of what I know from my wife who is a mayor and we together learned a lot about public policy.

**MR. BRAUN:**

Good afternoon. My name is Bob Braun. I'm a lawyer. My office is right down the road here in Commack. I live in St. James. I'm also a member of the County Planning Commission. And I'm looking forward to serving on this Commission. And I thank the Legislature and the County

Executive for suggesting it. Thank you.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Thank you very much, Robert. And Maureen Liccione.

**MS. LICCIONE:**

My name is Maureen Liccione. I'm a partner in the law firm of Jaspen, Schlessinger, Hoffman. I am special counsel to a number of municipalities in Nassau and Suffolk County. I live in Brightwaters with my husband who's an inspector in the NYPD and my two daughters. I am the former, the immediate past chair of the Bay Shore Brightwaters Summit Council. I'm a board member of the Great South Bay YMCA and I'm a member of the Energeo Partnership class of 2007.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Thank you, Maureen.

I said that I'm going to act as the informal chair today. At the next meeting we would expect you folks to elect a chair to run the Commission over the next year plus whatever it takes in order to complete your work. I'm going to give you an opening and kind of a quick lesson of what's kind of expected of you. I have three different speakers here that'll give you different perspectives of what the Charter Commission should be doing as well as resources for the work ahead of you.

First I'd like to introduce our County Attorney Christine Malafi. I'd be remiss if I didn't point out in the audience is Legislator Lou D'Amaro who is the head of our Ways and Means Committee and has a special interest in your work. And throughout your proceedings you'll see different Legislators stop in to monitor what's going on and to add suggestions or help or whatever, you know. But Christine?

**MS. MALAFI:**

Thank you, Presiding Officer. My name is Christine Malafi. I'm the County Attorney. I run the Department of Law for the County. We are here as legal support for you as a Commission. Once you elect a chairperson, if you have any any legal questions about any ideas that you're discussing, through the chair, we'd appreciate it. You can contact me direct and we will do the legal research for you to ascertain whether or not an idea you're considering is viable. For example if you wanted to combine two elected positions or abolish an elected position or combine departments of the County, we would do the legal research for you to let you know whether or not that was legally available to you so you don't waste a lot of time discussing something that can't be done, for example.

Any other questions that you have we're here to -- with the Counsel to the Legislature here to help you. The Charter -- Suffolk County Charter, as Presiding Officer Lindsay said, is on line. And that's really the best place to get it because it's up to date and it's searchable, also. So if you want to see for example which sections of the law relate to the Treasurer's Office, if you put -- there's a little -- at the bottom there'd be a little blank like a google search, you can put the word in and it'll pop up all the sections that pertain to that.

There's also when you -- if you just go to the Suffolk County home page, [www.suffolkcountyny.gov](http://www.suffolkcountyny.gov), I believe it pops up. And there's a link if you go at the top, it'll say links. You pull that down and it'll say laws. And if you click on that, it will come up. And the search is right there.

On the left side of the screen there's a table of contents. It'll be not only for the Charter but the Charter will be the first thing on the table of contents. If you click the plus sign next to the word Charter, the index for everything that's in the Charter will come up. I'm not trying to be repetitive. And I'm sorry if some of you know this, but I just feel that I just want to let everybody know the Charter of Suffolk County actually just sets up the government of Suffolk County. So that none of the laws of Suffolk County or the way that the policy or the Charter is implemented is anything that you will be looking at as part of this Commission. But it's all there on line for you if you have any questions or if you have any questions about how something in the charter is implemented, we're

more than happy to help you.

If you have any technical questions on how to do a search, we're here for you. My direct line is 853-5677. And when you call just identify yourself as a member of the Charter Review Commission and we're here for you.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Do want to take any questions now?

**MS. MALAFI:**

Sure.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Does anybody have any questions of our County Attorney? Okay, thanks, Christine. Christine, you'll be with us for a few more minutes in case something comes up?

The next person I'd like to bring up is Gail Vizzini. Gail is the head of our Budget Review Office here, which is an independent bipartisan office that really is where all our economists are. What do we have? About a dozen people. That work on every facet of where we spend every dollar in Suffolk County. They evaluate it and assess it and estimate it. And Gail wanted to talk to you as well.

**MS. VIZZINI:**

It's a pleasure to meet you today. At the request of the Presiding Officer I wanted to let you know one or two of the things that have come up during the budget deliberations that we are hopeful the Charter Revision Commission would look at.

One of the first items is the cycle, the budget cycle for the Community College. We are often faced with the dilemma that we complete our budget deliberations regarding the college's budget after the college has to send out the tuition bills. So it results in some additional paper work for them should the tuition be changed by the Board of Trustees either as a result or a consequence of the budgetary actions. So one of the things we actually included in our resolution adopting the last college budget is a provision that could the Charter Commission take a look at this.

As with most problems, as soon as you come up a solution, you've created another problem. So it's not simple because the college budget comes on or about summertime with their fiscal year being based on the state calendar. Other times of year the respective budget offices are engaged in a capital budget review or an operating budget review. So when you look at it, you'll see that there's also a provision for those those things.

The other thing I wanted to mention to you is this morning this very room was used for the first meeting of the Budget Reform Commission. And in the context of the Budget Reform Commission we will be looking at some of the provisions of the Charter. And once you select your Chairperson, I'd be more than happy to convey those specific sections of the Charter that pertain to some of the more mundane budgetary fiscal aspects. The Charter provisions that cover our expenditure cap that require us to have a differentiation between our mandated and discretionary expenditures. And some of the other things that require us to treat our fund balance in the manner that we treat it.

And these are things that, again, as an outgrowth of budget reform are worthy of reviewing. And as you progress in your deliberations, I'd be happy to make you more familiar with those provisions and at best dovetail the work of the two commissions on the budgetary aspect.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

And our last speaker is the Counsel to the Legislature George Nolan.

**MR. NOLAN:**

Good afternoon. I'm really delighted to see that Bayport/Blue Point is so heavily represented on this

Commission. It's good to see that. And Mr. Devine. And I'm also relieved to hear that Christian Malafi's going to be doing all the heavy lifting when it comes to doing the legal work and assisting the Commission. But Bill Lindsay has asked [me|employee|plea] to communicate to you that I am a resource to you; that if I can assist you in any way, I would really like to. I think the Commission -- the Charter really needs a good looking at and some cleaning up and some reorganization in certain instances.

Ms. Vizzini was talking about the budget. I was just reading over article four of the Charter. And I really think it could use [system|some] streamlining and cleaning up and I hope the Commission will do that, but I look forward to working with all of you. Thank you very, very much for volunteering your time to do this on behalf of the County and its people.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

All right. For the most part and, Dennis, is probably very familiar with what I'm about to say, the Charter is a document that for the most part came together piecemeal. And one of the things within the Charter is to review it by an independent commission every ten years to clean it up a little bit, to eliminate contradictions, to correct things that aren't working.

And Gail pointed out something that we do in our budget cycle. In June of every year we address -- the County Executive sends over to us a presentation of the capital budget, our construction program for the following year. It doesn't go into effect until January 1. In August we address the college budget that goes into effect September 1. And one of the suggestions that came up in the budgetary process last year is why can't we swap them? Why can't we address the college budget in June so that we would have the budget complete before the billing goes out to the students for September 1st semester and do the capital budget in August that really doesn't go into effect until January 1st. Just seems to make sense but that's, you know -- little things like that that do not sound very complicated but really cause a great deal of practical difficulty are some of the things that we're looking to evaluate.

Another example and something that will be tossed to you folks is right now as I stand here today, there's a lawsuit over revenue sharing for the east end towns and for the villages, that they don't think that they're getting their fair share of the police -- of the sales tax revenue that's assigned to public safety. And the whole lawsuit is based on one sentence in the Charter that isn't clear. And we're not expecting you folks to solve the lawsuit or to bring the County together. There's a lot of talks going on to try and resolve that, but what we're going to ask you to do is to take a look at the language that's confusing to try and eliminate problems moving into the future. But these are some of -- just a couple of quick examples of some of the things that we'll be asking you to do.

You'll have plenty of helpers, as I said. The County Attorney, the Budget Review Office, the Counsel will be here. The County Executive will have a representative at the meetings. I will have two people from my staff. Neal Capria is right here. He'll be at every one of your meetings. Neal is an attorney that will be of help in your search to revise our Charter. And Bill Shilling is sitting over there. He'll be also here to help you along with that.

In terms of a schedule, what I was hoping to do would be to identify a time and a date every month. Like this is the first Thursday. Is this the first Thursday? Yeah, this is the first Thursday. Is that a good time, bad time? You're going to have to have some public hearings. And the ideal situation would be to have at least one of the public hearings at night. This auditorium is available, you know, unless we have something else going on, but we'll schedule it. Most of the meetings will be here. We do have another auditorium in Riverhead but it's under construction so I do not anticipate that being available until early next year. So for the most part we're going to have to have the meetings here.

But do you want just schedule the next meeting and think about what's a good day for everybody? You want to have some dialogue about it now? You want to try and outline the scope of it at the next meeting to try and figure out how many meetings you need? The last commission, I think,

Dennis, met for two years, right?

**MR. MC CARTHY:**

Yes, that's right, Bill.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

And I don't really know if you need that many meetings, but I don't think until you get into it you'll really be able to identify that.

**MR. MC CARTHY:**

That's right. We had -- we also had a series of public hearings as opposed to just a couple.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Okay.

**MR. MC CARTHY:**

You know, we broke it -- we broke it into almost the -- a couple of the members of the committee would handle -- and we did it throughout the -- we did it throughout the County. And I think we did it because we found that we wanted more exposure. They weren't well attended. But the other reason was the availability of the members of the committee. We thought it was easy to break it up that way. But, no, I think it's something that we should -- the last time around we did extend it, I believe, a bit too long. It's something that should be able to be handled. One thing I might mention at this time, the Planning Department was involved at that time with a lot of the leg work and the formulating of the document. Would that be done -- is that going to be done by [your|you're] staff this time around?

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

[Well,|Well,] the executive branch will be represented here at every meeting. And if you need any input from Planning, we'll be happy to arrange that, I'm sure. We can arrange that. I know reading -- did you all get the [blew|blue] document?

**MR. MC CARTHY:**

Yes.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

The final report of the last commission. And you'll note that, I believe, it was drafted by the Planning Department, the actual wording was. Am I correct?

**MR. MC CARTHY:**

Yes, it was. We had -- the way we did it the last time, which doesn't mean it was the right way but any means, but [we had|wed] somebody almost serve as an Executive Director who is, you know, in the horseshoe all the time. And I believe that was Seth Foreman at the time. And that was very helpful.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Okay.

**MR. MC CARTHY:**

You know. And to dedicate that one staff person because there's things that come up. And then when you have the next get together, he's back with answers and to formulate things that you're going to be thinking about putting into the document. It's absolutely necessary for the reference work to be done as opposed to a variety of different folks, you know.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

[Well,|Well,] I'll be -- Bill Shilling will be my point person here and will be with you every step of the way.

**MR. MC CARTHY:**

That's great. That's great.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Yes, Kathy.

**MS. GIAMO:**

I wanted to ask having read the previous recommendations, how many of those recommendations were actually implemented?

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

I few of them; not all of them.

**MS. GIAMO:**

Also, I just wanted to make an observation myself in the sense of one of the things pointed out in the conclusions of the report was that the next commission which would be our commission is actually the first one of this millennium. And that also in those ten years so many changes would take place in Suffolk. So from my perspective, from almost every aspect that was reviewed the last time, there is many changes that did take place and are different.

One I think probably being one of the most important is the economy; another one being our health care. So what I'm asking is that I think [at this point|tip] we may or may not need to extend this two years, but I believe that we -- what we should do in the first few meetings is sit down and go over what the changes were from the last commission to this commission and review, I think, what the priorities are. And then maybe then we can set the meetings from, you know, how many we have to work with. I mean obviously there are two that are on the board right now that are I think primary.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Well, I think that's an excellent suggestion to move forward. I'm hoping that the folks that aren't here today, I know at least two of them are out of town. But I do expect them back by the beginning of -- by the end of this month so they'll be available if you wanted to set a meeting for next month. And at that time, you know, you all have to elect a chairperson to run the meetings. And I asked both Gail and George to give -- to come forward with a working list of things that they see that you really should look at, that I wouldn't use the word are broke but could use some tweaking.

Simultaneously we are doing a reprinting of the county code which the people that are doing that are going to transform it into an electronic document for us. And they're going to inventory duplications and contradictions so, you know, that will be thrown into the mix as well.

So [we'll|well] get you started with enough things, but you're certainly free to review the document at your leisure and to add, subtract or delete anything that you see there or add a whole [knew|new] section as a suggestion. And your final document will come back to the Legislature for approval.

**MS. GIAMO:**

Are we also not -- are we also not -- we're able to if we need to have information from any of the County departments, we can request relevant information from the Commissioners or people within the department?

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Absolutely, absolutely. And I'll make sure that everybody has my card. And anything that you need to schedule at your meetings, we'll try and do the scheduling through my office in terms of having a specific department or commission or an elected official here to address whatever your concerns are

or answer any questions that you have.

**MS. GIAMO:**

One of the things I neglected to say when we originally spoke and most definitely not the least of which in importance but probably one of the most priorities me is the fact that I am and the members should know the Treasurer of the Suffolk County Industrial Development Agency. And we do meet on Thursdays; the third Thursday of the month. So I'd ask that we work around that.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Well, I'm not locked into any date. You know, I just said this is the first Thursday. If it's a good day, if it's a bad day, you know, the only thing I would ask you to do is to try and stay away from Tuesdays because there's usually legislative meetings on Tuesdays. And the week that we have a Legislative meeting, after the meeting is usually Wednesday, Thursday, Friday is a good time. The week before there's committee meetings in this room. But what I'll do is I'll have my assistant Barbara who you'll deal with probably as much as you'll see me give you an annual calendar of when the auditorium's available. And maybe next month you can identify -- and the only reason I said the first Thursdays is it's easy to remember if it's the same time every month at least for me, anyway, you know.

**MR. MC CARTHY:**

Me, too.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

And it seems to work for me but I'm not the one that has to be accommodated here. You guys are the ones that have to accommodate your schedule. Kathy, do you meet the first Thursday?

**MS. GIAMO:**

No, we actually meet the third Thursday.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Okay. Well, would next month the first Thursday be agreeable to everybody? Same time?

**MR. BRAUN:**

Might it be more convenient to try to have the meetings at noon or so so that it can be, you know, with a lunch hour?

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Fine by us. Is that all right with everybody else?

**MR. BRAUN:**

Dennis, in [your|you're] experience, how long do the meetings run?

**MR. MC CARTHY:**

They would run a couple of hours.

**MR. BRAUN:**

So from noon to two or something like that; is that --

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

I'm sorry, I didn't hear.

**MR. BRAUN:**

My suggestion was that perhaps from noon to two would be a convenient time.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

That's fine by me.

**MS. ISRAEL:**

Some people come from further distances. And breaking it up in the middle of the day is actually more difficult than the end of the day.

**MR. BRAUN:**

Okay. I come about four blocks so.

**MS. GIAMO:**

Could we just work around the first week of March because we kind of all agree on one day -- that first week is the only one I can't make.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Okay.

**MS. GIAMO:**

Because I'm away. But other than that, any other day. So if we can just maybe all agree on one date that we make sure that we're all here together the same time?

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

When is the committee cycle? Is there one meeting in March? I'll go get the calendar. We're just checking to see when the committee cycles are in the month of March. I think the second week is free and if you can do it the second week of March on the Thursday and you -- what was the feeling? At noon or later or what?

**MR. KENNY:**

Later, I think was --

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Later?

**MS. ISRAEL:**

I can't do the second Thursday at all. The first Thursday is fine.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

The third Thursday she can't make it. How about Wednesday?

**MR. BRAUN:**

The first Wednesday of the month is the Planning Commission which is usually in here as well, but the second Wednesday would be okay.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Okay.

**MR. BRAUN:**

Wednesday, I think is the --

**MR. MC CARTHY:**

The 12th.

**MR. BRAUN:**

Yeah, the 12th is right.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

All right. Who is going to be operated on? On the 12th? Then we won't do it the 12th.

That day that we picked is committee week so the auditorium is being used except on Friday the 14th. Is that all right with everybody? Okay, then it's Friday the 14th here. Twelve o'clock did you want to meet? Two. Okay. We'll have a blank calendar that you can look at for everybody and try and set multiple meetings so you can set your schedule well in advance. And at that time you could discuss Dennis' suggestion of breaking up into smaller groups and holding multiple public hearings throughout the County. I don't object to that. The only problem with that, and I found similar things with the Legislature and other commissions is that not everybody hears the testimony from whoever chooses to give it, you know. But if you want to do that, that's fine.

Go ahead, Victor. You have to use the microphone.

**MR. FUSCO:**

I note there's a reporter transcribing. Do we share a copy of the minutes after each meeting? So the hearing minutes would be, I guess, shared with everybody, right? If they weren't there, they would see the minutes of the hearing even if they didn't get a chance to question people.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

What's the time frame that we can get the minutes?

**MS. KRAUS:**

It usually takes two to three weeks for them to get up on the site.

**MR. FUSCO:**

That's quick enough.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

You'll be able to pull them up on line. And we'll have written copies for you if you like as well. So [may be|maybe] you can think about that. If you want to have multiple hearings around the County with subcommittees of the Commission or you want to have two or three with the whole commission.

**MR. FUSCO:**

It just seems to me that with a board this big you're never going to be able to get everybody at the same time.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

No.

**MR. FUSCO:**

And as long as the minutes are available within two or three weeks, I don't really see a problem at all. I mean you're always going to run into one month you're on vacation, one month you're out of town. Somebody's not going to be at a meeting and somebody's not going to be at a hearing. And if it's done by committees, people aren't going to be [there|their] but they may want to know what went on, they may want to read it verbatim and they may just want to read a report from the Committee.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

[Well,|Well,] I think that's something you can discuss next month. It isn't for me to tell you how you want to do it. That's up for you to decide.

**MS. GIAMO:**

Bill, how much time do we have to give on the public hearings? I mean obviously they have to be published.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Well, once you set the public hearings, we'll make sure that they're published. And again, in [your|you're] rules you might want to adopt a time limit. Here for someone who gets up and speaks at a legislative meeting, the speaker's limited to three minutes. If it's a public hearing on a specific bill, it's five minutes. And we have the timer and a gavel and I don't believe that you're going to get that kind of response, but you never know. And you get the wrong person here, they'll talk for an hour if you let them. And I found even the best arguments after three minutes, if you don't make [your|you're] arguments in the first three minutes, you're in trouble.

**MR. BRAUN:**

Question for Christine, I guess. For working sessions, subcommittee meetings, little subcommittee hearings, all open meetings, all apply to all of this?

**MS. MALAFI:**

Yes.

**MR. BRAUN:**

So everything has to be published and available? And we just can't meet in someone's dining room for example?

**MS. MALAFI:**

Cannot.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

No. They wouldn't get into a situation --

**MS. MALAFI:**

They are not decision making but still, the Charter section that creates it should be an open meeting.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Yeah. It should be an open meeting. And you know the public hearings we'll advertise. Your regular meetings, you know, we'll post outside what's going on, but it won't be advertised.

**MR. FUSCO:**

Can we come back to that for a second? I know on our zoning board, if five of us were to go look at something, that be would be a public hearing. But if two of us want to just discuss something, that's really not a problem or send an e-mail back and forth, that type of thing.

**MS. MALAFI:**

That's okay when you're on the zoning board because you can confer to make a decision. You as a body aren't making any decisions; you're just making recommendations so if the two of you would like to discuss or look on the website to see what departments do and have discussions, that's perfectly fine.

**MR. FUSCO:**

Thank you.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Okay. Any other questions? Okay, so next month we're going to meet on the 14th at two o'clock, which is a Friday. And we're going to elect a Chairman and we're going to decide on how -- we're going to decide on a calendar and we're going to decide on how we're going to do the public hearings.

The other problem with too many public hearings all around the County is I got to assign a stenographer to it. And it becomes a little bit problematic for us in terms of our electronics. This paper reduction thing is a great thing but it doesn't make it easy to hold meetings in other venues.

But we can figure that out, I guess. Yes, Dennis?

**MR. MC CARTHY:**

You know, Bill, it might be like the fellow who got the tattoo on his bald forehead, on his bald head. And somebody asked him why he got it and he said it seemed like a good idea at the time. It was New Years Eve 1938, you know. Maybe the public hearings around the County, it was the same thing.

I know that the report that we put out mentioned the fact that it was not -- that the hearings were not well attended. And they were [we'll|well] attended -- they were always attended by the League of Women Voters and the mayors; the village mayors took a particular interest in the goings on of the Charter Revision Commission. But outside of that, there wasn't a lot of interest.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Okay.

**MR. MC CARTHY:**

You know, so if it's questions about coverage for stenographers and things like that, those are very good points.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

We'll work out whatever you guys want to do. [We'll|Well] figure out some way of accommodating whatever you want to do.

Yes, Kathy.

**MS. GIAMO:**

Is there any reason why there would be more than two public hearings one in each -- western Suffolk and eastern Suffolk? And do they deal with all the subjects at once? I mean, what really is the purpose of the public hearing other than they're going to put their input into the commission as a whole?

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Everything that we do in Suffolk County is always open to public attendance and public input. Everyone of our meetings, committee meetings has a public hearing -- has a public portion. Every bill before the Executive signs it has a public hearing. A lot of times it becomes a pro forma type thing where nobody attends.

**MS. GIAMO:**

I mean we're not expected to -- we're not expected to provide them an agenda of the meeting or --

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

No, no no.

**MS. GIAMO:**

Just be available --

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

What happens is usually somebody attends, they have a specific item in the Charter that they would like you folks to look at. All right?

**MR. CLAYMAN:**

Bill?

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Yes, Roger.

**MR. CLAYMAN:**

Is there an organizational chart of Suffolk County government or is it in the Charter itself?

**MS. MALAFI:**

It's on line.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Christine says it's on line but we'll make sure you have that as well.

**MS. MALAFI:**

Also on line at that website, if you go to departments, bring up every department. And each page has a description of what the department does. And on the Legislative portion of the website it will say elected officials, the Legislature site has the same type of thing; Presiding Officer Lindsay's area, it's all there.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

There's a great deal of information on our website. [There|Their] really is. My colleagues would like to put more on, which is something that wouldn't go in the Charter but we're wrestling now with -- we audio stream our meetings now; about video streaming them and put them on public television. It's interesting.

**MS. ISRAEL:**

Can we get a list of the members and their contact information?

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Sure.

**MS. ISRAEL:**

Thank you.

**MS. GIAMO:**

Including e-mail please.

**MS. ISRAEL:**

Yes, that would be good.

**PRESIDING OFFICER LINDSAY:**

Do we have all of that? Okay. They tell me we do have that. And with your permission, we'll contact you to get it. And we'll -- if we have the e-mail addresses, we'll e-mail it to you or we'll mail it.

Okay. Is [there|their] anything else that you would like to -- I know [system|some] of you got your proposed appointment letters six months ago. It took us a little while to get all the appointments filled. And, again, I thank you all for serving and know everybody's really busy and we'll try and do this in an expeditious way and in a way that serves everybody that lives in the County. But again I thank you for [your|you're] service.

If there's nothing else, we stand adjourned.

**(THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 2:20 PM)  
{ } DENOTES SPELLED PHONETICALLY**