

**SENIOR CITIZEN TASK FORCE  
Of the  
Suffolk County Legislature**

**Minutes**

A Meeting of the Senior Citizen Task Force of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Conference Room of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York, on March 13, 2007.

**Members Present:**

Legislator Steven Stern - Chairman

Holly Rhodes-Teague - Director/Office of the Aging

William I. Stoner - Associate State Director/AARP

Pamela Giacoia - Town of Southampton/Director of Senior Services

Amanda Cooke - Town of East Hampton/Department of Human Resources

Susan Harty - Town of Huntington/Director-Senior Citizens Division

Karin Bennett - Town of Shelter Island/Senior Citizens Center Manager

Eugen Pritz - Media Consultant/Department of Health & Human Services

Tanya Gilliard - Town of Babylon

Rita Glasheen - Town of Smithtown/Director-Eugene Cannataro Senior Citizen Center

Emily Chappell - Town of Islip/Director - Department of Human Services

Karen McLaughlin - Town of Southold/Director-Human Resource Center

**Also in Attendance:**

Mary Young - Aide to Legislator Stern

Paul Perillie - Aide to Legislator Cooper

**Minutes Taken By:**

Lucia Braaten - Court Stenographer

**Minutes Transcribed By:**

Kim Castiglione - Legislative Secretary

*(The meeting was called to order at 2:34 P.M.)*

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Okay. I guess we'll get started. I think we're expecting a couple of more Task Force members, but we'll bring them up to date along the way. Thank you everybody for coming once again. I guess before we get started maybe we can once again go around the room and just make some short introductions. I am Suffolk County Legislator Steven Stern. I represent the 16th Legislative District, and it is also my privilege to serve as the Chairman of the Legislature's Veterans and Seniors Committee.

**MR. PRITZ:**

I'm Gene Pritz. I'm on the Office for the Aging, Suffolk County. I don't know where to start. I'm also on the -- it's called Public Broadcasting Advisory Board, and I am with Channel Thirteen and 21. I am also the Director of Community Relations for 50 Plus, the lifestyle newspaper.

**MS. McLAUGHLIN:**

And what do you do in your spare time?

**MR. STONER:**

He volunteers with us.

**MR. PRITZ:**

And Will has just appointed me something at AARP, which I am waiting for the letter.

**MS. McLAUGHLIN:**

Hi. I'm Karen McLaughlin, Director of Human Services for the Town of Southold.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Holly Rhodes-Teague, Director of the Suffolk County Office for the Aging.

**MS. HARTY:**

I'm Sue Harty, Director of the Town of Huntington Senior Division.

**MS. CHAPPEL:**

Emily Chappell, Director of Senior Citizen Services for the Town of Islip.

**MS. GILLIARD:**

I'm Tanya Gilliard, Director of the North Amityville Senior Center in the Town of Babylon.

**MS. COOKE:**

Amanda Cooke, social worker and caseworker in the Town of East Hampton.

**MR. STONER:**

Will Stoner, Associate State Director of AARP.

**MS. BENNETT:**

Karin Bennet, Nutrition Site Manager on Shelter Island.

**MS. GLASHEEN:**

Rita Glasheen, Director, Town of Smithtown.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Welcome.

**MR. PERILLIE:**

I'm Paul Perillie. I'm the Majority Caucus Aide to the Legislature. I work for Steve and the other members of the Democratic Caucus. I'm just sitting in because I'm interested in this task force, so don't mind me.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Don't mind him. I guess we'll get right into some of the items on the agenda. We began our discussion last time of some of the things that we wanted to accomplish as a task force, some of the issues that we wanted to address, some of the information that we wanted to get from experts in the field, both nationally and locally. We also talked about how important it was to hear from the people that are most affected by the policy and the policymakers, and then of course we're Suffolk County seniors.

So the vision of this Task Force was and is to bring in everybody and all stakeholders at all different levels, all different levels of our society, all different levels of age, and all different levels of government to see how we can best come to together to provide, you know, the services and really an overall quality of life for our seniors today and in the future.

We talked about the public hearings that we're going to be holding coming up. Mary, do you want to go -- once again go through the dates and the places that we have right now.

**MS. YOUNG:**

Sure. The first public hearing will be on Tuesday, March 27th, and that will be here at the Legislature, 9:30 to 12:30. The second is Thursday, April 26th, and that is at Riverhead County Center.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

The other Legislature.

**MS. YOUNG:**

The other Legislature. And there'll be two hearings then, 9:30 to 12:30 in the morning and 5:30 to 8:30 in the evening. The third will be at the Suffolk County Community College.

**MS. GLASHEEN:**

I can't hear you. I'm sorry.

**MS. YOUNG:**

Suffolk County Community College.

**MS. GLASHEEN:**

Oh, Suffolk Community College. Sorry.

**MS. YOUNG:**

And that's May 24th, 9:30 to 12:30.

**MS. COOKE:**

Which campus?

**MS. YOUNG:**

Ammerman Campus.

**MS. COOKE:**

Thank you.

**MS. GLASHEEN:**

Ammerman? I have a hearing loss, so if you could talk a little louder.

**MS. YOUNG:**

Okay.

**MS. COOKE:**

Where?

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Selden.

**MS. COOKE:**

The theater in Selden.

**MS. YOUNG:**

Yes. And the fourth we need to discuss.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

The fourth hearing was something that we were still going to discuss because as you can see, and as we discussed last time, what we're trying to do is get diversity, diversity in the times, diversity in the geography, making sure that everybody from the west end has the opportunity to participate, from the east end, from the north shore and the south.

And one of the ideas was to hold the fourth hearing -- the working idea was Seneca Junior High School located in the Town of Islip but it was the very northern end of the -- half of the Town of Islip, you know, up by the Expressway. I think the feeling that I gleaned from our discussion last time was that perhaps we should look at a more south shore location, somewhere at the southern end, maybe at the Town of Islip, might balance out the geography.

I had spoken with Supervisor Nolan a couple of weeks ago, who was excited about the opportunity to host something in the Town of Islip, but I think we needed to get back to the Supervisor to see as a group if that's something that we felt was important and something that we wanted to pursue. Is there anybody that has any comment?

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Steve, did you give any thought to doing one of them at a senior center?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yeah. In fact I think last time -- who was from the Town of the Islip?

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Elizabeth Lorenz was here.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yeah, who had actually suggested, yes, we would love to hold it in the Town of the Islip and, in fact, let's hold it at a senior center in the Town of Islip.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Right.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

So that seemed pretty good.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

It just seems that -- I mean, you don't know what you're going to get for a turnout from seniors, so if you had at least one -- I'm not saying all of them, but at least one at a senior center, maybe it would encourage some participation you might not get otherwise.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yeah. I thought that was a great idea. So everybody likes Islip? Everybody loves Islip. So I guess we will -- Mary will reach out to the Supervisor and to Elizabeth and see what we can coordinate.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Actually, Emily, you want to stay at which part of Islip? I mean, that's one of things.

**MS. CHAPPELL:**

If you want to stay on the very southern shore it would be East Islip, the one at Ockers, which is a little tight.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Ockers is pretty small.

**MS. CHAPPELL:**

And West Islip, which I think would probably -- either East Islip or West Islip, and I'm sure they'll be more than willing to oblige.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

East Islip holds 100?

**MS. CHAPPELL:**

It's not as big as West Islip, but it can hold its fair share of people. I think that's a good site. Either West Islip or East Islip has a wide variety of seniors that attend the center, so either one would be acceptable.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Very good.

**MS. GLASHEEN:**

I have a question. I have a summons for jury and it falls on the 26th of March. Can I send somebody in my stead?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

You can speak with Paul. He'll get you out of that jury summons.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Pick me, pick me.

**MR. PRITZ:**

Aren't you glad you came?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

That is a good -- I'll have to check with Counsel to see whether or not there could be any other substitutions. My guess is probably not, that we can't have a substitution serve, but I will double check.

**MS. GLASHEEN:**

Well, my number may not come up. I just want to know if I could -- okay, that's fine.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

By the way, as we're -- and it's an important point, with those working dates that we have right now, well, I guess the first three are firm dates, so the last one we'll just have to coordinate with the Town of Islip on a firm date. But of the three firm dates that we have right now, is that a problem

for anyone? Does anybody know that off hand?

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

I have the State coming down to look at one of my programs on the 27th so I'm going to have to see if I can -- because I know they're going to Nassau on Monday and they were coming here on Tuesday. I don't know. I'd have to see on that one.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Okay. So, again, other than the fourth session that we'll coordinate, those are the places, those are the times, and we're very excited about the fact that we're looking for a maximum and hopefully we'll get maximum participation by holding them literally all over Suffolk County in all different types of times.

The next item to discuss then, are speakers, those people within the community that we are actually already in the process of inviting. And one of the things that we discussed at our meeting last time was -- I guess the assignment from last time was between then and now to maybe come up with this working list of those stakeholders throughout Suffolk that we would be interested in inviting. Now, we have a list that we're working from, but maybe I'll just throw it open and we can start to throw out some names and some ideas and maybe Mary will go down our working list and see if an invitation has already been extended and if not, then we'll talk about adding to the list.

**MR. PRITZ:**

Steve Englebright, probably number one on your list.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

No, we disinvited that guy. Yes. We've spoken with Steve, and Steve although will not be able to attend the first session, will be joining us for the second one.

**MR. PRITZ:**

Someone from the Department of Health? Doctor David Graham?

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

I don't know if the new person will be in or --

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Right. We now have a new commissioner.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

A new commissioner coming in.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yeah, who may be, may be not going to be confirmed, I guess, at our next general session. I think that's a good idea when the new commissioner is going to be, I guess, comfortable enough to come. Probably we wouldn't expect the commissioner to get in the hot seat at our first session, but maybe --

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Actually, there is a number of County departments that might be, you know, maybe the Planning Department, DSS, Mental Health. You know, you have a number of people who maybe we should look at the -- you know.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

We'll take a look at the department heads, the commissioners.

**MR. PRITZ:**

I have one more. The Chief of Police. I've already spoken to him and asked if he'd be interested

and he said yes.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**  
All right. Very good.

**MR. PRITZ:**  
I don't know whether you know him.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**  
Yeah.

**MR. PRITZ:**  
Bob Moore. And someone from the Veterans Department.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**  
Yeah. We've invited Tom Ronayne, the Director of Veterans Services.

**MR. PRITZ:**  
Okay. One more. How about LIPA?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**  
Yeah, I got to tell you, Gene, I think that's an excellent suggestion. I just spent a couple of hours walking door to door over the past couple of weeks, particularly in senior communities. It's interesting because the last time I had done it last year there were plenty of issues, but it was a wide range of issues. This time around the number one issue that kept coming up over and over again was the LIPA bill.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**  
When you think the surcharge is more than your --

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**  
More.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**  
-- fuel.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**  
It's absurd.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**  
The fuel charge is more than the actual electric and it's absurd.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**  
Yeah. Great idea.

**MR. PRITZ:**  
I know in my community that's the highest -- our highest cost. It's an electric community, but still in all, in the last three months the rates have gone sky-high.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**  
Excellent idea.

**MR. PRITZ:**  
That's my suggestion.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Great.

**MS. McLAUGHLIN:**

Priscilla DeMasi is not here so she did give me two names. Peg Orsino, she's the Executive --

**MS. YOUNG:**

She's been invited.

**MS. McLAUGHLIN:**

Oh, wonderful.

**MS. YOUNG:**

She's coming.

**MS. McLAUGHLIN:**

Louise {Blackburn}. She's Director of Admissions at San Simeone. She's got a lot of insight in caregiving and long-term care. So I have phone numbers.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Great.

**MS. McLAUGHLIN:**

And I came up with three. One is Paul Connor, he is the CEO of Eastern Long Island Hospital way out on the east end. And because it's a small community-based hospital we're seeing a lot of gaps and, you know, they're institutional care, but there's a lot of things that they want to do for the community. So he thinks, you know, he certainly would love to give some type of testimony.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Great.

**MS. McLAUGHLIN:**

Plus they have a psych unit and they are interested at some point to look at some geri-psych issues, so -- and I think that's a lot closer than Stony Brook for at least the east end.

So The other one I thought of, too, is Dr. Laurie {Brightlong}, she's a geriatric psychiatrist. She's a wonderful speaker, very -- if anyone has ever heard her, she's wonderful, quite knowledgeable, a real expert on Alzheimer's and has a real feel for what the needs of the community are, so she'd be dynamic I think, And I have her phone number.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Very good.

**MS. CHAPPELL:**

What is the name of that psychiatrist?

**MS. McLAUGHLIN:**

Dr. Laurie {Brightlong}, and I have her phone number.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

She's been around a long time. She's very good.

**MS. McLAUGHLIN:**

I think that would be good because one of the things we need to talk about was the, you know, mental health, and that's a huge issue we have to address.

Then the last one is we have a gentleman that works in our department, Phillip Beltz, and he

spearheaded the effort on affordable housing so we actually have groundbreaking on the first affordable housing in Southold Town, I think, in many, many years. So our new focus now is senior housing. So we are setting up senior housing forums. We're having one the 22nd at our place and we have a lot of data we're going to share on what seniors are interested in on the North Fork so at least when he comes he can have some evidence based information.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

He'll have something to share with us. Very good.

**MS. McLAUGHLIN:**

I have his phone number for you, too, so you're all set.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Great. Thanks.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

The housing partnership, you know, see if there's anything going on there. Stony Brook had the Geriatric Education Center, the GECs as we all call them. They've been -- I guess there's no funding this year but they're still hanging on by a string. I think maybe they -- they've been doing a lot of education on different health issues with the elderly over the last few years. I think that's another one that we should invite. I have to get their address for you. I also have a lot labels of our contract -- the home care agencies. A lot of them are going to be duplicate because they are here through the towns and stuff. We have all of those that we're giving you. If I think of anyone as we move along, okay?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Thanks.

**MR. PRITZ:**

Holly, you mentioned housing. There's a very interesting program on T.V. this week that Long Island has the lowest rate percentage wise of rentals in the State and possibly in the country. That's both Nassau and Suffolk. There are no rental units or very, very few.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Well, the Housing Partnership has been doing a lot to get home ownership. There's another housing -- I can't think of the name of it. There's another agency that's dealt with housing that works with the reverse mortgages. You might want to get some people from the reverse mortgage community. That's another -- George Roche. I think he's on here.

**MS. McLAUGHLIN:**

I called him today.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

George is coming all four times.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

He'll abuse us every time.

**MS. HARTY:**

I think you already have her, Mary, because I happened to see her today, {Kathy Rosenthal}, who's from the Federation -- FECS. That was a person I was going to seek into, and Gerontology of Long Island, the director there. And those are the two people.

**MS. YOUNG:**

Gerontology of Long Island?

**MS. HARTY:**

I P G or P G I. Holly, you probably know.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Oh, wait.

**MR. PRITZ:**

I P G A.

**MS. HARTY:**

Kathy is, you know, from FECS but the -- yeah, right. Gerontology Association. I'm sorry I didn't write it down, but I'll get it for you and e-mail it for you.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Professions? G P L I? That's Carol Gallagher.

**MS. HARTY:**

Oh, it is. Okay.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

She's on this Task Force.

**MS. HARTY:**

Great.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

And I think that the discussion about NORCs and how it's going in Huntington I think is going to be intriguing and sort of interesting to see how it's going there and how it might be replicated in other towns and so Supervisor Petrone and Councilwoman Jackson have been invited to come and talk about that as well and how it's going in Huntington.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Steve, another one, if you wanted to make nice, is you could invite the new State Director of the Office for Aging just as a, you know, let him know about it, ask him if he wants to come down. Just to make nice.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yep. That's usually not my thing but -- no, excellent suggestion. Yeah, definitely.

**MS. GIACOIA:**

I mean, I have a whole list here of people, so I'll just give it to you, e-mail it to you, from the east end.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Good.

**MS. GIACOIA:**

And, I mean, I don't want to jump ahead, but I see you have the publicity piece here?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yeah.

**MS. GIACOIA:**

Can you give us something that we can begin to distribute?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yeah. That was -- what we're going to distribute was going to depend on the final date and the final location of what we decided today together. But once we have that definitive location and time everything else is ready to go, so then we'll get it out. It's a one page -- a little bit about what we're trying to do and who we're inviting and where and when.

**MS. GIACOIA:**

Yeah, what you want them to come and speak about.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yeah.

**MS. GIACOIA:**

That's what we'll need.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

So we have that. Again, we're just waiting to insert the last location.

**MS. GIACOIA:**

Okay, good. I think you'll get a good response out on the east end. I know you will.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

The organizations that we've been speaking with and the people that I've been speaking with just in their homes and in part of the door to door effort, the response has been great, very excited to have the opportunity to come and speak about these issues and they're grateful when somebody knocks on their door and, you know, we'll speak with them about their concerns and the LIPA bills and this and that.

**MS. GIACOIA:**

Even the caregivers. I've been talking to some of the caregivers. We have several groups and they're looking for an opportunity to come forward and tell a little bit about their story and what they need. So I think you're going to see a good piece of that. We'll bring seniors on the bus for you.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Good.

**MS. CHAPPELL:**

I was asked to compile a list of our 19 senior citizen clubs affiliated with the Town of Islip, the president addresses. I don't know if you wanted to use that for mailings or for -- to have them involved in the hearing.

**MS. YOUNG:**

That's fine.

**MS. CHAPPELL:**

I was also this morning at Probation and I was asked by the Supervisor of the Domestic Violence Unit, because I used to be a Probation Officer I am still somewhat involved with that, and she asked me to become a part of the Elder Abuse Task Force.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Are you talking about the Family Violence Task Force?

**MS. CHAPPELL:**

I believe so.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

There is no strict component to elder abuse there anymore, but there is kind of a sub that's looking at legislation. We just had a meeting today.

**MS. CHAPPELL:**

Okay. I think we might in light of the recent news events that have been unfolding of that woman getting mugged --

**MS. GIACOIA:**

Two of them.

**MS. CHAPPELL:**

Since I been involved in seniors, our direct care, we've made at least 14 to 15 calls for Adult Protective Services. Perhaps if we could get somebody to speak on their behalf. I think it's a very timely and important aspect of getting --

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

What I had just done, was it two sessions ago I think, my Legislative Committee had invited representatives from the Elder Abuse Department of the Police Department and Adult Protective Services and we had representatives to at least begin the discussion of this issue, but to have them come again so that we can all hear what they have to say, I think would be a great idea. So maybe we'll just come up with the same list that we did before. They did a great job. They made a great presentation, I recall, but it would be good for all of us to hear from them again.

**MS. GILLIARD:**

I wasn't at the last meeting so I didn't get the assignment, but I would like to see someone from the Long Island Housing Partnership. That's a big issue at my center, senior housing.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

I think we also heard from Supervisor Bellone that he will be joining us the first sessions.

**MS. COOKE:**

My -- the Director of Human Services from East Hampton, I'm sure she'll want to have input into this, so I'm going to have to get you that later for where I am.

**MR. STONER:**

Paul Arfin, Intergenerational Strategies?

**MS. YOUNG:**

He's coming.

**MR. STONER:**

I thought so. Senior Umbrella Network probably takes into account a number of the groups that are already being invited?

**MS. YOUNG:**

Yes.

**MR. STONER:**

Okay. We have seven chapters, I think, seven in Suffolk County. I can get you the president's names so you can invite them and they can invite their members. And unless I'm missing something, Brookhaven, are they part of this group?

**MS. YOUNG:**

Yes.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yeah. I think -- was the gentleman with us last time?

**MS. YOUNG:**

He's on vacation.

**MR. STONER:**

Okay. They're away. Okay.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

But he was with us, I think, at the Legislative Committee meeting when we were discussing elder abuse. He was with us then.

**MR. STONER:**

Okay. If I think of any more I'll share it.

**MS. BENNETT:**

I brought a list of people from Shelter Island. Basically our Supervisor, Town Board, and then some of the leaders of our senior groups, senior foundations, senior counsel, Director of Senior Services. And then some people who have been involved with senior affairs on Shelter Island for at least 20 years, including the inception of the Nutrition Program and are really still active, are still writing Ed Romaine letters. They never stop. They're like the energizer bunnies. They're wonderful people and they all expressed an interest, very much, in this program that we're doing.

And then I also, I thought it was very important to involve caregivers. I'm trying to get a caregivers group started on Shelter Island because we really need it. It's a big hole for us. And I was thinking about involving, in terms of protection of elderly, a couple of times I've heard someone from ORT, Operation Restore Trust, and they talked a lot about, you know, things with elderly. Maybe somebody from there. I forget the woman who spoke to us.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

That's one of our contractors.

**MS. BENNETT:**

Oh, okay. I was always impressed with their information and protection.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

I don't know who it is that you spoke to but they are one of our contractors.

**MS. BENNETT:**

Okay. And then I also wondered about getting involved with some of the hospital representation in our area. I know one who does a wonderful amount programming is Regina McDonald at Southampton. She runs really good programs on elder health, diabetes, heart health, all kinds of issues that are very, very good. They have really good -- I just think you have to involve that medical end of elderly as well as the mental health. And another part of hospital care are -- is discharge planning. What do they run into when they send these people home and there's no help? How do you figure that out, how do you work with the services in the community to make sure it's a safe return to the home. Maybe it's getting a little too RN end of it, but really. It's important, it's a big piece. And then tying in maybe someone from the Red Cross with emergency services, or, you know, somebody to represent, you know, emergency medical technicians. Some aspect of health on that line. So those are some thoughts.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Good. Thanks.

**MS. BENNETT:**

You're welcome.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Rita?

**MS. GLASHEEN:**

I'm sorry I missed the last meeting. I had the letter and I put it in as March second and I said well, I'm going, see you later, and staff said Rita, it was yesterday, so I apologize. But we did a survey out of our 17 senior citizen clubs, and out of the members, 594 people responded to the survey that you sent us listing all the resolutions and what we have to address and whatever. So the main thing that really took off was adequate senior housing in Smithtown. A lot of people said -- out of the 594, almost 200 said that they weren't aware of any senior citizen housing in Smithtown or there was a waiting list of seven or eight years, and whatever.

Another big one was the -- is housing readily available, and that was out of the 594 there were 378 that said no, there wasn't -- there wasn't enough housing available. And that's where I think your tenancy comes in, where there are no rentals. And I think that's another problem.

Adequate affordable transportation. We have a great transportation system which just does the outer limits of Smithtown. We don't cross the borders, but a lot of people do come by the Suffolk County transit, only because they can't get up early in the morning, that early for -- to be ready at 7:30 in the morning because we do make those routes. So that's another one, adequate and affordable transportation.

Awareness of government programs and services. Three hundred and ninety-five people said that they weren't aware of it. And although we do a lot of outreach and whatever, I don't understand that. I've been in this now -- March 23rd will be my 20 -- 34th year with the senior citizens, and I'm really surprised that all the information that's out there some of them aren't aware of it, and I don't understand it. I haven't figured that one out yet. When I send the club leaders to the clubs and when they come for the Nutrition Program and whatever, we make sure that we have adequate information to give them. We're working on an updated programs and services guide which lists everything. We have to send it to the publisher because our papers are not long enough, so we're working on that.

Long-term health care. That's another thing that 286 people said yes, they were aware of it. Two-hundred and forty said they weren't. So that's our survey and I was rather surprised when I learned that a lot of people just are not aware of what is out there for them. Either they're not interested or they know and they forget and when they get to be our age, maybe that's the reason, I don't know. But it looks like I'm the only senior citizen and this gentlemen right here that are seniors, and maybe because I'm into it for such a long period of time that a lot of things really upset me that there are people out there who aren't aware of it who are entitled to all these benefits. And I think that what we should do is get an elder law attorney. And I know Davidow and Davidow has come to our center many, many times and does a free seminar. I think they are the ones -- what?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

You said David Arfin is not very good.

**MS. GLASHEEN:**

Why, is he a Republican?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

But, yes, George will be joining us. George will do a great job for us. But I think it is an important point. Number one, how do we continue to get the information to the senior citizen community, and their caregivers for that matter, on the available services? And I guess that brings us into our next

topic which is how can we best promote the hearings that are going to be going on over the next couple of months to maximize participation so that we can get the best ideas from everybody throughout the County and start to formulate some of these policies so that we can implement them at the town levels and across, you know, town borders so that, yeah, seniors and their families do have the information that they need. So I guess I'll throw it open to some ideas.

**MR. PRITZ:**

I've offered 50 Plus Lifestyles to list the dates or anything else, even a small story on it. And another thing I offer you, 15 minutes on Channel 21.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Very good.

**MR. PRITZ:**

If you would give me, again, a little bio, not only a bio, but a press release, and I'll talk to the producer. I didn't mention that I'm Associate Producer of 21.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Is March 27th a little too soon since we're just putting these lists together? I mean, are we really going to get some kind of turnout for that one? That's only two weeks away. I'm just a little concerned about that.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

I guess if -- well, first of all, to many of the people on our working list, invitations have already gone out.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Okay.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

So I guess it's really for the general population, and so, yeah, that's why I want to come up with ideas and implement some of them right now. Reaching out to the locals, reaching out to Newsday, if we can get it in the paper right away I would think that a couple of weeks should give us sufficient time. And again, it's just the first meeting. There are three others held and that, I guess, was the idea, was to if you can't make one you have three other opportunities.

**MR. PRITZ:**

I don't think the fact that it's only a couple of weeks away -- because it's the first meeting I think, you know, we should get our feet wet, too, for the first one before we really get involved.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

I don't know if you're doing any type of splash with it, you know, on the first one. You know, if you're expecting to do any type of press on that. With the first meeting usually it's the one we try to get the most press out of it. So if you're not going to get a lot of people at it, it may not --

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Well, we'll -- and again, I think that's for us to hopefully decide how we can use all of our collective efforts over the next couple of weeks to maximize participation at the first one. Some of the things that I had heard thrown around last time were, you know, let's look to the senior centers in the towns and let's let everybody know, you know, if there's two weeks notice and people are coming there for programs anyway and maybe there could be transportation provided by the towns as a way to get a large group there. And again, if it's not -- if it's not possible for that first one they have three other opportunities to participate.

So, I mean, geographically I would say that sure, those in western Suffolk should be given every opportunity to get the information and attend the first one. In the east end we're holding that day,

you know, two a day the following month, so there'll be plenty of time to get the word out, you know, out on the east end. I guess that was the thought. So, again if we can --

**MS. McLAUGHLIN:**

I forgot Sheriff DeMarco. Did you have him on the list?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Oh, very good.

**MS. McLAUGHLIN:**

He's doing a whole program for seniors.

**MS. BENNETT:**

Gene, you do Channel 21 you said. I know out on the east end we use Channel 22, Plum T.V. Now, if you made a tape could it go over to that channel so we would see it? No?

**MR. PRITZ:**

They won't take a tape from another program.

**MS. BENNETT:**

Even something like this?

**MR. PRITZ:**

We're federally funded and the government says we have to do our own or we can exchange within other public broadcasting stations.

**MS. BENNETT:**

Okay.

**MR. PRITZ:**

If they want to give us an idea and they don't have any qualms about our changing it and doing it ourselves -- in other words, if they have a particular topic that you think is great, you know, we'll do it. But we're not allowed by law to take somebody else's tape.

**MS. BENNETT:**

Well, let me ask, if I had -- we have a nice camera set up. The people who work for us are town employees but they get a stipend. If one of them came and wanted to tape and record the program, the first meeting, and then we could play it on Plum T.V. Would that be permitted?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

I think that would be fine.

**MS. BENNETT:**

Okay. Then it would show on Plum T.V. on the east end and that would be maybe very helpful.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

That's great.

**MS. GIACOIA:**

We have 21 on the east end, too.

**MS. BENNETT:**

Yeah. I'm just thinking to use all of it, though, because I know a lot of people who live out at Shelter Island, a lot of them watch 22.

**MR. PRITZ:**

21 does a program Monday through Friday at 7:30 that would just fit in with this topic. Each one -- each day is a different topic. I mean, it's question and answers one week, a program we call Tickets. It used to be called Act Two, the one with Newsday. The same format, but a different name, but that's the kind of thing. And it gets pretty good publicity and, you know, it's all over. As I say, if you give me a couple of ideas I'll give you ten minutes on one of those.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Very good. And I think also when we hold the first one there is going to be, you know, a pretty concerted press outreach, and hopefully all the area outlets will cover that first one as a way to get the word out about the next three. So that's definitely going to be part of the effort. But does that sound like something that is doable with the ten coordinating with the towns and the senior centers and --

**MS. HARTY:**

Yes.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Promoting in a way and even offering a way for people to get there.

**MS. GIACOIA:**

Yes, definitely.

**MR. PRITZ:**

Put it up on the bulletin boards in all the senior centers.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

And again, I think if you look at the map the first session, sure, we should make that effort in Huntington and in Babylon and in --

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Smithtown.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

And in Smithtown. We know that there's going to be one in Islip later on so we can move from area to area with that kind of an effort. It all doesn't have to be done in the next couple of weeks.

**MS. CHAPPELL:**

My concern, and I think it goes along a lot with what you were talking about, I know that our clubs will show up and they're pretty savvy about getting information and accessing services. My concern would be who will represent the seniors that are living in basically squalor who have no -- they have no access to information, possibly through television if we could access them through that. But I'm thinking of a few families who receive our homebound services who will not be able to participate in the hearings because they can't -- they don't have the ability to get out of their home. They're basically stranded there.

**MS. GIACOIA:**

What about the assessors that go out and do the home delivered meals?

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

You can hand flyers out with your meals, too.

**MS. GIACOIA:**

They can do it. My people go into this all the time, and I could get one of them to speak on it, or even any of the directors of the town senior programs. They could speak to that.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

But you could put flyers out with all the meals and that way at least everybody is aware that this meeting is happening because they do have caregivers, most of them. They are supposed to have a safe care plan which means that somebody is looking out for them as well as the town.

**MS. CHAPPELL:**

That's not really who I'm thinking about. I'm thinking about the ones who aren't receiving our services. How do we get information out to the people who don't have information because they don't have someone like the meal provider to give them information? I'm thinking more about the people who have never been able to access services because we don't have bilingual folks going out there. As you know, our minority numbers are very low and I think maybe it's a language barrier or they're not getting the information properly. How would we get the information out to them and give them a forum to speak?

**MS. GIACOIA:**

One of the things that I'm putting on my list is we've opened a dialogue up in Southampton Town with the faith based providers, you know, the faith communities. You know, sometimes they have clients -- you know, not clients, congregants, whatever they call them, that we don't reach. But they're hooked into a faith community so that's something I'm putting on my list, some of the leaders of those where we're not doing it through our services. But I think you're going to reach -- you will hit a certain amount through the town senior services, the Meals on Wheels. You know, you will touch some of those people. And then, you know, maybe we can get the faith based community, too. That's what I'm going to put.

**MR. PRITZ:**

Cablevision has a -- in my area it's channel 18, has a public --

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Public access, yeah.

**MR. PRITZ:**

Public access and I think they require two weeks in advance. And they'll put it on their --

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

In the form of a public service announcement?

**MR. PRITZ:**

Yeah.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

So contact Cablevision.

**MR. PRITZ:**

Mary, it's the kind of thing that fits on one screen on the T.V.

**MS. CHAPPELL:**

Will they put that in Spanish or perhaps another language?

**MR. PRITZ:**

I don't know.

**MS. CHAPPELL:**

You think they might do that?

**MR. PRITZ:**

I don't know. As I say, in this area it's channel 18 and it's part of Cablevision. If you ever watch it, it goes 24 hours a day.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Someone to sign, sign language for those who are hearing impaired.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

If you do any outreach in Spanish.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Best to do that.

**MR. PRITZ:**

The courts provide those people, but I know we do -- the AARP does a driving course and they do it in sign, and we get the sign -- the people who sign from the courts.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

We're going to do someone who signs and Holly's point was someone who can translate into Spanish.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

We can do an outreach to the Spanish speaking. Then you have somebody who can do the translation. Which I don't know if any of us here is Spanish.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Procedurally, and I think that's an important point, I guess how is that done. We can have somebody there who translates in real time to -- how does that work?

**MS. GLASHEEN:**

What about Sylvia Diaz from the Health Department?

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

She's not there anymore.

**MS. GLASHEEN:**

I know she's not there anymore, but she is a good contact person.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

You what, we'll have to talk about that. I have a couple of people in my office, but I don't -- I'm not sure how this works.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

I don't know if it's someone who translates sitting next to someone who needs that kind of translation or is it headphones like at the UN? I don't know procedurally how that's accomplished.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

I don't know if you're going to have a need for it. That's the other part.

**MS. GIACOIA:**

We can put on our lists, you know --

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Special accommodations requests?

**MS. GIACOIA:**

We have all these Hispanic groups and we're going to invite them to come and maybe -- I know you

want to put it on T.V. but I think that's going to be our best link out to the community, is those people that service that Latino community.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

I certainly would like to see something at the end of all of this and when we issue our report to have a Spanish translation made available. That's after the fact. I'd love to have everybody participate who wants to participate and there is that language barrier to do that as well. How best to accomplish that I guess we'll have to discuss.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

You might be able to put on any notice that you put out for special accommodations, whether, you know, it's language or a disability, whatever it is, you know, to please call beforehand so we can make arrangements. That might be a way to -- and then we'd have to figure out how to do that, whatever the accommodation is we would make.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Right. Okay. Other issues or ideas on how we can best get the word out? So we'll make every effort to utilize television and the available channels. We'll be in touch with all of the regional and local press for sure. But I guess I would leave it to everybody at the town level to get it out best in the centers, any other way that the town governments can get that word out.

**MS. GLASHEEN:**

The Spanish newspapers.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

We'll be in touch with the Spanish press as well.

**MR. PRITZ:**

In that regard to get the notice out I think this office should give us so that we're all on the same page.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yes. Again, we had that already prepared. We're just waiting for the last date to put that in there. But, yeah, everybody should use the same information, and I think we've come up with a pretty good, concise but informative explanation of what, where, when and why.

**MS. GIACOIA:**

Could we get that soon? Like could we get, even though the last date isn't on it, could we get it?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yeah. Do we have something now?

**MS. YOUNG:**

I don't have it with me.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

We'll -- do you have everybody's e-mail addresses?

**MS. GIACOIA:**

And can we have your e-mail, too?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yeah. Let's maybe send something around to get everybody's e-mail and Mary can e-mail everybody what we have, just holding for that last date.

**MS. GIACOIA:**

And what is yours, Mary?

**MS. YOUNG:**

Mary.Young@SuffolkCounty.NY.gov.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Okay. Good. All right. So, everybody, I think we're all on the same page as to what needs to be done regarding getting the word out. We'll all continue to brainstorm with those that we work with and see if there's anybody else out there who should be invited to come and share their knowledge.

**MR. PRITZ:**

Do you intend to ask all of these people to be at every meeting, the list of the --

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

No. They'll -- well, the people that have been invited have been invited and also given the information at least on the first two dates, and they have responded that they will attend either one of those dates.

**MR. PRITZ:**

Oh, okay.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

But now we'll have the next couple as well that will go out in this next round. Those invitations will go out and they'll receive the complete information with of all the dates and times and places.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Are you putting something out to the public information?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yeah.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

To Debbie Epple? So when she gets that up then we can steal it and use it for other things?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yeah.

**MS. HARTY:**

I would just mention another publicity angle, and I'm not sure of a cost factor, but I don't know if there's a public service type of thing that -- a company like this, but at grocery stores, you know when you go up to the checkout they have a monitor and they just flash --

**MR. PRITZ:**

Quite expensive.

**MS. HARTY:**

It is.

**MR. PRITZ:**

Quite expensive.

**MS. HARTY:**

I wasn't sure if they might do it as a public service thing.

**MR. PRITZ:**

We can try but I don't -- I have tried for other things and the cost was phenomenal. I'd rather to do it on television than --

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

If people were able to e-mail the information out, you know, in the towns and, you know, the County and stuff I think you'll get a lot of people. Suffolk Community Council maybe, because if you ask them to put something out, Peconic Community Council.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yeah, I think we've been in contact. I would also suggest that the area libraries would be a great way to do it. They can make the postings in the library and they can send it out as a part of their schedules.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Well, Middle Country Library -- who is it? Isn't Middle Country the clearing house for all the libraries?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

There's an organization that does it as well and we've been in contact with them.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Sounds like you covered almost everybody.

**MS. GIACOIA:**

Can you tell us your list so that we don't duplicate?

**MS. YOUNG:**

I can e-mail it to you.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yeah, why don't we do that. Mary is going to e-mail everybody that we've already come up with and the invitations have already gone out, so this way we're all on the same page.

And I guess then lastly I would suggest that because we are a couple of weeks away from our opening hearing, again, I'd like to give everybody the opportunity who sits on our Task Force the opportunity to speak, to introduce yourselves and the organization that you're with and all of the good work that you do and some of the things that you'd like to see this Task Force accomplish in the next several months. And kind of together, you know, set a collective tone for who we are and why we care so much, and what it is, you know, we'd all like to accomplish together.

And, again, there is going to be an awful lot of eyes and ears on what we're doing and looking to us at the end of this process to come up with meaningful suggestions that we can implement at whatever level of government that needs to happen. But as I said last time, you know, the goal here is not to come up with a report that's going to collect dust at the end of the day, but to do something that means something for the senior citizen community, you know, throughout our entire region. So, yeah, start working on some of those thoughts so that when we have the opportunity to introduce ourselves that we can all get our own individual thoughts across as well. All right?

Keep in mind, and I guess this is something that we can throw out there now, this is a public hearing, so, you know, government officials will come and they'll get to say what they're going to say, but as a public hearing, and it's kind of run the way Legislative meetings are, that those stepping up to the mike to share their thoughts with us will have three minutes. Now, if they're coming from an organization, you know, hopefully, if they would like to make a point that's more than three minutes they'll come with prepared, you know, testimony, some kind of a written

statement that they can make as part of the record, but their prepared statements will be three minutes, but those of us on the Task Force will have the opportunity to ask questions. So someone can, I guess, theoretically come in and take up three minutes with their introduction and talk about all the great things that they do and then we can pepper them with questions, you know, thereafter.

I'm going to try and keep the pace moving because hopefully there's an awful lot of people there who would like to be heard so I'll move it along, but I don't want any professionals or those that we invite to be discouraged because it's only going to be three minutes. They'll have three minutes to make their prepared remarks, but then we can ask questions of them along the way.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Have you given any thought to -- I know a lot of times on the State level when they ask for testimony or they are doing a hearing and they ask for testimony that if you are not able to make it you can send in testimony. Is that something you're going to publicize as well?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yeah, and I think that's also a part of the letters that have been going out to everybody.

**MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:**

Okay. Because that's nice for those who can't make it.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

I think that's also in our release as well that's going to be distributed to everybody. It talks about what we're doing, where we're doing it and all of that, and then on the bottom it does say if you are not able to join us, please submit your comments. Okay?

Any other questions? Other issues? A special thank you to those that made the big trip from the east end. I know what a big trip that is and I appreciate your being there. I guess really then our next time together is at our first session really, which is the 27th.

**MS. YOUNG:**

Right.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

March 27th we start at 9:30. I guess I would ask for everybody to be here at nine. Not earlier than that, but nine o'clock so that we can come together one last time with any last minute plans that we might want to make and things that we might want to do. I'd like to start at 9:30 which means all of the members of the Task Force will be sworn in by our County Clerk prior so that we can all be seated at 9:30 and ready to go.

**MS. GLASHEEN:**

What if I have jury duty?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Unless you have jury duty. I know that they're real strict about jury duty and these days I don't know if this session will count as one of the valid excuses.

**MS. GLASHEEN:**

I don't know. I just have to call on the 23rd to find out if my number comes up.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Other issues? Other comments? Very good. Well, looking forward to the 27th and, you know, we'll all do what we can do at our various levels to help publicize, promote, you know, the sessions coming up and to get maximum participation across the board and we'll do some good things.

**MS. GLASHEEN:**

I notice somewhere in the resolutions that you will appoint a secretary to take the minutes and whatever to --

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yeah. Those are appointments that are really ceremonial in nature. We have, you know, wonderful assistants and staff who will actually be taking minutes of everything that's going on.

**MS. GLASHEEN:**

That's my question. Do we get minutes of this meeting?

**MS. BRAATEN:**

I can't write and talk at the same time, but yes.

**MR. STONER:**

You can't? You can't do both?

**MS. BRAATEN:**

I can't do it, no. I have to hear it.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

But yes, everything that we do and say is part of a public record and so after we're done with our public hearings we'll come back together as a Task Force after, I guess, we've all had the opportunity to read through all of the minutes and then start to discuss, you know, how we want to take it all and put it all together and crumble it all up and bring it back out in the form of policy.

**MR. PRITZ:**

A question. You say policy. Do you expect any legislation to come out of this?

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

I do. It's a great question, I do. And personally I would hope that we would come up with several different measures along many different lines. Some things that can be implemented right away in the short-term, other things that will take more long-term planning, you know, specifically on how maybe some of these ideas are implemented at various levels of government. But, yeah, it is my goal, my hope, as I think we all do, that we'll be able to come up with real policy initiatives that will become the basis for legislation. Some things we'll be able to accomplish by legislation, other things will just be more by administrative directive. Other things will just be good ideas that will continue conversations in various areas.

One of the great ideas, I think, that came out of our discussion last time and is one of the things that I've been thinking about for a while now, one of the things I hope we get to develop further is the idea of senior transportation and knowing that it's primarily provided at the town levels, but how can the various towns come together in a more coordinated way through personnel, through transportation through vehicles, through the use of technology, to have better coordination so that if there's a ride that needs to be given out of one town going into another and their isn't the personnel or the vans not available, how we can rely on each other at all these various levels to maybe pick up the slack and do that in a coordinated and even more formal way.

So that's just an example, that's not legislation, that's not administrative directive. That's just good conversations, you know, with good forward thinking people who have responsibility to serve of all seniors and just coming up with good ideas and implementing them.

**MS. CHAPPELL:**

And if they buy into this club idea there's federal dollars so let's go. Get on the bandwagon.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Exactly. I'd really like to develop that in a meaningful way.

**MS. McLAUGHLIN:**

I approach on that, Steve, would be -- one of the biggest drawbacks is we go all the way to Stony Brook. We cross town lines. But if I were to have to pick someone up in Riverhead, for example, the issue -- that's not my -- I serve residents of Southold Town.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Yeah.

**MS. McLAUGHLIN:**

Now, the town just gave me a little wiggle room in a program where we have availability to let outside towns people use our program if we have spaces available. We don't restrict the County Nutrition Programs, but with transportation the big question I get is insurance, so maybe it might come down to some kind of incentives with the towns with some type of insurance like a rider, because --

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Pooling their insurance resources, sure.

**MS. McLAUGHLIN:**

Because, I mean, if we are going right to Riverhead, we could pick somebody up. If two people are going to Stony Brook it makes no sense not to.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Exactly. And I think I mentioned this last time, I mean, hopefully I have learned a lot of things over this past year. But one thing I've learned and take to heart everyday is that it's -- you can look at a map and you see ten conveniently marked off boxes, but when you go out there in the real world, those lines aren't there. You know, people don't care about what side of the town line they live on. They have real issues and real problems and sitting at this level of government I guess I have the -- I'm fortunate to take a more regional look at how things operate and know that of course you can't get anything done without the cooperation of the various towns. But we can have great ideas at other levels of government and act kind of as a resource and as a conduit for bringing, you know, of the various entities together to formulate, you know, more regional policy, whether that's in development or transportation or access to care.

And I think that, as the County Executive likes to say, the days of balkanization among the towns is over and we have to think much more regionally in our approach to how we provide services. And so that, for me anyway, is going to be an underlying theme here as we go forward and discuss all these individual issues.

**MR. PRITZ:**

It is very important in transportation especially.

**CHAIRMAN STERN:**

Exactly. All right. Well, thank you everybody for being here and I look forward to seeing everybody on the 27th.

**(The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 P.M.)**

**{ } Indicates Spelled Phonetically**