

**SUFFOLK COUNTY VANDERBILT MUSEUM**

**OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

**Minutes**

The Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Oversight Committee's Meeting was held at the William H. Rogers Legislative Building in Smithtown, New York, on Tuesday, February 17, 2009, at 11:00 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Terrence Pearsall, Chairman, Representing the Presiding Officer  
James Morgo, Representing the County Executive  
Barbara LoMoriello, Representing the Chair of the Parks Committee  
Linda Bay, Representing the Minority Leader  
Lance Reinheimer, Representing the Budget Review Office  
Neil Toomb, Representing the Budget Office

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Legislator Vilorio-Fisher, Legislative District No. 5  
Michael Pitcher, Legislative Aide to Presiding Officer Lindsay  
Steven Gittelman, President of the Board, SC Vanderbilt Museum  
Carol Hart, Executive Director, SC Vanderbilt Museum  
Barbara Oster, Business Manager, SC Vanderbilt Museum  
Michael DeLuise, Treasurer of Board, SC Vanderbilt Museum  
Debbie McGee, Association of Municipal Employees  
Rick Brand, Newsday

**MINUTES TAKEN BY:**

Alison Mahoney, Court Stenographer

**MINUTES TRANSCRIBED BY:**

Kim Castiglione, Legislative Secretary

***(THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 11:12 A.M.)***

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Good morning. Let me welcome you to the Vanderbilt Oversight Committee. Let me introduce the members to you. My name is Terrence Pearsall. I'm the Chief of Staff to the Presiding Officer and Chairman of this Committee. To my immediate right is Lance Reinheimer, who is with the Budget Review Office; Linda Bay, with the Office of the Minority Leader. To my left, Barbara LoMoriello, representing Legislator Vivian Vilorio-Fisher in the Parks Committee, and from the County Executive's Office, Neil Toomb. We're expecting Jim Morgo, who is also a member, to be here shortly.

I sent a letter earlier, a couple of weeks ago, to Carol Hart outlining many questions that this committee had and were derived from the organizational meeting we had two weeks ago. I think we'll use that letter basically as the agenda for this meeting.

One of the first things on that agenda dealt with job descriptions of all the full-time employees. Do you have those available for us, Carol?

**MS. HART:**

Yes, I do.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Okay. Not that we'll look at them today, just if you leave them with us. We'll discuss that at our next meeting. You can just leave them with Alison.

**MS. HART:**

There have been some changes in the full-time staff in the last couple of weeks.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Okay. You want to point those out to us now or?

**MS. HART:**

Sure, if this is a good time. I included the job descriptions of the current full-time staff as well as two full-time positions that within the last two weeks have been eliminated. The gift shop supervisor position, which was full-time, is now a part-time position. The human resource/security person is now a part-time position. So these are very recent changes. In both cases the people resigned. The gift shop person will continue for now as part-time, the full-time human resource/security person has resigned completely. Rather than filling positions I do feel we can do what we need to do using part-time personnel.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Thank you. The next item on the agenda is the dinosaur exhibit. There was considerable discussion and questions came up at our organizational meeting of the oversight committee, and Steve I will turn to you if you want to discuss the history.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

I don't know the questions you had, so if you would be kind enough just to hit me with 100 questions, I'll give you 99 answers.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Sure. Okay. It is requested that a breakdown of all costs to transport, accommodate, store and display the dinosaur exhibit since arrival at the Vanderbilt in early 2001 be made available. Also, the amount of revenue that the dinosaur exhibit has generated for the museum.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

I've been just handed a spreadsheet. Do they have that?

**MS. OSTER:**

No.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

No? Okay. Let me give you an overview.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Sure.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Because I do think you need that. Otherwise, this doesn't -- it doesn't fit the proper context.

(Jim Morgo entered at 11:16 a.m.)

In 1993, between 1993 and 1997, I was the President of a society called the Dinosaur Society. The Dinosaur Society was a tiny, little not-for-profit that was privileged to have cooperation from Universal Studios in terms of putting together a very important dinosaur exhibit that traveled the world. In '97, when my second term as President was over, I was already President of the Board of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum. It was too much; I couldn't do both. Between '97 and approximately 2000, I really couldn't tell you what happened in the Dinosaur Society; I wasn't there. The fellow who took it over was Jack Horner. Jack Horner is an extraordinarily well-known paleontologist. He's written many, many books and he works out in I think Colorado.

The Dinosaur Society is a 501(3)(C), and in putting together these two exhibits -- there were two of them. They used components from the movie Jurassic Park. It opened in '93 at the American Museum of Natural History and was globally probably the most popular exhibit in the history of traveling exhibits around the world.

In the three year separation between my being in it and not, it seemed as if the Dinosaur Society seemed to disintegrate, it fell apart. And the dinosaur exhibit was picked away because I believe that Universal took most of the specimens back. It was a very large exhibit. I think it was up to 14,000 feet at one point. So the exhibit was picked apart and many of the Universal properties, for example, the incubator from the original movie, that kind of thing.

(Legislator Vilorio-Fisher entered at 11:18 a.m.)

The heaving Triceratops. I don't know if people have seen the movie, but you might recall some of these things. They were all in the exhibit. The amber, that was in the exhibit -- all of these things, the storyboards and stuff, were taken back by Universal Studios because they were opening up Dinosaur Park in Universal down in Florida and they were using some of these components.

I was no longer involved, and then I heard that the exhibit was then residing in a warehouse somewhere out in the Midwest not in use and suggested not that it go to the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum, but that it go to the New York Institute of Technology, which had a vacant building on Carleton Avenue. And I got Bill Rogers to join me in that effort. He was not then a Trustee.

It turns out that the building at the New York Institute of Technology was not appropriate and the dinosaurs were still -- had been brought up here to be put into that exhibit. And we had by then made an arrangement that historically goes back to Bill donating a million dollars to the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum to create an exhibit that would go into the then renovated seaplane hangar. And the timing on renovating the seaplane hangar was on paper. Please, we understand how things change, but it was supposed to be finished in 2003.

So we now had an interesting opportunity. We had the remnants of an exhibit that was about six or seven thousand square feet, okay, made an excellent traveling exhibit, and we could take the revenues from that traveling exhibit and create a profit for the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum and share that profit with the Dinosaur Society. The mission of the Dinosaur Society is to donate funds to dinosaur sites. And, in fact, on the seven continents in the world, six of those continents actually had scientists working around the world, two of whom decided to name dinosaurs after me. So it was -- it was a nice thing. Believe it or not, there is a Karongasaurus Gittelmani buried somewhere out there.

This is the history, and maybe, you know -- again, so we have this opportunity. We're going to build this wonderful exhibit that's going to go into the seaplane hangar, but we got three years and we got nothing to do with it. So we go into a contract with the New York Institute of Technology and that contract provides for an exhibit that will open, how serendipitously, in the summer of 2001 around July or August. Those of you who were here all remember something very tragic happened on September 11, 2001 right in the middle of the exhibit. And what happened was is that Bill Rogers gave, according to these numbers in 2001, \$125,000 to help start the traveling exhibit, which was going to be at New York Institute of Technology as its first venue. And a dome, a large dome was purchased, an inflatable dome, and the exhibit was, you know, transported, brought to New York Institute of Technology under the aegis of the Vanderbilt Museum, where I believe -- and there are contracts. I believe there's a 50-50% split.

So here was no cost to the museum, no involvement of museum staff. You're going to get a revenue stream for three years on a traveling exhibit, and I had experience on traveling exhibits because I had traveled the world's largest dinosaur exhibit at the time, the most successful one. I had the contracts, I knew how to do it. Three months at a venue, one month travel, three months at a venue. We felt we could generate perhaps a \$100,000 a year for the museum. It was fiasco, okay?

What happens is, is that 9-11 came in the middle of the venue. Everything -- that exhibit did not make money, but the contract with New York Institute of Technology called for a return of all the money that we gave them, actually 75 -- it was \$50,000 was in the agreement and another 25,000 we gave them additional. So \$75,000, which I don't know if it appears on this, I have never seen this sheet, okay. Seventy-five thousand dollars was returned to the museum, but instead of going into the Bill Rogers fund, it went into the general operating funds. Now is that on here someplace?

**MS. HART:**

Yes.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Yes, in fact it is. In 2003 and 2004 you can see New York Institute of Technology settlement. They settled with us for a \$75,000 return on the \$125,000 investment. So now, even though the museum has not put forward any funds, it has \$75,000 in hard cash in its coffers. It's ahead by \$75,000, but that's not enough because in addition to that, the museum also received the components of the exhibit which were at the time in order to make the exhibit more interactive. I'm very interested in interactive education for children. I know what makes an exhibit work. I had done it successfully. We hired Mr. Wizard. How many of you remember Mr. Wizard? There you go. Mr. Wizard has a museum preparation company, so Mr. Wizard prepared interactive components that would be used as part of the traveling exhibit.

What were they? Okay, they were components like if you're a predator how do you want to see things, but if you are a prey, how do you want to see things? So we had things set up so that when you looked through something you looked bifocal and your vision was cut off if you are a predator, because a predator wants to spot you and chase you down. He's not worried about getting eaten, he doesn't have to see 360 degrees. But another dinosaur might want to have his eyes on the side of his head. How does it feel to look out the sides of your head? So we had actual interactives that made it possible for children to walk up and see what it looked like to look out the sides of their

heads. Then we told the story of how an antelope might look one way and how a lion might look another way. It's not all about dinosaurs.

Then we had things about leverage, okay, because it's about the physics of things, you know? What kind of dinosaur runs fast? One that is maybe running away, one that's maybe chasing down its prey. What kind of a cat runs fast? Maybe a cheetah runs fast, but a lion might sit and wait. Is the leverage different? And we had interactives built to show that if you put on things and you made your legs longer could you run faster and could you get -- that's what we did, all right? Those interactives were returned to the museum. They cost about \$15,000. There were other things that were returned to the museum, things like generators, the dome, whether the dome was in usable condition or not I can't tell you. I think they still have the dome, okay?

We estimate somewhere between 25 and \$50,000 was returned to the museum. So before you know it, and I don't see it on this line at all, okay, the \$125,000 that Bill Rogers invests is now returned to the museum. Either in cash, \$75,000, which you see in 2003 and 2004 in settlement with New York Tech, or in goods.

In addition to that, some of the materials that had been bought with the money that Bill had given, which was stuff for the gift shop to be in the exhibit, were also returned, but they don't appear in your financials because, quite frankly, as Lance can tell you, sometimes things go out under one column and come back under another. Goods and services coming back in crates in a truck -- rather stuff coming back to the gift shop isn't necessarily going to hit Barbara's books, not in the same way.

Now, the auditors picked it up, but okay, so here we go. Now if you look at this, so what's going to happen with this exhibit? It is now sitting in trucks at the museum parking lot, no good. Okay. It was supposed to be traveling around the country, but no good, it fell apart. The folks we made a deal with fell apart, it didn't work, so what did we do? Bill then said okay, maybe it would be good if we just -- you know, things were moving slow, okay, the waterfront wasn't advancing, so what if we built a temporary structure. Temporary, please, with a capital T. Temporary structure outside in a very innocuous place behind the planetarium, where I doubt any of you who have been to the museum have noticed it if you just went on the museum grounds. It doesn't interfere, it's not obnoxious. It was in a place where things were being stored, all right, and we built a building to house the remaining exhibit so we could get it out of the truck bodies that were storing it. This is a big exhibit and we didn't want to pay rental on the truck, so Bill donated the money to build the building.

Okay. As things go, the original building I believe was supposed to be like 35, \$40,000, which would have made sense because now we were to avoid the storage costs, we could wait until you finish the waterfront, we could then do programming in the building. We were going to connect the HVAC from the planetarium to this temporary building because they're right next to each other. Oops. It turns out when -- I don't know how that plan came together, I don't know everything that goes on in the museum, but that particular component, that's what I was told, it didn't happen. We were told no, the HVAC from the planetarium can't handle the load. Okay.

The next thing we were told is that it's not really a temporary building, how long do you plan to leave it up. Well, we're leaving it up until you finish the waterfront. Well, is that six months, are you going to take it down once a year? No, it's a metal building. We are going to leave it up, we have an exhibit inside. Well, the exhibit is so big we can't -- we have a full sized Tyrannosaurus Rex that -- I mean, John Cooper was there yesterday because he said, "Do you really have it?" I said, "Yeah, we really have it." Okay. The Tyrannosaurus Rex goes from that medallion probably behind me, it's full size, state of the art, cost \$65,000 to put together in 1993 dollars and it was overseen by one of the world's experts in T-Rex, all right. So this T-Rex is outside of the building. The building doesn't hold it, but the kids can go in and see and interact with the exhibit. It's pretty good. The problem is is that we then have to stabilize the exhibit according to County standards. That costs another 20, \$25,000. Bill put up every nickel, all right, nothing came out of museum

pockets, period.

So if you look at that, you see now that in 2002 \$35,000 appears. There's an expenditure of \$56,000, and then another \$75,000 appears in 2003. So remember now, the museum has \$75,000, which is gone around, if you will, not showing. These are his contributions. You get \$75,000 in cash, maybe at 30, \$35,000 in hard goods, and now you got a building. The exhibit goes into the building. So now what happens? Okay? Why isn't the exhibit a smashing success? Last I recall there was an oil -- a heating crisis and we had oil at that time, so now that we built the building and we put in its own heating system, we couldn't afford to heat it. That's what happened. So we were unable to use the exhibit in the winter months as much as we would have liked to. All right?

Now, in terms of what happened, you can see here that Bill in the top line gave \$315,000. What you're calling the dinosaur exhibit totals 279. I don't know how that's possible, but it totals 279. But in reality you did get \$75,000 in cash back, which I would take out of that 279 and make it like 204. Is that correct?

**MS. OSTER:**

Yeah. He forgave the debt.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Oh, by the way. The 75 -- as the money came back it was supposed to go back into the dedicated account. That money was used to support the museum for general operating. It was used for cash flow purposes. It was not used for any other purpose other than what, paying bills?

**MS. OSTER:**

Paying bills.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Paying bills. So in reality you had considerably less than that -- this line. This line is very misleading. But Bill kept giving money year after year. The expenses, I'm looking at this now, the expenses for the dino programs, revenue, general admission -- no, wait, I'm sorry. There shouldn't really be -- is this the expense line here?

**MS. OSTER:**

Yes.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Okay. So if you see 2005, six, seven, eight, the expenses are nothing. Why? You have an exhibit standing there that all you have to do is take children into. You don't have to heat it during the spring and summer months, and it doesn't cost you anything. The exhibit is not owned by me. It is not owned by Bill Rogers. It's owned by a 501(3)(C) not-for-profit registered at the State of New York by the Department of Regents.

Now, then I guess you have a line here which shows revenue and it's showing approximately \$39,000 in revenue. If you want to subtract that from the total you could, but on the bottom line is I also think that this exhibit was open to the public in many occasions so that it was a free asset. So when you bought a ticket, just like you could walk the grounds, you could also go into the dinosaur exhibit. We also have birthday -- when was the last birthday party?

**MS. HART:**

Last Saturday.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Saturday. I want in the exhibit yesterday, all right. Jon Cooper and I went in because Jon -- he wanted to know. So Jon and I went in and he brought his kids, we did a tour, the exhibit is up and functioning and I welcome you to come take a look at it today.

Now, in terms of what do I see is the future for the exhibit. You have a perfectly usable building that you could use for storing building and equipment. You can use it for putting temporary exhibits in. If you don't like this exhibit, then I recommend that the County Attorney sit down with the records of whatever we have on the Dinosaur Society. The Dinosaur Society could be liquidated. The Dinosaur Society's mission could be considered. We could appeal to the Attorney General and liquidate the dinosaur exhibit and then do some kind of a revenue split, depending upon whatever is considered fair by someone other than me. And you have a T-Rex that costs \$65,000, you have five Deinonicus, each of which cost five -- \$25,000 apiece -- just for the licenses. You have a full size Brachiosaurus, a full size Allosaurus, a full size Albertosaurus. These are big dinosaurs.

I don't know what the market is for them today, but you might have three or \$400,000 in today's market. You might. Please don't nail me to the wall because -- and I'm exact. I'm not in the business of buying and selling dinosaur bones. And they are not real, they're fiberglass, and you have a gorgeous T-Rex. It's absolutely beautiful. Many museums would be proud to have it.

So if it was understood, if it came down to it that okay, fine, we don't want this at the museum, what do we do with it, the Dinosaur Society is as far as -- and I'm on the board, Bill's on the Board of the Dinosaur Society, because it was basically surrendered to us, all right.

And by the way, I did contribute considerable funds to make this happen, all right, and I figured out why you can't find it in your books, because I settled the debts of the Dinosaur Society so that it could come to the museum with no debt. That cost me I believe, I can check, between 35 and \$70,000. So as far as the dinosaur exhibit goes, my God, it's an asset. If you don't want it, then let's sell it.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Steve, thank you. We were looking for the background. I think you gave us an awful lot of background on the dinosaurs that aren't reflected in the minutes of the Vanderbilt.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

I do have one comment to make, though. I just wish we hadn't, you know, sent Bill Rogers a letter. The man is 89 years old, and I realize that you need information, but sending him a letter that to him he looks like he's being investigated, okay. He received a copy of this memo and the way it's written is, is you're looking into his contributions. He's a contributor and he still looks upon the remaining \$700,000 as an obligation. And what we just basically -- and by the way, he just gave \$30,000 for the audio tour and he's prepared to pay the balance of the audio tour, okay, and here we are telling a major contributor oh, by the way, we're investigating you.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

The letter went to all the Trustees.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

I understand that. It's just a price that maybe we can't afford to pay right now.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Legislator Viloría-Fisher has joined us. Do you have any questions?

**D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:**

No, I'm just listening right now.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Okay. Linda?

**MS. BAY:**

No.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Barbara?

**MS. LoMORIELLO:**

No.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Neil?

**MR. TOOMB:**

The only question I would have is who else is on the board of the LLC of the dinosaur 501(C)?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

I believe Ray Ann Havasy is.

**MR. TOOMB:**

And yourself?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Myself, Bill Rogers. I don't think tax returns have been filed for six or more years, okay. It's an inactive society whose only point of existence is the fact that the Vanderbilt Museum is using the dinosaurs.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Jim.

**COMMISSIONER MORGGO:**

Hi, Steve. The name of the registered 501(C)(3) is the Dinosaur Society?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Yeah.

**D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Terry, I do have a question.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Sure.

**D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Yeah, I apologize that I came a little bit late, so you might have explained this. But if the dinosaurs belong to the Dinosaur Society, how could the Vanderbilt sell them?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

What I'm saying is, and I'm not a lawyer and I have not -- I'm being straight -- have not investigated this, do not have the records. Ray Ann has the records, okay, I don't have the records, okay. I'm looking at a society that is essentially inactive, hasn't filed tax returns for half a dozen years. Okay. Maybe the -- some understanding -- first of all, I feel it would be a reasonable thing to say that the assets could be transferred to the museum since the museum has basically had them, okay. And that would always have been the intent, was for the museum. You know, if the Dinosaur Society ceases to exist, it's for children, and the Vanderbilt is for children, and so the missions are very parallel. So why can't the Attorney General just let one not-for-profit transfer it to another not-for-profit? I guess if your intent is to liquidate it that might be complicated, okay.

So if you like the exhibit and you feel it's a revenue generating thing, and it could be better used, trust me, it could be better used, okay. I just feel that in time it could be -- why not? Certainly it's

inactive. You know, and there's -- nobody has any personal stake. You never know, they can come out of the woodwork.

**D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Can you just -- so can kids go in and see the museum -- the dinosaurs now?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

They did yesterday.

**D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:**

They did yesterday. Are the interactives in place?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

No. And to me -- you know --

**D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Now, you said they did yesterday, but is that an ordinary part of the museum tour? Because I couldn't remember that.

**MS. HART:**

During the winter generally it's closed for the holiday break and this week we do have it open. It's not heated, so you go out, you know, but it is open as part of your general admission, and when we notice families with young children --

**D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Oh, it is. Yeah, I just didn't -- I thought it was closed, but maybe I've just been there during the winter most times. Okay. And in the summer it is open. And the interactives are not operating why?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

You know, the interactives intellectually required -- you had to be into it. You know, you really had to be -- you had to say well, I really cared how a dinosaur ran and I really cared how it looked around. I think that one of the failures that I had in transferring this over as an asset to the institution is that I didn't spend a couple of weeks with people saying this is how you use this stuff, folks. But, you know, there was a plan.

**D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Okay, because interactives is the way most museums have moved. When my kids even go to Bronx Zoo I remember them putting on the ears to listen to the way the fox was able to hear.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Absolutely. Right.

**D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:**

And when you were talking about the gait of different animals, you know, this is how far you'd go if you had the muscles of a rabbit jumping, you know, that kind of thing.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Right.

**D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:**

So interactives are very, very -- you know, the Ben Franklin Museum in Philadelphia, etcetera. Institute, rather.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

The whole Dinosaur Society, I mean, look, you know, I don't even know what -- if we're working as a team --

**D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:**

What would it take, though, if it were to be seen as a revenue stream? What would it take to put -- get the interactives in place so that it could be a viable exhibit?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Probably half of them have been destroyed because they weren't understood, okay. There may be -- I'm just guessing, okay? This is all discussion, I know I'm on the record. It may be an uncomfortable thing for me to do, but I just think that it would -- if I had the interactives in a pile I could figure out the interactives for folks and I could help them build programs out of. One of the problems that exists is sometimes you bring something and you don't -- there was a plan, a written plan that described the interactives. I'm confident the museum has the written plan. None of this was -- when Bill and I did this we hired somebody with an EDD to work out an actual written plan on how the exhibit would function and how it would flow and what the interactives would do. Maybe to some extent the folks in the education department saw this as -- they didn't know what to do with it.

**D.P.O. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Okay.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

I mean, you know, it's possible.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Jim Morgo has another question.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

A follow-up, Steve. You are right, if you dissolve the not-for-profit you could convey the asset to another not-for-profit. The question then remains for the museum board, whether you would want to sell that asset because of the financial situation you are in, or if the board would want to retain it as a revenue producer and an educational tool. That's why I think Vivian's question was on point. If you were going to retain it, then you would want it operating obviously, but that would really be the question. And you said you don't have any idea the amount, that if you were to sell it, the amount that it could realize?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

I mean, I can tell you what they cost. I mean, you have somewhere between four and \$500,000 worth of -- in 1993 three dollars -- and they're in pretty good condition. Whether -- I don't know -- believe me, I don't keep track of the reproduction dinosaur market. I'm sorry, you know, I don't know.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

It wasn't a criticism, it was just an observation.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

No, no, no, I don't know. I guess, you know, look, we're in a crisis so if I could wave my wand and you guys could get me -- you know, if we had -- the County Attorney was able to say you can do this, okay, and we could transfer the assets and you could liquidate -- we could liquidate the assets and you could get two or \$300,000 for the assets, if that could be part of the solution I would go for it and I think Bill would go for it, too. Bill is very wed to this. This was his dream he had. He wanted to do it, but really he loves the museum. We both do. So we're not wed to the dinosaur -- if we're looking for things that we can sell, I would sell the dinosaur exhibit.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

And it's not as tied up as so many of the other assets that the museum has.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

It's not accessioned.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

So in this crisis, as you seem to imply, sacrifice is the necessary.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

But you never know. You could have people from the dinosaur world who say hey, look, mission of the Dinosaur Society was to help dinosaur research, to help children. You know, this was about kids, okay. So, you know, this is one way of reaching kids. We're another way of reaching kids. Would somebody work out turf and say that's the mission of the society, you've got to maintain that mission, that money should go to that way of reaching kids. It could have complications and I'm not saying it wouldn't. I just want you guys to, everybody, ladies and gentlemen, to understand what the issues are when it comes to this one thing. I was astonished to see it here. It was something you were very curious about. I heard rumors that somebody thought that we had spent a million dollars on it. No. We're ahead by a lot, okay. The museum is ahead by, I haven't added it up, but it seems like over a hundred grand on the deal and you still have a major contributor giving 25, \$30,000 a year waiting to write the big check.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Neil.

**MR. TOOMB:**

You mentioned that he gave \$30,000, Mr. Rogers gave \$30,000 just recently?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Yeah.

**MR. TOOMB:**

Carol, when was that received?

**MS. HART:**

It was received December, 2008, for the audio tour.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

And with it came a commitment predicated, number one, that the museum is alive, okay. I think you might understand that he doesn't want to give money to something that is going to be wasted. He's very upset about the proceedings and very upset about wasting more money, but he is willing to put up the other \$30,000 to finish the audio. He asks me every time I talk to him, which is frequently. He wants to know what's the progress, what's the progress. He's willing to make the next \$30,000 contribution, but he's very upset about -- what contributor wants to go through this?

**MR. TOOMB:**

Is there a plan or an outline or a documented -- a document forgiving additional funds? You mentioned that he's willing to -- he's just waiting to give the rest of the money. What is the amount of the rest of the money?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

You know, I tend to get in trouble every time I bring this up. Look, in 2001, 2000 -- Lance, I forget the exact -- something like that. The idea was that there were capital projects in progress at -- and I'm using the word progress loosely, to do the waterfront. Bill said finish it by 2003. He was 80 years old. He said finish it by 2003 and I will give a million dollars. And at the time, if you look at the resolutions that went through the Legislature and was signed by the County Executive, the timeframe was 2003 and that included the boardwalks and that included the seaplane hangar.

Bill has not held anybody to progress because obviously he's already \$315,000 in good faith into contributions and he's got another \$30,000 commitment. So let's say he's put a third down and nothing has happened on the waterfront. Will he give the remaining let's say \$650,000 if there's no progress or no good faith progress on the waterfront? I doubt it. Will he stay as a Trustee and give 25 and \$30,000 a year, and by the way, if we had 15 of them we'd have less of a problem. Yeah, I think he might. I think he will. He's certainly willing to do it in 2009 when we're literally in a state of what appears to be at the edge of a financial cliff and he's still willing to do \$30,000 in the next 60 days. So to say that he'll do it in 2010 and 2011 I cannot say that he will do that. I can say that he has done that and he will do that in the next month. But he wants to feel like we're going to be in existence and who would blame him?

**MR. TOOMB:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Thank you, Steve. We'll move on and one of the number of questions we had dealing with the operating budget and one was can the museum modify its monthly Treasurers Report of actual revenues and expenses to reflect the revenue codes and expenditures -- expenditure appropriations included in the County's Operating Budget, thereby making the comparison of these two fiscal documents more meaningful and transparent.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Before we answer that, philosophically I need to get a -- I'm asking to be on the same page, okay. Right now we're going on a week by week, if you want to stretch it and say 30 day, Armageddon scenario. I would recommend -- the answer to this is yes and yes. Of course we can do it and of course we will. Okay? Can we delay that enough so that we -- instead of focusing on making these changes today can we focus on raising money to keep ourselves alive for the next 30 days. Once we have a 90 day future maybe we can start making these changes. Would that be permissible, because of a lot of this stuff falls into we're going to stop what we're doing today, which is raising money, running the museum in its busiest week, and we're going to do this, which maybe it can wait. Can it wait four weeks, can it wait eight weeks? The answer is absolutely yes, we can do it. But would you prefer -- which would you prefer?

**MR. PEARSALL:**

I don't think we're setting a deadline here. But, Lance, you want to comment?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Yeah. I think the point of this is to be able to look at your recommended budget and try to link revenues and expenses to the way they appear in the budget with the Treasurer's Report so it helps us analyze the -- your requested budget, recommended budget, for 2010 looking at the revenues you've gotten to date. Some of your revenues are collapsed in one line where in the budget they're broken out in two lines. It's hard for us to know, you know, planetarium revenues from general admission revenues.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Right.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

So I think working towards this over time with your accountants and with your bookkeepers -- bookkeeper and financial system to come up with a system so that your budget request is reflected in your monthly Treasurer's Report. So working towards this for 2010 I think is the goal of the request.

**MS. HART:**

Okay, and I would think we might further work on a dashboard kind of report that would give

everyone a real sense of where we're at. I know there's information I asked from Barbara, you know, how much money do we have in the bank, there are things like that, so that I think we work together and get the best possible without getting too much detail so things get lost, but get a good dashboard so at a glance you can get a good sense of where we are, where we've been. We can work with you, with Barbara, and with our accountant and get a real nice format. We will work towards that.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Do you want to take the next one?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

I think this is related to the first request, too. It's asking you to enhance your annual operating budget request presentation to include the information, backup, you know, sort of statistics on visits and revenue so that, you know, we can look at that and project or analyze how you got these projections. Include, you know, the staffing hours for staff, you know, it doesn't have to be by name, but by title. You know, you've got positions, you've got hours, so we can kind of see how you got your staffing expenditures also. And how you're planning on filling positions that are vacant half a year, you know, what your hiring plan would be for the coming year so the detail related to that. Again, it's -- we're looking towards 2010 as you develop your budget.

**MS. HART:**

Uh-huh.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Another question that came up is does the Board of Trustees have to approve any line item transfers within your budget?

**MS. HART:**

No.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

And why is that?

**MS. HART:**

I think we run very differently from any government or other kinds of organizations where we spend as little money as possible. It's not allocated expenditures and if you don't spend it you lose it kind of thing. If we need to -- if our heating bills are high that month we pay the bill and I will cut costs elsewhere and I look to balance the budget as it comes in and as we have unexpected expenditures. The Treasurer's Report certainly reflects monthly where we're at and if there -- it was clear we're going over a budget line it would be under discussion.

In addition, any expenditure over \$250 the Treasurer does sign the check, so there's a check by check discussion when we're going high and we're going over something. It will be discussed with the Treasurer and larger finance committees when there have been unexpected large expenses.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Any questions? In looking at the minutes of your monthly minutes, it's very unclear of the amount of information that the Finance Committee gives the board and we're wondering if you can do a better presentation to the Board of Trustees as to what the financial situation is rather than just keeping it within committee.

**MR. DeLUISE:**

Absolutely we can do that, right Carol? Absolutely we can. In fact, I've asked -- Barbara is going to join us at our board meetings to really fill in all the details and answer any questions. So we will do that.

**MS. HART:**

Again, I think if we get to more of a good format that we can quickly identify what information is helpful to -- for the understanding of the different, not only our board, but other -- Oversight Committee or whatever. We can work out a better presentation to communicate those kinds of concerns. So again, I think if you let us know what you're seeing a lack of information on we can make sure that we communicate that to you.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Well, in, you know, reviewing the minutes of the board for the last almost ten years, there's really no reference to a dollar amount in any of the minutes.

**MS. HART:**

I guess it -- we hand out -- it's on paper.

**MR. DeLUISE:**

What we should do is add that to the minutes.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

It should be -- yes. It should be included.

**MR. DeLUISE:**

We will do that. We have that distributed to the board and we should add it to the minutes.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

It's always there. Unfortunately we don't make an oral record and it hasn't been attached, but I imagine we can even reconstruct.

**MS. LoMORIELLO:**

It should be attached to the minutes.

**MS. HART:**

Yeah. I mean, there is always actually at least the Treasurer's Report that breaks down. In addition, I have done other comparisons for previous years that, again, have been handed out. But I guess they haven't been attached to the minutes, so that would probably be the best way to handle that.

**MR. DeLUISE:**

We can start that at this month's board meeting. We'll attach it.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

Terry?

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Yes.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

I have another question for Steve --

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Sure.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

-- concerning Mr. Roger's contribution. One thing -- you may have made this clear, I may have missed it. Are his contributions and his commitment to contribute dependant on the dinosaur exhibit in any way? Or they're totally separate?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

You know, that's a -- I think it's an important question because in the beginning it was, because if you read the legislation that was passed the -- sometimes you have to put on your 2000 head, not the 2009 head. Okay. In 2009 -- the dinosaurs were a big -- they still are a big thing, but they really were looked as a great idea. People embraced the idea of putting a dinosaur exhibit. Do you understand?

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

Yes.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Now, okay, we might have a different emphasis. So whereas I think that Bill -- I don't think that Bill's money is tied into the dinosaur exhibit. I think that Bill's money is tied into when the health of the museum and perhaps some good faith measures on the waterfront, because that was the original agreement and it's very clearly spelled out. But be that as it may, I think if the man is lucky to live to a hundred and if he happens to serve on this board for the next eleven years, you will probably see the rest of the money every year because he's been giving it anyway. And I, by the way, I'm looking at this -- you don't have all this money.

**MS. HART:**

That's just to the dinosaur and audio.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

This is just dinosaur and audio. This man goes ahead and is a major sponsor for almost every event we do. So you -- I don't have an exact number, but would it be fair for me to say there's maybe \$50,000 more or \$75,000 more that he's given as five and \$10,000 bits that come not -- you asked for the dinosaur exhibit. For example, you don't have anything from me. It's as if I never gave a dime, okay, but I did. All right. So, yeah, he'll -- I believe in my heart he will continue to do it, but is it tied into the dinosaur exhibit anymore? No. No, because I frankly discussed with him selling the dinosaur exhibit to keep the museum afloat and he said okay, let's do it.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

Well, that was the reason for my question.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Well, okay. But I think he wants to see a healthy museum.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

Well, of course. And as you said, you could use several more Trustees like him.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Yeah.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

I would ask Lance to ask a couple of questions about the capital projects.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Yeah, okay. Moving on to the capital budget, which I guess you have your requests in for 2010.

**MS. HART:**

Yes, we do.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Okay. So this is looking, again, towards the future and coming to, I guess, for the next Capital Budget cycle, if you can include with your capital budget request or you can amend your current one to include overall comprehensive plan for the museum, along with the individual capital project

requests and have a detailed plan of the phases. I know DPW does the cost estimates, so the cost estimates are in conjunction with DPW request.

**MS. HART:**

They do the -- yeah.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

And expect a completion date. I think it's also done through Public Works.

**MS. HART:**

Yeah, yeah. As you are probably aware, there are master plans. There are overarching schedules, but the museum, me, we have no control. Once it gets out to DPW's hands we really pretty much lose control of timing, of the way things go. So it's a continual readjustment. For example, the -- we've been planning a spring start on the two waterfront projects. The money has been appropriated, everything is all ready to go, DPW informed me that the Commissioner told them to hold up all our projects. So two weeks ago the ad was supposed to go in the paper and it's sitting on someone's desk now. I don't know how long, I don't know why, I can't influence it, but we are not going to make the spring start and we were really hoping to have that boardwalk in place by the fall. And why it's being held up, how long, and this gets lost over time and this has continually happened with our other projects. This one I specifically know about and I'm calling every day on, you know, our other projects.

So we have plans planned around those projects, but it's just -- it's very difficult when so little is out of our control. But I do meet with DPW representative Jim Ingenito at least weekly. We talk almost every other day because we do have many projects going on. In fact, he just faxed me over the latest update so we can try to get a more formal presentation possibly to keep people apprised of where we're at at the time we're requesting, knowing that things will change. But, you know, we will try to include that knowing that it's probably only good for that moment.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Carol, what's the latest update on the planetarium projector?

**MS. HART:**

We had the team of engineers who are bidding on the RFP were in on February tenth. I think it's the 23rd is the date they need to put their proposals in. Hopefully one would think it would just take a few weeks to choose, but the way things go that could well be three or four weeks, and if people are told to hold things up, it could go even longer. We're hoping if things went optimally, that they assign and get contracts written, it's going to be at least two months I would think. Then they hire a planetarium consultant. He's going to need a couple of months to do his work, put out the RFP, assign it. So we are moving along, but at any point things could hold up. We need to try -- I need to try to learn better who to call to find out how to move things along faster once they hit these roadblocks. But things are progressing.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

I don't think we have ever had better communication on capital projects with DPW than we have now. It was really a very black box situation five years ago. I really feel that we may be able to communicate better, we may be able to plan better, but the communication is the best we've ever had.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Anyone have any questions on capital projects? None? A couple of questions about audits. One was can the museum provide the Oversight Committee with an update on the status of its financial audits?

**MS. HART:**

Yes. We -- there is the 2006 audit is complete. We've got the management -- the opinion letter, it's

all done, so we just need to -- it has to go to -- the Audit Committee has to meet and approve it and 2006 will be done. The -- not two thousand -- 2007, excuse me, 2007. 2006 is done, complete. I'm talking about 2007. I'm so excited. So we're just about caught up. There is some discussion of reviewing the current company that does our audit and I think it's been a few years.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

We have had a very difficult time with this audit company because they -- the President and the Treasurer are not allowed to be part of the audit, okay. However, conceptually, the auditors have to agree as to how to allocate the assets of the museum. For example, the endowment is not a museum asset. It's controlled by the County. We -- you know, the argument being that it should not be on our books. Increases or decreases would inflate or deflate the appearance of the financials for the museum almost wildly burying what would go on at the museum.

We have been embroiled with this auditor with probably a two or three year discussion, which has been at the County Attorney's Office, was given many opinions to the auditor that, in fact, some of these items, including, for example, the buildings and grounds, the collections, do not belong on the museum books. Okay. And this auditor just would not budge, okay. So I was not able to be part of the debate. I don't think Mike was able to be part of the debate. But despite the fact that they got opinions from the County that, in fact, these are County assets, not the 501(C)(3) that runs the museum's assets, that's what -- we would have been ahead of this curve on the 2007. We're at least six months behind where we would have been had this argument not been stalled and it's because of their intransigence that perhaps we feel we might want to move on to another company.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Are you interviewing other auditing firms or that decision hasn't been made?

**MS. HART:**

We have gotten some inquiries and some proposals. I know Mike has some, talked to some. We haven't done any formal process yet, but we have been collecting some names.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

It would be an area that, quite frankly, I would expect Michael and myself not to be part of, okay, because of State law.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Okay.

**MS. HART:**

So just to clarify, the 2007 is totally finished and we will be working on 2008 hopefully very soon.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

RFP's. Where do you stand with the catering and food service?

**MS. HART:**

We had some inquiries and proposals for some people, I think, in looking at -- one of our Trustees did look at it and felt that they were inadequate. I think we are moving towards the fact that we do need, in fact, to develop a formal RFP and he'll be working on that.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

He is experienced with it, he's reviewed it. I'm hoping he'll come back -- he certainly sent recommendations by e-mail to me. I asked him to follow through with it. I expect to get recommendations from him at the next board meeting. I'm hoping to. But he knows his stuff, so he seems like the right person to do it.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

How about the toy store that you have talked about a number of times?

**MS. HART:**

They have not gotten a formal written proposal to me yet. They seem very interested. Michael, have you heard from them recently?

**MR. DeLUISE:**

I think they have a few questions and looking at what their commitment is going to be, but hopefully they will have something to us fairly soon.

**MS. HART:**

Okay. In the meantime, we function our store. We have been supplying it for this busy week and we continue to run the store. Barbara is our buyer.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

And any progress with the cell tower?

**MS. HART:**

Well, you know, I talked to -- one of our Trustees had set up an appointment with Verizon, had needed to make some contacts in the County and was told not to attend the meeting that the County -- I'm sorry for not knowing specifically who, but he was told not to be part of it until they decide if there was a frequency or something and he was removed. He set this forward, he set up an appointment, and then he was told not to be part of it. So we will have to get -- maybe tomorrow night at our board meeting Noel can fill us in exactly on how that worked.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Neil.

**MR. TOOMB:**

Carol, has anyone from the museum talked to -- the County has a Cell Tower Committee.

**MS. HART:**

Maybe that's who he talked to. Our trustee, Noel Gish, did talk to someone in the County about setting this up and they sort of went with it. I'm not sure who it is. Maybe it is the Cell Committee.

**MR. TOOMB:**

The Legislature has established a Cell Tower Committee for all cell towers to be on County property.

**MS. HART:**

That's probably -- Noel was working, talking to his -- Legislator Kennedy, so that might have been his avenue. We'll find out more tonight exactly what happened there.

**MR. TOOMB:**

Okay. If he needs a contact, he can get through Commissioner Gary Quinn at IT. He can put them in touch with the committee.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Go ahead, Barbara.

**MS. LoMORIELLO:**

Going back to the catering, you mentioned I think it was Art Sillman is doing this?

**MS. HART:**

He's one of our Trustees -- is looking at -- is looking at the contracts and --

**MS. LoMORIELLO:**

What is his background that you would choose him? Why is he the person?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

My understanding is that Art has actually been involved with contracts of this sort. To be honest with you, I would -- based upon what he sent me, he seemed very well qualified. It was an intelligent analysis, okay. So my understanding was from -- that he has a background in working with these kinds of facilities, so that's why I went with him.

But if you look -- if you oversee the board, okay, I have a limited number of Trustees that I could give such an assignment to, so you have to first of all find someone who's willing and, you know, and go forward. We don't have a specialist who could do this that I know that runs, for example, food services on a regular basis. But I do believe Art has a related background. Frankly, I looked at his resume and it escapes for the moment. You folks do have -- I think you ask for all of our resumes.

And one of the problems, by the way, is that we don't get resumes, okay. When a new Trustee comes aboard, we do not get a copy of the resume. So if it sounds like we're dealing a little bit in the dark, it may seem strange, but we're not part of that process.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

The Legislature gets it.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Steve, it's always attached to the backup as backup to the resolution. I don't know why you're not getting it, but I will see that in the future that you do get them.

**MS. HART:**

I don't have any contact information or --

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

I'm not complaining.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

No, you are bringing us a very valid point and that should be corrected.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

As you know, we do not pick the Trustees. Often the first time we meet a Trustee --

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Is when they come to the board meeting.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Is when they come to a meeting, okay? We've actually had Trustees come to meetings and not know -- who are you, and it's very uncomfortable and that's the way it is. And, you know, there have been times where I've said something like this and, quite frankly, it's legislative prerogative. You fire, we learn to work with. We don't have the information.

**MS. HART:**

Which just reminds me, I personally haven't contacted -- there are two new Trustees that I think are effective tomorrow night and I don't have their -- I know their names, but I don't have their contact information, so.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Okay. I don't think the resolutions have come back from the County Executive yet.

**MS. HART:**

So they're not official yet.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

They are not official yet.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

So, Steve, what I suggested to you at the meeting that we were at that you emphasized the three G's with new Trustees, I was really directing the suggestion to the wrong person apparently.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Yes, but it's okay, we didn't object.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

I still think it's a good idea, obviously, apropos on Mr. Roger's comments.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Right.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

There was a question, what items does the museum have in its collection that have not been accessioned into the museum's permanent collection? Do you have a list of those items?

**MS. HART:**

I do. What I have, and our Curatorial Department spent a lot of time looking at this. There are about 30 items that we don't believe are accessioned, but I think even these would take a little bit more work to double check. This is out of approximately 42,000 items. There is virtually nothing, and the items that I'm looking at that don't have accession numbers, they're little things. There's nothing, I think, of value.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Give some examples.

**MS. HART:**

Okay. There's a rug in the -- red medallion on a beige, floral scattered field; a couple of tapestries, an oak bench, an Italian Renaissance style side cabinet, a pair of sculptured marble garden statues. There are a bunch of -- a lot of these are outside statuary that weren't accessioned for whatever reason but are part of the estate. I think we probably would accession them. Some of the items I thought maybe weren't it turns out are accessioned, like the old cars.

We have a complete, very thorough listing, not only listing of everything we have, but everything has quite a lot of documentation. And as an accredited by the AAM you must have -- that's something you have to show, that you not only have your lists but you know where they came from, you know where they are, that they have been photographed, that they're looked over fairly carefully.

So, again, different from many museums. Most of our collection is exhibited, about 80%. We have very little in storage. Most of what we have is out there. So, we have this list. We want to go through it again, but I think in the end by the time we go through it you will probably end up with maybe 10, 20 items that really aren't accessioned and maybe shouldn't have been accessioned. That's about it.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

To me this is a good juncture because there's a piece of culture here that we would like you folks to understand if we can get it to you, and that is the AAM. The American Association of Museums accredited this institution after a long, drawn out, miserable period. Okay. This was not an easy thing to achieve, especially for the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum. Okay.

The Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum developed a reputation in the 70's and 80's as being an accreditation nightmare. The AAM would have -- would liked to have come visited. One director after the next was interested in getting reaccredited and they didn't make it a year or two. And the thing is, is that every time you fire a director, the AAM gives you another 18 months before you have to come back for reaccreditation and so the reaccreditation process was delayed through the 80's.

We have been reaccredited twice. It is a very vigorous process but it is the most prestigious designation that any museum could achieve in this country. Okay. There are 29 museums in New York State that have AAM accreditation. We have now received, for the first time in the museum's history, we received it in the 2006 accreditation, we have received a ten year accreditation. This museum simply never had that.

If you read the accreditation report it is a glowing testimony to the quality of this institution. And one of the things that they looked at most carefully was -- was the relationship between the board and the staff, and the relationship between the director and the staff, and the relationship with the board and director, and the relationship between the board and it's governing body, which is you, okay.

In addition to that, they look at how we maintain our collections. Now, when Jon Cooper was there yesterday I said, Jon, you have got to come upstairs. What's upstairs? The archives. What's the big deal. And you can go up into the archives and see things that were doomed to destruction 20 years ago. They would not exist today had they been left where they were, where scholars can come, and it is one of your questions and this is why I'm bringing it up. Scholars can come and they can look at a period frozen in time that is so magnificently documented because we saved the paper collection which does not appear for the public, but is rather an incredible intellectual resource that should never be allowed to be lost. Even if you shut down the museum, for God's sake, save the archives because you may be able the rebuild the building; you will never be able to rebuild the story once you lose it, and the story is tens of thousands of documents long.

And when it comes down to the AAM accreditation, one of the things that this County should be most proud of is that that is the symbol of excellent worldwide for a museum. Museums do not put themselves through it because they can't get it. We have it. Don't lose it, please. So when it comes down to the accreditation, and when it comes down to deaccessioning items, there is a rigorous process that we have to go through, all right?

Frankly, I would say to you I want to save the museum. So if there's something that we can sell that's not accredited, and I'll say it again, the dinosaur exhibit, if we could get title to it and we can sell it, I'm all in favor of it. When it comes to -- and there are items, for example, that to me, and certainly to a layperson they would say why do we need a hundred copies of the same book, okay. The darn part about it is that we did accession it, and deaccessioning something is just like, unfortunately, an extremely difficult thing to do for a museum in the eyes of museum culture and in the eyes of the American Association of Museums.

So, as much as we would like to deaccession some items, we can't. Or if we do, we risk losing an incredibly prestigious designation. Having been through two accreditations I can tell you, you don't want to have to get accredited. You want to be reaccredited over and over again.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Barbara, you have a question?

**MS. LoMORIELLO:**

Yeah, I have a question. I know what you went through because at the time I was working with Jon Cooper and I know some of the stuff you went through. I have just a basic question and I really don't know this, maybe you know it. But the accreditation and people coming in, scholars looking at

the books and everything. Does it somehow bear anything on your revenue?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

It's a great question. Quality sells, so when a museum presents itself in a certain fashion, it bears on the revenue. That was a pretty vague response to you, could fall back, maybe not the best answer, okay. But the AAM doesn't stop there. The AAM speaks to the issue as to how staff gets managed, it speaks to the issue of professionalism and presentation. It speaks to the issue of standards of exhibition. More importantly, it also speaks to the issue of what is the latest technology, and you are part of a culture when you are part of the AAM. So being an accredited museum of -- in the AAM is being in an elite museum. It's being -- it's considered a wonderful institution, and when it comes to getting grants, you should get grants more easily. It's just that simple.

**MS. LoMORIELLO:**

There you go.

**MS. HART:**

There definitely is -- we would not have gotten the Save America's Treasures Grant if we were not accredited. I'm quite sure. And when we go for other foundation funding or sponsorship they look us up, they see that you're accredited. That shows that there's been the kind of scrutiny and oversight, not just for the value of your collections, but the way you manage things, the way you are going to take care of things, and it is very, very important. You need it for Federal grants and certainly for the State grants and the private foundation grants. It makes it a lot easier to get.

**MS. LoMORIELLO:**

Great. Thank you.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Let me make another point. When open up the AAA guide, or in these days you go on the AAA website and you see a star next to an attraction, okay, I know that when I go to a lot of strange cities I look -- I don't have a lot of time often. If there are seven starred attractions and 45 that are unstarred, I'm going look at the seven starred ones to see if I really want to go there first, okay. You would never say to me that the star in the AAA guide isn't a revenue generator because of course it is, okay, because you have to stay in hotels, you have to buy meals. What they spend at the museum is trivial compared to what they spend here in the community. We have the star, okay. As far as I know, when it comes to starred attractions in Suffolk County, this is it. This is the only starred attraction in Suffolk County. I think there are two in Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

By the way, the Teddy Roosevelt Museum does not have it. Sagamore Hill doesn't have it. Long Island Museum, doesn't have it. They're not starred attractions by the American Automobile Association. Now, that's a revenue generator. Any why? Because they look upon us as a significant institution. Did they look at our AAM accreditation? No, but I would put them in parallel and say you don't want to lose that kind of excellence. If you go to a four star hotel or, we don't all travel in five star hotels, but if you go to a four star hotel you feel like you expect something. When you see a star in that AAA guide and you see an AAM accredited museum, you expect something. People come from Japan to go to the Vanderbilt.

**MR. DeLUISE:**

To bring it home closer, we just finished a 30 second TV commercial that will be running on Channel 55 and maybe some other stations. But they were able to place it for us because we have that AAM accreditation. So that alone you know it's immediately right now something that we're getting because of this.

**MS. LoMORIELLO:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Neil, you had a question?

**MR. TOOMB:**

The accessioning process, can you describe what that is? I'm sure it ties it up somehow, but are they tied to go to other places after -- should something happen to the museum? What is the process of that?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

If you have an accessioned item within the museum, okay, once you have accessioned it into your collections you can take an accessioned item and an accessioned item can go to another institution, okay. It can be done. But it's like going to the -- it's not like. You go to the Smithsonian, which has accessioned items, one of which I believe is the Vanderbilt Cup. And you want to get that Vanderbilt Cup out of the Smithsonian Institution, you better be taking it in an armed vehicle. Okay. They don't trade accessioned items willy nilly. We don't move accessioned items from institution to institution. Just because you have a mission. What are we talking about accessioned items? We're talking about stuff that creates an overall picture of William Kissam Vanderbilt the Second, the guy who lived at that place. What did he do? What were his furnishings like? Were they eclectic? Why did he buy this particular item, and why did he not buy that one? Why does he have a mummy? Of course it's accessioned because it tells a story.

One of the things that you -- you don't start spread the accessioned items all over the place because then they start to look at your mission and they say well, wait a second. If you are willing to spread your accessioned items all over the place, then, in fact, what about the story you are trying to tell?

Now, there's also a point of what items should have been accessioned, darn it, that weren't accessioned that we lost, and do they matter and what part of the story do they tell. One of them is Normandy Manor was not an accessioned building, if you will, as part of our collection. And thank God in our view we captured it because we are a collection of structures from a period that is -- it is impossible to recreate the gold coast, okay. It's impossible to recreate a Vanderbilt house with its furnishings. Go find one, okay. So we have Normandy Manor, the only building that was outside of our collection that has been brought in. It may not fit the picture of our current fiscal crisis, but it sure in heck fits the picture of putting together a story and telling a great one, and that's what happens.

For example, on Normandy Manor there were two lions at the gate, okay, and we didn't have them as part of our collection. We didn't have the proper hooks into their manes, if you will. They got out of our hands and we can't get them back. Who cares, they're just two lions made of I believe marble, right? They are just two marble lions. The truth of the matter is, is that why did Willie take those marbles and where did he get them and what was the story behind which house he took them from and the truth was it was the biggest failure in his life and he took those marbles so that he could have them with him and they were some form of a reminder because he looked at them every day of his life that he was at that estate. We can't tell the story anymore because they are not there.

**MR. TOOMB:**

Where are they?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Somewhere Upstate.

**MS. HART:**

The private owner sold them. I just want to also say, and I'll get you information because if you are not a museum person the whole thing of accessioning and the public trust that's involved might not be there. Because of the current economic times it's at the forefront of all museum discussion. And it's not just accreditation, AAM, it's New York State Charter of Education, and that even more you

don't want to lose -- we don't want to lose our Charter, and that's in the Charter. And it particularly has been up because a lot of museums are facing tough choices. You know, we have these things of great value, yet we might have to close, what can we do. Some museums have made bad choices. Brandeis, for example, decided to sell off their collections unbeknownst to some of the museum people. They are now in court. It gets into IRS issues, it gets very complicated with your donors.

The New York State Charter is very clear in explaining what the public trust is, if you have a collection what you are allowed to do and what you are not allowed to do. And selling your collections for operating is just -- it's not allowed. You would lose your Charter as a State education. You are -- sort of the ethics of it is you can sell a collection piece if the money comes back into the collection, so maybe to purchase another piece that more fits your mission. But to sell a piece to pay for air-conditioning or operating, it's just not ethical and you face losing -- you will lose your New York State Charter of Education and you face losing your AAM accreditation.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

And, Jim, we had this discussion. We know that there are Vanderbilt family members out there who probably would love to own 44 acres that they could build condos on, okay. Let's face it, all you have to lose is that New York State Charter and you are giving them ammunition.

**MS. HART:**

We have that additional that most museums -- but, again, I will get you, and there are some very nice positioned statements that's coming out of AAM, how to explain to your board why you can't sell that painting, and out of the New York State as well. I think that will help understand the, you know, we're dealing with a lot of bottom line issues, but there are some things that go to the core of who we are and the public trust and get into legal issues and IRS issues and we have to -- if you are not from a museum background, you are not familiar yet with this and so we will -- I will make sure I get some of that most recent discussion to you.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Thank you. We wanted to finish by one o'clock today so I'm going to skip the next two items, the donations and the Butler buildings because I think --

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Just as long as you know the Butler building is the building that we built.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Right, and we've discussed most of that in your presentation.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Yes.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Unless anybody had any questions on those two items? No? Okay. The question came up regarding the boathouse, and its use by Cornell Cooperative Extension. I know there was some controversy early in 2008 and then you had asked them to pay rent or something. Anybody want to comment on it?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Absolutely. The germ for this idea came from the Legislature, okay. Cornell has a very close relationship with Suffolk County. They approached the Suffolk County Legislature, they were looking for a place to house a research center. It seemed perfectly fitting within the mission of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum, who had a founder who believed himself to be a marine scientist, to have marine scientists working out of the boathouse, okay. Everybody knew in essence that as soon as the waterfront was put together, Cornell would have to vacate the boathouse or some accommodation would have to be made, but Cornell could not get in the way of development of the waterfront.

Cornell started out with two scientists, if I recall correctly, and I certainly was involved in the arrangement that was made. And what was is that we were bringing in a research component. They were seeding clam beds in the Sound. This was wonderful. This was an opportunity to have real research going on on the Vanderbilt Museum and they were coming to us with empty pockets and we welcomed them because the Legislature indicated that they welcomed them and they thought it was a good relationship.

They grew, they grew more than perhaps we expected, maybe it was a healthy environment, and we should have tapped them for more revenue than we did, but there was a commitment to revenue that went beyond the agreement. We were supposed to get an overhead item. We never received it. Finally we put our foot down. We said we had to get it, we weren't renewing the contract unless we got it. We got into a protracted negotiation and things were suddenly culminated by the fact that the building was essentially condemned.

You know, I have to tell you that in 15 years of being President of that institution, some things go perfect and some things go almost perfect, let's say. This went almost perfect because it turned into an education program, it turned into a research program, and for them it was a success. And now they are at Coindre Hall. I wish them the best.

**MS. LOMORIELLO:**

Was there a dollar amount on that, what they were supposed to give you?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

It was a consideration based upon -- we were supposed to get an overhead. You know, I did not research this out myself. There was a revenue consideration. In my heart of hearts I do not believe that they upheld the spirit of that understanding. If you are going to say to me hey, Steve, what are you doing with spirit, okay, everything was run by the board. They grew faster than we thought, and maybe we could have generated more money from them, just as we might have been able to generate more money from food services, too.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Okay.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

You know, the question still was asked, a dollar amount. You know, we've --

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

There was no fixed dollar amount. It was more of a percentage arrangement.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Why is -- our understanding is that they didn't fulfill their obligation that was -- there was a dollar amount attached to that obligation.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

I don't know. I would have to look at the -- I'm doing recall here, okay, and I beg this group to understand that I'm answering questions and we can research out the contract a little better. Quite honestly, I was more focused on other sections of this and I find myself talking about a lot of stuff, but do you have other things that you can add to this?

**MS. HART:**

I will get you copies of the contract. There was no dollar amount in the contract.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

To my knowledge. We went for a dollar amount in the end, but we weren't -- they would not give it to us.

**MS. LOMORIELLO:**

What was that?

**MS. HART:**

The original contract there was but -- there was no dollar amount in the original contract. When their contract expired and we were negotiating as of September '07 we said that now you have to start paying your own utility, you know, all your utility bills, and they did start paying that as of --

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

They did pay that.

**MS. HART:**

When we demanded it of them. So I don't think it's probably fair to say that they didn't pay anything that we were demanding of them. I think there was just, you know --

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

No, we went beyond that. It was a negotiation that dragged out that didn't quite yield as much as we felt we were entitled to, because we felt that they had had more of a free ride in the first five years of the deal than we anticipated they should have.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

There was a written contract, though.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Yes.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

And what did the written contract call for their doing for getting this free space?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

I think the best thing to do is to give it to you, the best thing to do, because I don't want to just spit it out. We're not trying to evade anything. We'll give it to you.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

They say that they were supposed to make capital improvements to the boathouse, which they did. They provided us, the Presiding Officer, with a list of all the capital projects they put into the boathouse, which I'll make available to you --

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

The understanding was they would make --

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

-- but it totals tens of thousands of dollars.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Pardon?

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

It totals tens of thousands of dollars.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

But most of those capital improvements that they made turned out to be capital improvements that they needed in order to serve their own function. And that's what we had -- that's where we ran into a conflict with them. In other words, you know, and Terry, if you would give me an example.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Well, there are plumbing repairs and upgrades in the boathouse, \$3,500. Electrical upgrades in lighting, \$10,000. Phone and --

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

I will take them one at a time and explain to you --

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

No, we don't --

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Let me do plumbing. Plumbing. They needed a huge flow of water in order to keep their shellfish fed. We didn't need that plumbing. So yes, they invested money for their own operations. That's not what we anticipated.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

I will make a copy of this.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

And you get us the contract.

**MR. PEARSALL:**

Yes.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Yeah, sure.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

You want to talk to some of the --

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

Yeah, let me just ask one more question on that.

**MR. PEARSALL:**

Sure.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

So it's fair to say that there's still conflict between the museum, the 501's, and Cornell Cooperative?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

No, because, you know, it's like -- and I guess this is one of the things that -- I mean, there's no lawsuit. We're not -- we're not considering a lawsuit. I don't even think -- I wouldn't even think that we -- I haven't studied it to see if there's grounds for a lawsuit.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

But in your mind they didn't live up to their contract.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

In my mind we ended a -- they developed programs that -- and quite frankly -- yeah, I kind of -- I feel feelings they did not live up to their contract.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

Is that the feeling of the board as well?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

I don't know.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

Because you know where I am going with this.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

I don't know because it's in the past. What are you going to do, are you going to chase another not-for-profit, you know, for what? What are we talking about.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

I know of quite a few not-for-profits that have been cased to keep up their obligations.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

It might be that one of the things that we get from you is a more aggressive approach, but when we start hiring lawyers to do things like that it costs us more in legal bills than it does in terms of return.

**CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY EXECUTIVE MORGO:**

It depends on the contract.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Okay, it depends on the contract, and we have not been litigious in that particular way. If that's a failure, then it's a failure. If it's something we can improve in the future, then fine. But we have not been particularly litigious. We were very strong with New York Tech, but we were not -- that's not --

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Go ahead, Lance.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

If there's no other questions we'll move on to technology. What is the museum's ability, software and ability to use Excel spreadsheets related to financial records and things like that?

**MS. HART:**

Yeah, we do use Excel spreadsheets. We are training, you know, trying to get everyone on staff, and most people I have set up spreadsheets and at least trained them enough to enter into to make it easier as we go from department to department. Certainly within the bookkeeping/accounting department things are on spreadsheets. Barbara's software is -- well, she'll explain what her software is. The Treasurer's Report that I get is in a different format so we have been converting into Excel. But I would actually like to make a little bit more use of Excel, and especially if we are going to be distributing more of the financial information, exporting it out of the MAS system into Excel where more people can access it is something that I -- that we are going to be moving towards.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Barbara, on the accounting software, the interface between that and Excel, I guess, what accounting software does the museum use?

**MS. OSTER:**

MAS 90 is the name of the program and it's extensive. We can -- we have a lot of breakdowns in our accounting program for all the departments that we have so we can track expenses with every department. I know that it can be exported to Excel, but we haven't done that yet.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

The reports you receive from your accountant, you receive financial reports from your accountant also, and I guess it's the interface between their program and your program. Is there a breakdown between the two financial programs or interpreting them?

**MS. OSTER:**

Well, I send him an income statement every month and any backup information that he needs. I have payroll accruals, everything that he requests, and he puts it into a format. I'm not really -- I don't know what format he uses, but he has all the backup for those reports.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

On the income statements, are those distributed to the Trustees on a monthly basis or periodically, quarterly basis?

**MS. OSTER:**

No. The income statement is available if they wish to see it, but really that information does go into the report that the accountant does, so it is there.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Okay. And the accountant, my understanding, he usually gives a report at the Trustees meeting?

**MS. OSTER:**

Yes. Right.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Is that a written report and an oral report?

**MS. OSTER:**

It's not really a written report. It's just the financial statement, just with numbers, really, unless there's -- unless there are some questions asked of him he wouldn't go into great detail about anything.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

It's a spreadsheet without commentary.

**MS. OSTER:**

It's a spreadsheet, right.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Is that it?

**MR. REINHEIMERS:**

I think that covers technology.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

A couple of quick questions regarding grants. Do you have anybody who writes and researches grants right now?

**MS. HART:**

Yes, I do and our Director of Curatorial Affairs would be doing that as well, though she's fairly well overwhelmed in finishing up a big grant right now. But I have been applying for grants and writing them.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

How about the Wal-Mart grant? Is that progressing at all?

**MS. HART:**

Who was involved? Were you --

**MR. DeLUISE:**

They just went public with it this month and we'll talk about it tomorrow night about what we're going to ask for.

**MR. PEARSALL:**

Fine.

**MS. HART:**

And some of our Trustees have been researching and investigating and are working in some areas as well.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Okay. You may have answered the next question that we had in some of the discussion, but does the museum receive any revenue from the various books that have been published using research and information provided by the museum? And the two examples are Howard Kroplick, Vanderbilt Cup Races for Long Island, and the Long Island Motor Parkway.

**MS. HART:**

No, we wouldn't be receiving -- you know, if we let a photograph be used we get a small fee for when someone publishes a photograph, but beyond that if an outside author comes in we're like a library. They do the research and we wouldn't get revenue from that -- except that this particular author likes us. He's donated books for us to sell in the gift shop. You know, he does some of that for us.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Are new of Board of Trustees members oriented and educated about their roles as Trustees? Everybody's quiet. I'm assuming they walk in and sit down.

**MS. HART:**

Well, we do have -- there's been so many lately. We have a manual, New Trustees Orientation Manual that would include, you know, all the bylaws and mission statements, things like that. I have been giving a copy, the AAM bookstore has a Museum Trustee Board responsibility kind of book, so we get that. And then usually I give an orientation on the site. We're hoping, because we happen to have a large number of new Trustees since September, I think, and we knew more were coming, we are hoping to do a day long retreat and get everyone in because we have six, seven new Trustees -- a big number, and I think we've sort of settled down now. We're going to get -- I know you want to get together and do a --

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

I don't know if we settled down. You folks apparently have some more folks in the pipeline.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Well, you just again had a recent resignation.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Yes, David D'Orazio.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

We're trying to fill these so that you don't, you know, go on.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Right. We have to spend time with the new Trustees to educate them the best we can in terms of museum culture. We can do a better job I think. We have a lot of knowledge and the trouble is, is that to import that knowledge to a Trustee and to sit down and spend the time, frankly, it would really be my responsibility because I don't know of other Trustees who have experience, you know, in terms of what might be expected.

And then there's the other issue is what is expected, because the requirement of fundraising has changed. And so we would like to see clarification on that particular issue as soon as possible. We know that you changed the requirements for trusteeship, but now does that apply to Trustees who, for example, might be there already. There's a resistance on the part of some Trustees to make contributions themselves or to raise money. And so -- but it's not all about making money. I mean, we do a lot of education as things go. I do spend the time to explain the things that, for example, we just went through a whole thing here about accessioning. We explain that and we give them information. You can always do a better job in educating your Trustees.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Why does the museum have its own directors and officers liability insurance policies?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Because we were told that we had to.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

By?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

And now I --

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Neil, go ahead.

**MR. TOOMB:**

I followed up with the County Attorney's Office on that item and they do have to get it because it is a separate organization from the County as opposed to the Board of Trustees or Parks Trustees, which is more tightly entwined with the County. So they had to get their own.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Okay. Thank you, Neil. That answers that question. If the museum is part of the County telephone system, why do you have your own telephone service carrier?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Go ahead, Barbara.

**MS. OSTER:**

Okay. We do have the County lines. We are an extension of the County lines, but as far as I understand, that's part of our operating expense and we do have to pay the bill. We always have. We consider that an operating expense, the phones.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

But you have a separate contract for your business phones, your outside lines, aside from the County lines? No, that's all part -- so your whole telephone system is part --

**MS. OSTER:**

We're all hooked up. The only thing that's outside would be the Internet service. That's the only thing.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Do you receive bills from the County or separately?

**MS. OSTER:**

No, Verizon.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Verizon directly.

**MS. OSTER:**

Yes.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Under the County contract you don't get them, then, through Telecommunications Department?

**MS. OSTER:**

No.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Okay. But that's still part -- you're still under the County contract the best you know?

**MS. OSTER:**

I don't know if it's the County contract because I didn't set that particular system up myself, so I'm not aware of that. We do -- we're on the County phone system which means we have the extensions, the County extensions.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Right. I would think if their contract is with Verizon that it would go through Telecommunications and through the County through -- not a charge back, but some kind of voucher system.

**MS. OSTER:**

I do know that when they did put some lines in for us we were charged for it. This was back a few years ago. When we moved to Normandy Manor we had to have a lot of lines brought over there and the County was involved in that and we did have to pay them back for the work that they did.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

You paid the County back?

**MS. OSTER:**

Yes, right.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

You know, we're an odd cultural institution.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Yeah.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

We are owned by the County, but the operations of the 501(3)(C), which would be these phone lines, are something that maybe as a Board President I might not question since it was -- I believe it existed this way before I came, and if we can transfer a cost to the County we'd be thrilled to, believe me.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Well, it's a case of consolidating the contract and possibly getting a better rate under the County contract rather than you having a separate contract. We'll check with Telecommunications on this end and see the how's and why's if this can be done or changed.

**MS. OSTER:**

We do have a lot of lines and there is a fee per line, as you know, so it adds up just with that.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

I don't question -- you have a weather station on the property?

**MS. HART:**

We don't. We did; it was taken away.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Okay, so the question is answered. Thank you. Thank you all for coming

**MS. LoMORIELLO:**

I have a general question.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Oh, I'm sorry.

**MS. LoMORIELLO:**

I'm sorry, I just have a question. I want to just follow-up with Carol. I want to know if I understood this at the General Meeting. You presented your budget, three year budget, and I believe Legislator Montano was asking some questions regarding the increase in personnel costs. I don't know if I understood this properly, but I want to ask you this question. At that time you stated that you were going to get a \$20,000 increase in pay over the next three years?

**MS. HART:**

That who was going to get a \$20,000 increase in pay?

**MS. LOMORIELLO:**

You.

**MS. HART:**

No, I didn't state that.

**MS. LoMORIELLO:**

Okay. That's what I wanted clarification.

**MS. HART:**

I mean, I certainly didn't -- I don't know how -- I might have -- I certainly don't think of that for myself, so I don't know --

**MS. LoMORIELLO:**

Okay. I wanted to clear it up. I wanted to make sure.

**MS. HART:**

-- how it came out.

**MS. LoMORIELLO:**

He was going through the budget with you.

**MS. HART:**

Yeah, I know. I wouldn't have meant that anyway, certainly.

**MS. LoMORIELLO:**

Okay.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Before we close the meeting, do you have any questions of us?

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Yeah.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Go ahead.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

I know these are your structured questions; what are your unstructured questions?

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

We don't know yet.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

I'm looking at this as a partnership; am I correct?

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

It is, and this is only our second meeting, and there's many things I'm sure we want to discuss amongst ourselves. One of the things that has been suggested to me is that we hold exit interviews with some of the past Trustees and employees to get a feeling of what they think -- how improvements could be made overall at the Vanderbilt, and I think, you know, we'll discuss then if we want to do that.

And then one of the purposes is to help get you through this year and get you self-sufficient into 2010 because the Legislature on the record has said that, you know, you're not going to get that \$800,000 next year. Unless, and I would say that's not going to happen unless they see some dramatic improvements in your in-house fundraising and grant writing and so forth.

**MR. DeLUISE:**

We could definitely use your help. There are things, you know, Carol was talking before about how certain things -- we need to know how to get through the process. If you can help us with that, if you can look at some of our expenses and say here's a better way of doing it. As Steve said, we're looking at this as a partnership and we could really not have to wait until the next meeting to call us and say hey, we have a great idea on how we can work together and to sit down and to kind of move this forward as quickly as we can.

We know that not only us, but there are a lot of other organizations that are going through economic turmoil right now. Any ideas to move forward, ideas on how we can work together with you and other institutions I think would be very helpful. We really do look for you for help and insight.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

And I assure you, we will do our best. One of the things I know the Presiding Officer is committed to is helping to expedite the projector at the planetarium because we realize that's the basis of your biggest income in the future is going to be, in attendance growth and so forth, is going to be that planetarium.

**MR. DeLUISE:**

If there would be some way to cut a few months off of that projected wait that could really help us a lot.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Exactly. Absolutely.

**MS. HART:**

Ask them to put it on the top of their pile.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

Yeah, you know, if you can be ready for when the downtime is at the museum, the slowest period,

so that you are not losing income, a lot of income, while it's being -- and you project it is going to take three to four months, right?

**MS. HART:**

To put in?

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

To put in.

**MS. HART:**

Three -- yeah, I would say three months.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

The way the County works, four to five. Okay, I want to thank you and we will be in touch.

**MR. GITTELMAN:**

Thank you very much.

**CHAIRMAN PEARSALL:**

We'll probably see some of you tomorrow night or you will see some of us.

***(THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 12:59 P.M.)***