

# Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum

## Board of Trustees

### Minutes

A regular meeting of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board of Trustees was held in the Planetarium Lobby, Centerport, New York, on March 19, 2014.

#### **The following were in attendance:**

Ron Beattie – President  
Joseph Dujmic – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
Gretchen Oldrin Mones - 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Betsy Cambria - Treasurer  
Duncan Armstrong - Trustee  
Thomas Glascock - Trustee  
Stephen F. Melore – Trustee  
Jack DeMasi - Trustee  
Anthony Guarnischelli - Trustee  
William Rogers - Trustee  
Dr. Steven Gittelman - Trustee  
Michelle Gegwich - Trustee  
Michael Mule - Trustee  
Lance Reinheimer - Executive Director  
Legislator William Spencer – 18<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
Lora Gellerstein – Legislative Aide 18<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
Bob Pilnick  
Danny Schrafel – *Long Islander News*  
Ralph Colamussi – Thatched Cottage  
Gino Scotto – CFO Westbury Manor  
Clifford E. Hotte – Community  
Virginia Hotte - Community  
William Wilkes, Sr. - Community  
William Townsend Perks – Community  
Erich Preis – Community  
Mary Fudens – Community  
Gary Marotta – Community  
Jacqueline Whelan – Community  
Ann Marie Pastore – Stenographer  
Dorothy Rowan – Community  
Other Interested Parties

**Absent:** Kevin Peterman – Secretary

**(Mr. Ron Beattie called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.)**

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Welcome to the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum. We'll start, as always, with the Pledge of Allegiance.

(SALUTE TO THE FLAG)

Thank you, all. We have our County Legislator here tonight, Doc Spencer. Did you want to make a couple of comments?

**LEGISLATOR SPENCER:**

Thank you. First of all, it's really a pleasure to be here. Again, I want to just commend the Vanderbilt Board for the job that you're doing. It's always a pleasure to be able to come down and just see really how much you've accomplished in a very short period of time.

I'm so proud to be the Legislator in this district. Just with your hard work and being able to move things forward to restore this beautiful planetarium and all the things that you have moving forward, I continue to be a partner and look forward to working with you.

I see there's a lot of excitement in the community. I did speak with the Board. I will follow the rules. I know tonight that there's going to be public comment, and they're going to keep that to a strict three minutes. I understand those are the Board's rules, and we follow those same rules at the Legislature. I guess that they will ask questions, if they so desire.

But, anyway, thank you for having me. I wanted to be here. I do have a community precinct meeting on public safety with the South Huntington Library, so I will be leaving shortly, but I did want to come by and express my support for the Board. Thank you very much.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Doc, thanks for coming. Thank you for all your support for the institution. We really appreciate it.

I understand we probably have a lot of people who are here about the Thatched Cottage. What I would like to do is, for the sake of expediency, if anybody wants to speak to the Board, you're going to have to fill out one of the yellow cards, so we have your name.

What we're hoping to do is ask for – I believe Ralph would like to address the Board. Before I start, does anybody have anything other than the Thatched Cottage subject that they'd like to address the Board on? I suspected not.

With that, we will start with Ralph. What we'd like to do, because we're all volunteers here, if anybody has anything that Ralph didn't address that they would like to address that's obviously different, then please fill out the card. Otherwise, just to hear the same thing over and over again, we appreciate it, but for the sake of time, we'd like to get things moving.

Ralph, would you like to speak to the Board?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

I know you mentioned three minutes. I might go a couple minutes longer.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

You will not be going a couple minutes longer. It's a strict three-minute limit. You can put your remarks on the record.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Mr. President, if I may, I think we should extend the courtesy to Mr. Colamussi and give him a few more minutes.

(APPLAUSE)

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

I won't read all the details. I have copies of everything here. It's just an introduction, and it's two pages long. I'm not a quick reader. I will make it as short as possible.

First I just want to tell the Board that it's been nothing but a pleasure working with the Board over the years. I have a big dedication to what goes on here, especially as far as education and working with the community -- same as with the Thatched Cottage.

I wasn't going to mention this, but I will mention something about the Thatched Cottage. The Thatched Cottage has been here actually longer than the Vanderbilt Museum. We are celebrating our 100 year anniversary – or maybe we're right about the same time.

The Jelly Fish has been around since 1830. In 1880 is when it became the Whitney Mansion.

I do own 12 different businesses. Myself -- always in good standing. Unfortunately, we had the two worse hurricanes in history. After Lloyds of London said they're not going to be funding for another six months to a year on December 15. On December 2, with advice, I did go for reorganization, which we're already on the way out of reorganization.

The funding is finally happening. I rebuilt the building without insurance funding, without FEMA and without disappointing 400 brides over the last two years. I think that's a big achievement for myself.

They call it bankruptcy, but it was reorganization. The entities are in financially very, very good health, even through the reorganization. That's why it's ending so quickly. Thank God we just received several million dollars in aid from the insurance companies.

The first thing is that I want to thank you for the opportunity to address the Board. As most of you know, during the past week and several years of frustration over our business dealings with the Vanderbilt, I made some inappropriate comments to this group. Despite my frustration, my comments are inexcusable. I apologize for making them and for any harm that they may have caused some of you. It will never happen again.

This is from the Historical Thatched Cottage at the Vanderbilt Museum, the corporation that you asked me to form, which is in good standing. You signed the contract for the RFP that I was selected for to do catering here. Suffolk County –

**MR. BEATTIE:**

That's three minutes. Mr. Collamussi, just one second, please. Let me just have a vote from the Board without objection for Ralph to continue.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

I'll make a motion.

**MR. GLASCOCK:**

I'll second. Why don't we allow another three minutes?

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Okay. Without objection? **(Vote: 11/0/0/4 Not Present: Dr. Gittelman & Mr. Rogers. Absent: Mr. Peterman. One vacancy.)**

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Let me ask you a question. This is something that is an issue to the paper. If someone else wants to read this, they can be a lot quicker than I can. It's nothing personal; it's just that maybe somebody else can just read this.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

No, we'd prefer if you read it, Ralph.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Okay. "Dear Respected Members" – this is addressed to the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board of Trustees. "Dear Respected Members of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board, this letter will serve to request the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board to execute a viable contract with the Historical Thatched Cottage at the Vanderbilt Museum as per authorization by the Suffolk County Legislature over six months ago."

"The Historical Thatched Cottage at the Vanderbilt Museum was selected as a preferred concession vendor. Noel Gish, the Vanderbilt Museum Director at the time, sent a note stating that the final contract would be sent to the Suffolk County Legislature and the Vanderbilt Trustees for approval. See attached. It took approximately two years for the contract to arrive."

"On March 6, 2013, I signed and forwarded to you in good faith the Vanderbilt Museum catering concession licensing agreement, which was prepared by the Legislative Attorney, Mr. George Nolan, with my input."

**(Dr. Gittelman & Mr. Rogers entered the meeting at 7:15 p.m.)**

"On May 1, 2013 a meeting took place with the Suffolk County Parks Department Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature. Mr. Reinheimer and Mr. Dujmic attended and spoke in favor of the Historical Thatched Cottage of the Vanderbilt Museum proposal and in an effort to encourage an authorization of a concession agreement at the Vanderbilt Museum, which received a motion and a second to approve with a vote of 5-0-0-0. See attached."

"On July 30, 2013 the Suffolk County Legislature unanimously voted to authorize the Vanderbilt Museum through the Director of the Board of Trustees to execute a licensing agreement to be executed with the Historical Thatched Cottage at the Vanderbilt Museum. See attached document."

"The Legislature specifically requested the museum strengthen its fiscal position by the finding new sources of revenue and that it generated new revenue to support its operations. The contract with the Historical Thatched Cottage at the Vanderbilt Museum was one of the ways that this request was to be made."

"For almost eight months I have been requesting a final copy of the executed contract. Is it not the fiduciary responsibility of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Executive Board to execute that contract upon approval from the Suffolk County Legislature in a timely fashion in order to begin generation of revenue?"

"I responded to the Request for Proposal because, like the Thatched Cottage, I consider the museum a historical treasure. When I received confirmation that we were to proceed forward and work in partnership with the Vanderbilt Board to boost its financial stability, I proceeded in good faith as I awaited the executed contract. I was committed to ensure the implication of a successful concession program at the Vanderbilt. I was encouraged to continue forward with planning of logistics which would serve as the foundation of our plan."

"I was so committed to this project that I invested my own funds and expended considerable effort, time and energy in setting up a viable corporation as was proposed. I also created an initial cross marketing campaign outreach announcing our partnership and illustrating the upcoming opportunities which would take place for the museum. This marketing was shared with the public by the Vanderbilt Director. I invested in the development of a sound catering business plan to benefit the museum."

"In addition to the above, I began outreach to the local community and its members to ensure that everyone was working together to support this project. As you can imagine, I have strong relationships with the community. Because of the nature of my business, restaurant and catering establishments deal with ongoing concerns from the community and its residents due to their operations and how it affects the community as a whole."

"Like the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum, I have had to address those concerns by the community about operations and it affects the local residents. I have built strong relationships within this community and work closely with everyone including the community activists who have filed lawsuits against municipalities, institutions and businesses and who are committed to maintaining integrity of our local town. We are all committed to working in harmony for the best of our community."

"With the support of the community and as a stakeholder in Centerport, this neighborhood and with the Vanderbilt Museum, I believe that through listening and addressing community concerns, harmony can be achieved as long as we deal both ethically, honestly, transparently and maintain clear, committed communications on an ongoing basis."

"All this was done in good faith trusting the word of the Vanderbilt Museum Board and Director. I was assured on numerous times that the contract would be fully executed by the Board in a timely fashion, yet nothing arrived. So I continued forward in good faith without an executed contract. And still to date after approximately eight months of work, I have not received the executed contract."

"Instead within the last few weeks, I was informed that the Board would not proceed forward with the contract and would rather consider other options. The reasoning was I was restructuring another business which is not involved in our agreement due to recent economical challenges of hurricane damage and the slowness of the insurance companies to react and respond."

"We are much alike. The Vanderbilt Museum is a national treasure that, like my business, has fallen upon the economic times. In my financial plan, I had to seek bankruptcy protection just as the Vanderbilt Museum had to seek legislative assistance. It was clear to me that I had to restructure my business model and address the recent challenges which have taken place as a fiscally responsible citizen. My actions should be considered an asset to the museum."

"Due to my experience with restructuring, I am in a unique position to assist the Board to turn around the national and local treasure and boost the financial foundation of this historical landmark while balancing concerns of the community."

"After all this time, to not proceed forward with this agreement we had is not ethical and not dealing in a fair manner. I am a local businessman who was led to believe by the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum as well as the Suffolk County Legislature that my proposal to the museum would be the best and most viable opportunity to the museum and that we would proceed forward with an executed contract in the effort to work in partnership to strengthen the fiscal position of the museum."

"I, in good faith, began preparations to execute my proposal relying on the words of the Vanderbilt Museum Board and Director. The investment into the Vanderbilt Museum was based on my trust that the Board was operating in an honest, professional, ethical and trustworthy manner and that the Board was representing the public, local residents and Suffolk County's best interest."

"What happened? Mr. Reinheimer and Mr. Dujmic went to the Legislature to present my company as a viable fiscal option. Their recommendation was authorized but still the final contract had not appeared. I have been told that another vendor has directly approached a specific member of the Board following my company's approval by the Legislature in order to maintain the contract."

"If that information is true, it would have been the responsibility of the other vendor to have submitted a timely response prior to the selection of the Historical Thatched Cottage at the Vanderbilt Museum's proposal and authorization so a selection would be fair."

"I am committed to this relationship. I committed to ensure the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum is successful. I am committed to helping the museum become fiscal stable. I even offered to invest more into the contract by increasing the contract annual license agreement we made so far of \$135,000 to \$270,000 which would be phased in over a five-year period in order to insure success of the project. I offered to invest money into the project providing additional revenue-generating amenities that would only benefit the museum and Suffolk County as well as the Town of Huntington."

"I committed to providing a state-of-the-art tent for outdoor events which, through the latest German technology, is soundproof and will address the concerns of the local residents about lighting. We discussed the possibility of including a \$4.5 million green building, trolley service to help transport people around the property, and

restoration of the historic landmarks on the property such as the airplane hangar.”

“As I have stated all along, our agreements would result in providing valuable equity into the museum, would address the concerns of the local residents that may arise and would support the Town and County to reestablish the Vanderbilt as a viable regional tourist attraction here on Long Island. My work will help the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum and is designed to fulfill the request of the Suffolk County Legislature to the Vanderbilt Museum Board to strengthen its fiscal position, finding new sources of revenue and generating new revenue to support its operations.”

“Please understand that I have worked hard to proceed forward in good faith. I have expended an abundance of resources to prove my commitment and dedication to this project. I believe that my experience and dedication to our local community including many years of philanthropic support for numerous local charitable organizations uniquely qualifies me to partner with the respected members of this Board to support this wonderful cultural and historical resource.”

“I am requesting that you uphold the agreement and decision of the Suffolk County Legislature to approve the execution of the contract which I signed with the understanding that we are building a relationship together. Please let me continue to work with the Board and the community to serve their respective needs. Please do the ethical thing – the original promise to my company.”

“To do so would undermine the commitment and dedication the Board is supposed to have towards the Vanderbilt Museum, to the Suffolk County Legislature – historical venue which will improve the quality of life in the local community. To do so would also serve to damage a local business owner who depended on the word and actions of the Vanderbilt Museum Board of the Trustees and the Suffolk County Legislature and invested time, money and effort into a project which was designed to benefit the cultural and historical landscape of Long Island.”

“Upon receipt of this letter, please note a copy has been sent to the Suffolk County Legislature. I am available to discuss any further details. Please feel free to contact me. I look forward to being involved in the future success of this agreement. Kindly, Ralph Colamussi, President.”

There is back-up documentation. I have something to – a copy of this to issue to everyone here. I do have two copies of – actually one copy – no two copies of the complete documents with all the amendments to it. The only thing that isn't here, which was sent, is the signed copy of the contract. The draft is here. The signed undrafted copies were sent. One was sent to Board and the Legislature and one is here already. These are two other copies.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Mr. Chairman, may I be heard, considering that I was mentioned by name? This isn't the first time I've been mentioned by name this week. I'd like to address Mr. Colamussi and ask him a few questions.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Sure.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Mr. Colamussi, you might have noticed that there is an increased police presence here today. Did you notice that?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Yes.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

I understand that you sent out an email to have people come here and support you. I commend you for doing that.

But if we're going to tell the story here, let's tell the whole story. Why don't you indicate the statement that was made that precipitated the police presence here today and why a panic button had to be installed here at the Vanderbilt Museum and at Legislator Spencer's office?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Okay, I did that in my first statement.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

No, you didn't say what you said. You said you made an inappropriate statement. Why don't you tell these individuals who came here to support you and tell this Board what the statement was that you made.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

I was advised just to read this statement.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Okay, well, I'll ask you a question and you either agree with me or disagree with me. Okay?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Okay.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Didn't you make a statement – actually, you made it on more than one occasion. You said it once, and when you were corrected, you said it two more times as serious as can be, that if you didn't get your contract, you were going to come down here to this meeting with a shotgun. Isn't that right?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

That was absolutely not the truth.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

What did you say? Correct me. And bear in mind the person you said it to is standing here in the audience tonight.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

I believe I said it twice. With everything that went on with this Board and being –

**MR. DUJMIC:**

What was the statement, Mr. Colamussi? Clarify for all of us, since I apparently got it wrong.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

That I was victimized and I said for what the Vanderbilt Board – after signing this contract – and I said it in jest, everybody should be shot.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

You said it in jest that everyone should be shot?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

I don't know what "in jest" means, but I said it in frustration or whatever. I mean, they lied to me, everyone should be shot. I said that, and I apologized for saying that. It was said in a manner that I wasn't serious that day. I was the most happiest person in the world that day because when I did go to Doctor Spencer's office, we were checking on whether Congressman Israel got the paperwork.

That was the day, the most happiest day in about six months of my life. Mr. Gino Scotto, who is over here, has voluntarily put up \$400,000 to get the Thatched Cottage out of reorganization. The Thatched Cottage has \$4 million – about a million dollars just given to them from the insurance, with \$4 million being held up by FEMA and other things. The Thatched Cottage has a lot of money. Thank God I have someone I have worked with in the past with many fundraisers, who has put up – I have to say – a little bit money just to get me out of the financial crisis I'm in. It's a very short crisis, and it is over.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

I commend the gentleman for doing that. That's wonderful. But there was a police investigation as a result of this, wasn't there?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

What? I was talked to by the D.A.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

The D.A.'s Office.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Yes.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Okay.

Let's talk about the contract.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

And most of the –

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Let's talk about the contract.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Okay.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Who was the person that sat down with you to help to try to get this contract going?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

For most of the years it was Noel Gish.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

At the end.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Lance and yourself.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

I was, right?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Yes.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

I went down to the Legislature on your behalf, didn't I?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Yes.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

That was in July.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

I don't remember the month.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

It was in July. After July, do you recall a wedding that took place here at the Vanderbilt on October 13? I believe it was one of your employees that got married here. Is that correct?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Yes, yes.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

It's customary whenever you hold an event at this facility that the – what kind of fee has to be paid up front?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

The fee is in the contract.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

And what fee is that? The site fee?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Yes.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Okay. What site fee was paid for that party?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

It was the site fee that's in the contract.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Was anything paid?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

I believe the site fee was paid.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

If I ask Lance, is he going to tell me that it was paid?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

I believe it was paid.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Well, didn't you indicate to Mr. Reinheimer that you were going to take care of the site fee? In fact, you renegotiated the site fee, and you said that because you believed you had the contract, that the party shouldn't be paying \$6,000 – am I incorrect in my numbers, Lance -- but they should be paying \$2,500. Is that right?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

No, the –

**MR. DUJMIC:**

I'm asking Lance, just so he can clarify for us.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Yes, I believe it was \$6,500 and according to Ralph in the contract, because he said that the wedding arrangements were made within six months, that it was only \$2,000. I debated with Ralph on the telephone that in my opinion the contract was not executed because it was not signed, and I felt that \$6,500 is our going rate. We do, in fact, get \$6,500 for weddings that are booked within six months. That's been our practice, and that's what we've been doing. He assured us that he would send a check -- get a check for \$2,000.

At that point, two days or three days before the wedding, I didn't want to hold things up and I just said just give us the check. He indicated he was going to have a check before the wedding. As a matter of fact,

Carol Sperandeo waited until five o'clock on the Saturday before the wedding. The wedding was on October 13, which is a Sunday afternoon. We never received that check. We never received a check from Ralph.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Have you received it to date?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

We haven't received anything.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

I would have to – again, the check was given by the party. If the check – I was never told at one time that the check did not come. I will go to the party who had the party and tell them. But the amount is the amount that was in the contract. Nothing different.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Regardless, we didn't receive either, did we?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

I never got a statement. This is the first time I'm told that it was given, and it wasn't for me to pay the fee. It was the person who had the wedding.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Right, I understand. Let's move along. You spoke about that you would be the most viable option of anyone that comes forward in the future. That's what you said in your letter or I'm paraphrasing. I don't want to misquote you, but I believe you did state in here that you would be the most viable option for the Vanderbilt, correct?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Yes.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

And you would probably also agree with me – well, maybe you wouldn't under these circumstances – but generally you would probably agree with me that bidding for work would provide some type of competition, right? If a group were bidding for a particular contract, there's going to be some type of a competition for it, right?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Well, the amounts of the fees are already in the contract.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

But if we opened it up the RFP –

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Yes.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Then we would be able to select from a number of different groups, right?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

You already did that.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

We did?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Yes, four or five years ago.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

No, actually. We've had this discussion over and over. I'm not going to belabor it, but the bottom line is there was never an RFP award granted.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

You're wrong.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

No, I'm correct.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

If you check the Legislative – and Lora who dug up the minutes will state when Lance said, it was done, and, Ralph, you have the contract. That you are wrong.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

I'm wrong a lot. I actually thought – I'm going to withhold my comment. You and I will talk about it later.

But with regard to being a viable option, Ralph, excuse me, Mr. Colamussi, you have to admit that the incident that took place in October and filing for bankruptcy took place after the July meeting. Isn't that correct?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Well, the fee that was paid wasn't due by me. It was due by the customer. If the customer didn't pay for it, I'm going to check on it.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

But you interceded on the customer's behalf and negotiated with Lance, because in your opinion, you didn't believe that they should have to pay the \$6,500. You thought they should have to pay the \$2,000, right? You just said it on the record.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Well, that's what the contract fee says, and that's what the customer was given, the fee in the contract.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

So you interceded on the customer's behalf, right?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

I told them what the contract said. The contract said that fee, and that's what the fee was.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

So you became the go-between between the customer and Lance, right?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Not the go-between. I just represented what the contract said and that's how much had to be paid.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Okay, but when did you file for bankruptcy?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

December 2.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

So that was after the July meetings, correct?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Yes.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Okay. You read the contract, right?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Yes.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

I'll show it to you, if you want. I'll read it aloud, so everyone can hear it. This is a contract that you signed, correct?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Yes.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

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**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

I don't have a copy of that.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

I will gladly give it to you. Just let me read it aloud. I will hand it to you and you can tell me if I'm wrong. Actually, do you know what? Here's what we'll do. Pass this around to Mr. Colamussi.

**MS. GEGWICH:**

Mr. Vice President, can I read it, please?

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Sure.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

That is the draft, not the final copy.

**MS. GEGWICH:**

What are you looking to be read?

**MR. DUJMIC:**

I only passed it over because he said he wanted to see it. I'm looking under Section C where it says immediate termination and the grounds for it.

**MS. GEGWICH:**

"The licensor may terminate the agreement immediately upon such terms and conditions it deems appropriate upon the following events which constitute a default. Licensee failure to perform any duty required of it under Paragraph 3 of this exhibit."

“However, it shall be in the licensor’s discretion to allow for reasonable delays that the licensor determines are not caused or prolonged by licensee’s actions. Or, number two, a failure to maintain the amounts and types of insurance required by this agreement. Or a failure to comply with federal, state or local laws, rules, regulations, or license for policies nor directives, or for the licensee’s bankruptcy or insolvency or the licensee’s failure to cooperate in an audit.”

**MR. DUJMIC:**

So the bankruptcy or insolvency is in there in the contract, right?

**MS. GEGWICH:**

Yes.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

But the company that signed the contract, the Historical Thatched Cottage at the Vanderbilt Museum, is not in bankruptcy.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Who are the Board Members?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

What?

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Who are the Board Members of the Historical Thatched Cottage at the Vanderbilt Museum? It’s a corporation; who are the Board Members?

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

I am the Board Member.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

The sole Board Member.

**MR. MULE:**

Mr. President, can I make a motion to go into executive session concerning contractual documents?

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Mr. Mule, I oppose that motion because Mr. Colamussi opened up this line of questioning when he brought – this is what this is all about. This is all about the contract. He brought it here.

**MR. MULE:**

But I'd like to make the motion and see if there's a second.

**MS. GEGWICH:**

I'll second it.

**MR. MULE:**

So we have a second, Mr. President.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Okay.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Can I say something else?

**MS. GEGWICH:**

We're going to go into executive session and then be back.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Well, we have a motion if we want to go into executive session. All those for it? Against? **(Vote: 8/3/2/2 Opposed: Mr. Dujmic, Mr. Beattie & Ms. Cambria. Abstentions: Dr. Gittelman & Mr. Rogers. Absent: Mr. Peterman. One Vacancy.)** That's eight; we have a majority. Let's go into executive session.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Let me just say that in the interest of transparency, I voted no and I think that everyone should hear this.

**MS. GEGWICH:**

We'll be right back.

**(EXECUTIVE SESSION 7:45 P.M – 7:55 P.M.)**

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Very good. We're back in session.

**MR. MULE:**

Mr. President, I'd like to address Mr. Colamussi.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Mike, go ahead.

**MR. MULE:**

I think I could speak for the Board when I say that I appreciate the comments of Mr. Colamussi. We do appreciate your commitment to the community.

The Board, obviously, disagrees with much of what was written in the letter that you read. I can say that the Board makes a determination in the best interest of the Vanderbilt Museum.

At this point, there is no sense in commenting further at this time. This isn't something where we should litigate or dispute facts in a public forum. I think we should move on and take the public comments at this time.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Very good. Thank you, Mike.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

I think there should be one more thing said, but –

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Ralph, we have given you way more than your three minutes. I think at this point, there are numerous people who want to talk to the Board.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

Okay, but I think with Mr. Dujmic with what he said, I think there should be one more thing said.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

We disagree. You had your time to speak. Let's move on to the public comments.

**MR. COLAMUSSI:**

It's not fair. Mr. Dujmic had a secret agreement – meeting with me, and I think the Board should know about it. Pete Gunther was at the meeting. I think the Board should know that.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

That's enough, Ralph. Clifford Hotte.

**MR. HOTTE:**

Thank you. I appreciate the opportunity to present before you. I'm a member of the local community. I've lived on Prospect Road for 27

years with my wife, Virginia. We have known the Colamussi's since the time that we moved in. He has always shown himself to be a quality individual and a very strong supporter of our community.

We would hope that he could continue to do business and this contract would mean an awful lot for him. I think it would also mean an awful lot for the Vanderbilt who's been looking for different ways to supplement the income that comes their way.

I know you were unsuccessful with the tower and other activities that haven't really panned out. We have a viable contract on the table that you banged out the terms of over the course of however many years.

I don't believe that the reason that you would not want to go with this is anything other than making sure that you're able to get the money that is going to come to you via the contract and possibly the fact that he did go for Chapter 11 through one of this organizations, may give you some sense of hesitancy for that.

I think it would be easy to proceed now and get whatever money is coming to you. And, if, in fact, Mr. Colamussi did not comply with the terms of the agreement, at that time, you will have every opportunity to exercise the terms of the contract and get rid of him and go somewhere else.

The fact that he did go through reorganization in one of his companies is not something that is out of the ordinary in the United States of America these days. I believe Donald Trump went through it four times himself.

I mean, just because you try to get back on your feet doesn't mean that you're not a capable businessman. I would hope that this Board would take that all into consideration and rethink their decision not to go forward with Mr. Colamussi and give him another chance. Thank you very much.

(APPLAUSE)

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Thank you. Mary Fudens. I'm sorry if I didn't pronounce that correctly.

**MS. FUDENS:**

Close enough. Thank you for allowing me to speak. I guess you kind of caught me off guard because I was surprised at this Board Meeting that I was hearing the things that I was hearing. I expected that I was just going to be able to say very nice things, and then we would all go home.

Anyway, on behalf of Ralph, I would like to tell you I'm a realtor. I've known Ralph for 15 years. I have worked with him when I was the Treasurer and President of the Long Island Board of Realtors, Huntington Chapter. We worked together. Our events were always held at the Thatched Cottage.

I found Ralph to be not only gracious and helpful but overly generous each and every time to this day. Yesterday we actually had an event, and it was so beautifully done. He is so gracious. He did speak with us, and he was wonderful.

Ralph's only fault is that he is overly generous, I think, to most people. I've known his family for many years. They are wonderful, honest, loyal people. I feel that honestly Ralph has worked so hard to do the right thing for the entire community and certainly for the Vanderbilt. I think that you should think about what you plan to do, which is if you'd like to discontinue with him.

I think that he is certainly the best suited. He puts his heart and soul into every single thing that he does. Every project that he approaches, he does it wonderfully. You know that by not only the Thatched Cottage but the Jelly Fish. They are absolutely the two most beautiful things that you have in this town, except for, of course, the Vanderbilt Museum, which he will add to with your help. All together I know you can do a wonderful job. I'm hoping and looking forward to you really reconsidering and going forward with Ralph. I thank you very much.

(APPLAUSE)

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Thank you. Erich Preis.

**MR. PREIS:**

Hi, how are you? I don't really know where to begin about the character of Ralph Colamussi. I've worked with Ralph since I'm the age of nine – no, the age of sixteen, being a waiter. I'm sorry, I've

known him since I'm nine, but I worked for him at sixteen as a waiter at the Thatched Cottage. I worked there for years.

I've seen many good things from children with cancer, to benefits for politicians, to just great things. I can't say enough about him.

I am the founder of the Spirit of Huntington Arts Center. We're merged with South Huntington Public Schools. I did the George Washington mural on the corner of 25A and Park Avenue. It was formerly Platts Tavern.

I'm also on the Autism Spectrum. I lost my best friend on 9/11 who died in the Pentagon. When we got into the South Huntington Library, I went to Ralph and I told him I needed catering. We had a B-25 fly over our building, Kings Point Merchant Marine Academy and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Precinct was there. We had every fire district in Huntington present. Four hundred people attended. Ralph did our catering. I can't say enough good things about this man.

Being on the Autism Spectrum I'm on the Board. My Executive Director, Michael Kitakis is right here. I could say I lost my cool on my Board a number of times due to my communication issues. My heart is in the right place. Do people lose their cool and say wrong things? Yes. I can assure you that Ralph is not a violent man. It hurts me to hear this.

I feel that maybe this isn't the right thing to say, but do you know what? I am the founder of the Spirit of Huntington. Ralph is the image of the Spirit of Huntington. I feel – I'm speaking out of my heart. Never mind laws and legalities. I feel that you guys should give him a second chance. His heart is in the right place.

He went through two bankruptcies. The guy is just brought to his knees right now. When people are brought to their knees – when hurricanes hit and tragedies come, people say wrong things. When I relived 9/11 in November, I said wrong things to my Board that I regret. They forgave me. Sometimes people say things they don't mean out of stress. I'm asking you guys to forgive Ralph and to give him another chance. Thank you, in the name of the Spirit of Huntington.

(APPLAUSE)

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Thank you, Erich. Laura Perks.

**MS. PERKS:**

Good evening. I'd just like to say that I'm so disturbed by what happened here before as a community member. Nobody deserves that kind of behavior. I'm not going to stand here and scold, but everybody should just take a deep breath in and realize that we're all human beings. Please behave with a little more professionalism.

I, for one, am very dissatisfied with the Board at the Vanderbilt. I've lived in this community my whole life. That just really took me for a loop. But that's not what I'm going to talk about.

I'm going to talk about Ralph and his family and what he and his family have meant to this community. When I was a little girl, the Thatched Cottage was a dilapidated nightmare. His dad and his family returned it to the beautiful place that it is now. It's been there for a long time.

When we were little we came here to the Vanderbilt. It was starting to become dilapidated, too. Thanks to Lance's guidance, I think you guys are putting it in the right direction, and I'm so pleased about that. I can't tell you how much.

Now we're looking at my friends who are having grandchildren now. Their kids are having kids. They're coming here. I know that's what this place is all about.

Ralph has helped so many of us. He helped my friend Ginny's mom's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday and our other friend's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We all have stories. Every one of us probably has a story with the Thatched Cottage and/or the Jelly Fish. It's the fabric of our community.

He got so much garbage from a couple of people on the Mill Pond when he was creating the Jelly Fish for no reason. He's gone above and beyond noise abatement. You're going green and doing the right thing and employing so many people. I look at Matthew over there. I love the guy. He's part of our lives, not to mention that he knows what kind of vodka I drink. That doesn't hurt either, dude.

He has helped so many organizations. He's helping us at Centerport United Methodist, the nursery school. You know so many of you have kids in pre-school or grandchildren in pre-school. Children need to be

in pre-school. We need to get that nursery school back up on its feet again. He's helping us to do a really, really beautiful fundraiser. That's one of a million things that he's done.

I think what Erich said, and I'm just going to chime in on that, too, but hasn't anyone ever said, "Oh, I'm going to kill you," or "I'm going to break your face?" Considering what he's been through, please, please reconsider this. We're all backing him here. He does a great job.

Anyway, I just want to say thank you. To those of you that are able to hold their heads and their tongues, I appreciate it. Please continue with your great work.

(APPLAUSE)

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Thank you, Laura. William Townsend Perks.

**MR. PERKS:**

My name is William Perks, and my scouting years were here at the Vanderbilt with Will Young who was Mr. Vanderbilt's Curator. From there back in the 1980's I hosted the Tall Ships and had a Captain's Ball here. We had about 250 people at a black tie at Vanderbilt. It was the main event.

Without a doubt, the Vanderbilt didn't have a caterer, and we were desperate for it at the time, but we pulled it off.

After that some time later on when I was really feeling ambitious, I became a Trustee here in the 90's. Dr. Gittelman will attest to that.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I sure will.

**MR. PERKS:**

It was a great four years.

My family goes back here on the peninsula, they were here since 1774. There are some deep roots. As we all know and what I wanted to convey to you is back in the 90's, we all talked back then of getting a caterer and getting food service.

Any museum that you go to has this. It will make the Vanderbilt – it will add that extra venue that is desperately needed. We knew it back

in the 90's. We were trying to do it then, but the Health Department and everything got in the way.

The work that I'm sure you all know that you've put into this thing already, to get it to where you are now, to all of a sudden – the hurricane hurt more people than just Ralph. I mean, he's still standing. A lot of people weren't. He's been through some terrible times, and I would ask you all to reach down and look into your hearts and say, "Are we going to help our neighbors that are in trouble? Are we going to hang in there and give him a shot at it?"

I don't know how much time it would take you to defer this and go on to the next RFP. Months turn into years, and that money is important. That service is important for the Vanderbilt to become an excellent museum. I know that that's in everybody's interest that's here tonight, to make this place work and work well.

So I urge you to think carefully. We know that there have been mistakes that have been made. There's no question about it. We all support you. Believe me. I don't think there's anybody here tonight that doesn't want this place to succeed. We hope you can work it out. Thank you for your time.

(APPLAUSE)

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Thank you, William. And thanks for your past service. We appreciate it. Jacqueline Whalen.

**MS. WHALEN:**

Hello, good evening. I just want to thank you for letting me speak. I'm also part of this community. I've been here now for the past 16 years that I moved here with my family from Manhattan.

I have to say that I have had the pleasure of knowing Ralph, meeting Ralph. He's created jobs for people in this community. He has been unbelievably the most giving person I really have encountered in this community. I had a fundraiser for children of India. We are also going to be hosting another fundraiser for breast cancer. I'm very much involved in my community and in my children's lives.

He's created jobs for the kids, which is great. It keeps them out of trouble. Honestly, I really think like Mary and everybody has said, you have to give people a second chance.

Sometimes people get very arrogant and can be very arrogant. That doesn't mean that maybe you are arrogant. Maybe it's just the way you came across. Maybe it's the same thing with Ralph when he got upset and when he was pushed up against the wall. People might judge you from what they just see, but maybe that's not really who you are.

I really feel that you should give Ralph another chance because he will improve and make this really happen. He puts his heart into everything.

It took him years for him to do the Jelly Fish. People were going against him. What did you want, an empty building for kids to go in there and just hang out and do whatever? He created jobs. He's building. He's making this community a better place to live and creating jobs. I mean, give him a chance. Really, okay?

(APPLAUSE)

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Thank you, Jacqueline. Gary Marotta.

**MR. MAROTTA:**

I'm a son of Walt Whitman's Long Island but from the west end, Brooklyn. I've been away now for some 15 years, arrived in Buffalo April 24 with my wife Joan Vita. Joan Vita is a long time resident of this area. Her dad and mom, Nick and Ann Vita, are dear, dear very close friends of Ralph's mom and dad. That's how I know Ralph.

I know him to be a person of remarkable sensibility, a seemingly ethical, generous, sensitive person. Where I come from, western New York, western Long Island, we don't knock a guy down who is trying to get up. I would think Suffolk County and that this community would want to create synergy, want to help each other and want to extend a hand.

I read the mission statement for the Vanderbilt Museum. Its fundamental mission is educational, implies ethical dimension, implies lessons that you teach in your decisions. You have a profound fiduciary responsibility. That responsibility goes beyond the fiduciary dimension. It's the educational meaning of the Vanderbilt Museum and the decisions you make. I'd like to see a decision for Ralph and the Thatched Cottage. Thank you very much.

(APPLAUSE)

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Thank you, Gary. Bill Wilkes, Sr.

**MR. WILKES:**

Good evening. I know that Ralph – I don't really know him, but from listening to him, he's not a polished speaker. But I think what he is saying is from the heart. I believe he would provide the best break for the museum and for the community. There already is a contract, maybe not signed, but the guy really hasn't done anything wrong. I don't see one entity going bankrupt affecting the entity that's involved in negotiating with the museum. The lawyers here should know that.

I think we should give him a break, give him the contract and move forward. If he did anything wrong or does anything wrong later on, then you can pull the plug on him. You have a contract that gives you the right to do that.

Suffolk County spends a hell of a lot of money on economic development and not infrequently it's wasted. As an example, take Spellman Electric. Look it up. They got economic development money to create jobs. They built a plant in Ronkonkoma. Time went on, they outsourced their manufacturing to China, laid everybody off in Ronkonkoma and then sold the plant.

In this case, you have somebody who's putting money into the business, into the community, and the contract that you have with him doesn't cost you any money except for services that you receive. Jobs are all here. They can't be outsourced. I think you should definitely go with him and not create some long extension of time bidding for new people and having years and years go by and have the time wasted.

Some of the things that I heard Ralph say fall very closely with things that I've thought about, such as developing the seaplane hangar and other things. I'll try to work with him to make some of it real. We have a lot of good ideas and things that could make it better and bring some money into the museum itself. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Thank you, Bill.

That concludes the public comments, unless anybody else has any comments to make. We're going to move on to our regular business. I would welcome everybody to stay, but if you would like to leave at this point, please feel free. We're not going to be insulted about it.

At this point, I'd like to ask for a motion for the previous meeting minutes to be approved.

**MR. DUJMIC:**

Motion.

**MR. DEMASI:**

Second.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Without objection? **They are approved. (Vote: 13/0/0/2  
Absent: Mr. Peterman. One Vacancy.)**

Committee Reports, Finance/Treasurer Report.

**MS. CAMBRIA:**

I have the Treasurer's Report for the month of January. If you remember, we had not meeting in February, so this is how it went in January. You all have copies in front of you.

I call your attention to the "Admissions," which were certainly up, and the "Memberships," which is down. I guess that's how it goes in January.

Under "Special Events" I'm informed that the income was specifically from the February Valentine's Day dinner.

As noted, we have not received the disbursement from Suffolk County for the funds, which we generally get, but in January we did not.

"Site Use" indicates \$8,722, which is deposits for a party or two and also weddings in the future.

The revenue is down, but, again, that's because of the lack of disbursement of County funds.

Under "Expenses" the only thing that seems to be a little bit high is the "Professional" expenses, which I'm advised has to do with tree work and computers –

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Excuse me, I'm sorry. Everybody in the back, if you don't mind, we're just having the background noise in our acoustics. It's affecting our acoustics and the ability to take notes. Thank you.

**MS. CAMBRIA:**

Do you want me to repeat anything?

**MS. PASTORE:**

No, we're good.

**MS. CAMBRIA:**

Okay. The "Professional" expenses in the month of January had to do with additional tree work and computer technical support.

Everything else looks to be right in line.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Any questions?

**MS. GEGWICH:**

Yes, are we expecting to get the County funds? Are we just getting them late?

**MS. CAMBRIA:**

Yes.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Yes.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Very good. Any further questions for Betsy?

Let's move on to Education and Exhibits.

**MS. OLDRIN MONES:**

Even though weather forced closing for several days in January and February, attendance in the mansion was good. With four snow days in January 2014, there were 310 mansion tours, down from 400 tours in January of 2013.

This February, there were 465 mansion tours compared to 191 tours in 2013. Both years had four snow days in February. Bad weather impacted our planetarium school shows and the February break week. Planetarium shows have been rescheduled, and attendance for the February break was a steady flow, which amounted to \$22,000 in admissions.

Lorraine, Lance and Elizabeth helped to showcase the Science Bus to BOCES. Their representative is helping now to promote the bus to districts, especially grant schools, and Brentwood is a school that has started to book.

Dave and Lorraine are busy creating planetarium programs for the Fall and Spring. One that sounds particularly interesting and relevant is a new "Weather Program." It will encompass such weather events such as nor'easters, Sandy-like hurricanes, snow storms, polar vortex, tides, winds and other Long Island specific weather events. The program will be appropriate for students in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade and up. This will be one of the new school programs offered in the 2014-15 education brochure that staff is now working to complete.

Beth has released the offerings for the Spring Recess Museum Workshops for children, and they look terrific. I will pass those around so that you can see how terrific they look for yourselves. Please notice the special Earth Day Celebration offering for April 27.

Beth also has summer workshops planned. She's hoping to incorporate the Science Bus into the Natural History/Museum Workshop.

Museum Education and the mobile classroom exhibited at the Suffolk County Library and Co-Op Showcase on February 12. Several libraries have called requesting the bus for this summer.

Beth is sending museum educators to Comsewogue Library on May 12 and Middle Country Library on May 15 for their International Museum Days. We'll also be exhibiting at the Sweet Briar Nature Fair on June 14.

Stephanie reports that the Depression Glass Society visited and presented us with a plaque to display in their collection. They also donated four reference books about collectable glassware. They will

be donating the remainder of their holdings when the dissolution of their society is completed with New York State and Suffolk County.

Stephanie had a request for archival information and images from WNET for a show called "Treasures of New York."

Dale Spencer, from the Lake Ronkonkoma Society, continues to visit once a week for information regarding the Vanderbilts and Motor Parkway.

Stephanie has contacted the New Netherlands Institute to correct their website information regarding the Vanderbilts.

I know we say it sometimes at Board Meetings, but I don't think it can be said enough, that we have some wonderful, world-class staff here. I'm reminded of this every time I come.

For instance, recently Stephanie was showing me the progress in the Stoll Wing. I got to see her give an impromptu tour to a family from Israel. Her enthusiasm and her knowledge wowed them and it awed me.

If you ever have a chance to see something with Stephanie, do it, because you will be astonished at what you learn.

(APPLAUSE)

Also, if you haven't been to the Stoll Wing lately, you will be astonished at the improvements, thanks to the art of Sean Murtha and George Dante and the efforts of the entire renovation and restoration team.

As you know from what Lance sent out, there have been articles in *Newsday* and *New York Times* that highlight some of the magic that's now taking place in the Stoll Wing. I will pass around the *Newsday* one and the *New York Times* one, just in case you didn't read it.

This leads me to a letter expressing similar sentiments – you know, I just mentioned Stephanie and the staff, but these are about all of the staff. It's from the *Amsterdam at Harborside*.

"Dear Carol Sperandeo, on behalf of all of our residents who toured the Vanderbilt Mansion and Museum on Tuesday, February 25, we

want to express our appreciation of all your assistance in making our visit outstanding."

"We want to start with the special help that we received from your transportation staff that enabled our seniors to get to the mansion and then the museum without a long walk from the parking lot and even provided a ride for the drivers of the three automobiles that accompanied our bus."

"The docents were excellent in putting up with our group and the questions and showing their knowledge of the history of the Vanderbilt family."

"The catered lunch received raves from everyone. The visit to the gift shop was enjoyed by all, as was our space travel in the planetarium."

"To summarize, it was an outstanding excursion for us, and I am sure that a new group of our residents will be anxious to visit when they hear the complimentary comments from these initial visitors. Very truly yours, Audrey P. Vassel, Cultural Arts Committee Excursion Planner for the *Amsterdam at Harborside*."

I will pass this around. That concludes the Education and Exhibits Report.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Thank you, Gretchen. Any questions for Gretchen?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

I'd just like to add one other thing. We failed to mention the *Long Islander* who also covered the renovations to the Stoll Wing. The *Long Islander Newspaper* is here today, too. Thank you for your support.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Very good. We did not have a Development Committee Meeting, so we'll move on to Planning/Strategic Plan. Do you have anything on that?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

On the reaccreditation?

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Yes.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Sure. Actually most of the work we're doing now is trying to get ourselves straightened out so we know how to plan for the job at hand.

What we've been doing is reviewing the letters that have come from the AAM, which we have copies of the most recent letter. We're distributing that so you can get an idea of how rigorous the AAM is in terms of their review. This will give you a sense for what they're going to look at when they look at us and the kinds of things that they look at.

After having looked at the various letters and the self-studies, there's a lot of work to do. So what we're going to do is we're going to come back to you at each meeting with something new to do.

What we figured is this is enough for this meeting. If you'll read it between now and the next meeting and get a sense for what they look at, we would greatly appreciate it, because then you would have an idea of the scope of work.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Very good. That's how you eat an elephant, one bite at a time.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

One bite at a time, guys.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Thank you very much.

Community Relations Committee, I don't think we had any meetings on that. We probably had one today, though. We could probably count that.

Operations, Buildings and Grounds, Kevin Peterman is not here tonight.

Let's move on to Technology. I think Lance has an update on the website.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Yes, thank you. We met with Flexible Systems, and we're supposed to have the website up and running by today. It's not a problem with Flexible Systems. They actually have a test site. We just, right before

this meeting, straightened out – it has to do with our domain name and ownership and the transfer to let Flexible Systems the rights to be able to host our domain.

That took several days. It wasn't until about four o'clock this afternoon when Network Solutions, who currently host our domain name, were able to satisfy the documents that they needed in order for the transfer to go over.

We do have it. It should be up and running within about 48 hours. It takes about – Network Solutions told me it would be about 24 hours before things start rolling. According to Flexible Systems, it takes about 24 to 48 hours for the new domain location host computer to cascade through the web.

Our website looks good. It's a living organism. We've got it up and running. Once it becomes live, then we'll make some changes on that. But it looks good. It's easier to navigate. They have optimized it. I think we'll really see some benefits.

It also translates to mobile devices, which is the wave of the future. I think more people will be using the mobile devices than the computer, which is good. When you're on the road, you need maps and directions to get here, shows, purchasing of tickets, and all that stuff. It's going.

They assured us -- and it was not their fault nor our fault that it isn't up and running. Ron twisted their arms and made it clear that he wanted it up and running. There was a slight delay about getting it up.

Due to that delay, they did give us credit for two months' worth of service because the fault lay with them. They got those personnel problems straightened out. They paid attention to us. They listened to us, and they did a fabulous job. I think you'll be happy with it.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Steve.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I'm remiss, I'm sorry. There was a piece of business that was left on the table last time, and that was a revision to the mission statement that Michael kindly, shall we say, added some verbiage to it to include the planetarium. With Michael's permission, I'll read it.

"The Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum, a unique combination of mansion, marine, natural history museum, planetarium and park is dedicated to the education and enjoyment of the people of Long Island and beyond."

"This mission shall be achieved through the thoughtful preservation, interpretation and enhancement of the Eagle's Nest Estate as an informal educational facility."

*"Much of the"* – and those are in italics because they're new words – "exhibition and program themes focus upon Long Island's Gold Coast era and upon William K. Vanderbilt II's desire that his marine natural history and ethnographic collections promote appreciation and understanding of the marvelous diversity of life, other cultures and scientific knowledge" – and this is added – *"while Planetarium programming, more specifically, focuses on scientific knowledge and seeks to capture William K. Vanderbilt II's sense of adventure and exploration by state-of-the art entertainment."*

I would like to put in a motion that we accept the new verbiage as part of the mission statement. I would like to, with your permission, ask for a second and then discussion of the changes.

**MS. CAMBRIA:**

Second.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

So now maybe we could entertain discussion, we're open to that.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Yes, any discussion?

**MS. GEGWICH:**

I like it.

**MR. DEMASI:**

I have one minor possible correction.

**MS. PASTORE:**

Could you use the microphone, please?

**MR. DEMASI:**

I'm sorry. I have one possible minor correction where it says, "Much of the exhibition and program themes," I think the verb should be

"focuses." If you want me to go through grammatical explanation, I will, but I think "focuses" would be the right word there.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

These teachers always have their red pens out, don't they?

(LAUGHTER)

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Commentary, Gretchen, on that?

**MS. OLDRIN MONES:**

I agree.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Very good. So should we entertain a motion to accept the new mission statement?

**MS. GEGWICH:**

I'll make a motion.

**MS. OLDRIN MONES:**

Second.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Without objection? **(Vote: 12/0/0/3 Not Present: Mr. Glascock. Absent: Mr. Peterman. One Vacancy.)** Thanks for your work, Mike.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Thank you, Mike.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Okay, HR did have a meeting, but Tom Glascock had to leave early tonight, so we'll wait for that report for next time.

The Executive Director's Report.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Thank you. I'd like to start with a summary of the Capital Program. Suffolk County is in the process of adopting the Capital Program. We submitted a proposal to the County Executive's Office for a total of \$5.8 million over the course of the next three years and including 2014.

The first project is restoration and stabilization of the seaplane hangar. As most of you or all of you know, there was \$3 million for the restoration of the waterfront and the seaplane hangar. Those appropriations are well over five years, probably approaching ten years. The bonding resolution that was adopted is over ten years.

There is a County law that sunsets appropriations if no money is spent after five years. The County is closing out those appropriations, which was the fear of Steve Gittelman and a concern.

There's a long story to that, but we need to protect and preserve the seaplane hangar, have it stand for future generations and also have it there when the Board decides its future and what we should be doing with it. It's one of the last remaining privately owned seaplane hangars in this country. It's art deco. It's part of the original estate. It needs to be at minimum stabilized.

So in the Capital Program request –

**MR. BEATTIE:**

I'm sorry; can I just add one other thing to that? It's also a public danger at this point.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

That's correct.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

So there's County liability.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

So, our budget request is for \$200,000 in 2015 next year for the planning and permitting process that needs to be done due to its location next to the water.

In 2016 we're requesting \$3 million, which is really replacing the appropriations that have expired, to stabilize the foundation, to stabilize the front of that structure where the steel beam is failing on the left hand side as you look at it from the waterfront, and to remove the original ramp that's there that is in disrepair. Pieces are breaking off. It's a danger to anyone that's on the beach. That's for the restoration of the stabilization of the seaplane hangar.

The next request, the current program for the restoration of driveways and gutters has \$100,000 that's previously appropriated. I spoke to

highways and bridges, and they're going to retain a consultant to assess the structural needs of the bridge that leads into the courtyard.

This has been a discussion for a number of years. It hasn't gone forward. I met with them in January, and they're going to assess the bridge this year. They feel that the \$1 million we're requesting in 2016 is a reasonable number, but until they assess the bridge and figure out what the structural damage or what the structural needs are of the bridge to repair it, the \$1 million is a good guesstimate at this point. They will have a better number after they assess it.

The next project, improvements to the Vanderbilt Planetarium in 2015 is \$90,000 to retrofit space in the planetarium for a café. That goes in lock step with what we just discussed in terms of having food on the property. This is an independent request from any concession or any contract.

It's a space that maybe the museum can develop for pre-prepared food, not wet use. We're not putting a restaurant in there. Public Works said that that would be a problem anyway for the health code and getting approvals and permits from the Health Department.

The next project is \$200,000 for improvements to the Vanderbilt Planetarium primarily to replace the front doors and to put in ADA compliant doors in the front of the planetarium. These doors are 40 years old. Money would also be to replace the airlock doors also. That's \$200,000 to replace the doors in the front of the planetarium. That was a number that was in consult with Public Works.

The next project is waterproofing and roofs. It's an ongoing problem here. If Kevin was here, he would talk about all the water problems we have. I brought a couple of pictures to the hearing that we had in the County Executive's Office to demonstrate the water problems. One of them was a light switch that's encrusted in rust. It hit home. They see that we have some real water intrusion problems. The back stairway by the guest wing of the mansion that is in total disrepair, and it's all water intrusion.

There are walls that the water is leaching through the walls. We have roofs where we have leakage. We have ongoing work for keeping ahead or trying to at least catch up on the waterproofing and the roofing needs.

The amount we have in the current budget is \$200,000. Then for 2015 the amount is \$400,000, \$200,000 in 2016, and \$100,000 in 2017 for ongoing water projects.

The next one is rewiring of historic structures, \$100,000 in 2015. Right now that would be earmarked for rewiring of the Normandy Manor that's in need of having – there were several families living there. The wiring was done over many years. It's a hodgepodge of an electrical distribution system in there.

Then a new project is reconstruction of Vanderbilt seawall. Hurricane Sandy helped to cause some damage to the seawall. We didn't get funds for that. The County didn't apply for funds for that, but we certainly had some damage.

In addition to the three major areas that there's damage to the seawall, it needs to be re-pointed. The seawall that needs to be replaced is the granite block side of the property, that seawall. It's in dire need of re-pointing.

The balance of the property -- the seawall that's plastic and is holding up, but it's really standing the test of time. But this other seawall needs to be repaired. It prevents run-off into the water. It prevents pollution, and it also protects our property.

That's a summary of the Capital Program. Are there any questions?

**MR. ARMSTRONG:**

Lance, is there any way you can get the money sooner than what you have on the calendar? We have two years before some of the major problems which are in pretty bad shape get --

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

It's probably best to review the process of the Capital Program. First of all, the Capital Program and Budget is not a real budget. It's a plan. They're not appropriations. So this is a plan of how to schedule funds.

In the adopted column on the last page, you see \$200,000 for waterproofing, that's all we have in the Capital Program. That money doesn't become real until the Legislature adopts a resolution to appropriate it. So it's a schedule.

I failed to mention \$200,000 in addition to waterproofing is to redo the roof for Normandy Manor. We have \$450,000 that was previously

appropriated. Public Works came out and looked at the roof. We had a short meeting the other day – two days ago to look at the roofing at Normandy Manor. When the tenants move out, this is a perfect time to do the roof and do some heavy construction.

The \$200,000 in addition to the \$450,000 should give sufficient funds to do that and also other work that needs to be done at the museum. You can't advance money to 2014 and request it in 2014. The only way you can get funds advanced is if the County takes funds that are scheduled in another Capital Program.

As you can see, the bulk of the money in 2015, \$825,000 restoration, it takes time to get the permits for the seaplane hangar. That's why the \$200,000 is just for planning. The \$90,000 is a number that I consulted with Public Works on what it would cost to retrofit space here in the planetarium for a café and waterproofing of roofs to upfront some of the funding, \$400,000 in 2015.

So 2015 is really what we're concentrating on. It's the same thing for reconstruction of the seawall; \$35,000 is mostly for the permitting process, the environmental permits that you need.

You appropriate the money in 2015 to do the planning on those two projects. By the time they retain a consultant and they get the permits, it's going to be the end of 2016 probably. The money could be appropriated 2016, but you might not see work done until 2017. Like Steve has endured, if you appropriate money for the seaplane hangar, you may never see it start. This is just a plan.

It may not be as ambitious as we should have when you have a 43 acre, 100 year old estate. You need a lot of funds to keep it from falling in disrepair. It's a delicate balance between what we need to do today and what we'd like to do.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Lance, can I ask a question? This is regarding the process that I think piggybacks on what Duncan was asking. In the \$5 million or so that was previously allocated and I believe bonded – but I could be wrong on that – for the waterfront, instead of it sunseting, is there a way to spend some of that money that was approved in order to reset the sunseting?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

From my discussions with Public Works, the money really is gone. It should have been closed out years ago. Bond Counsel, at this point, the way they interpret bonding resolutions is that that was ten years ago. That's five different Legislature sessions that passed. They feel that anything that goes forward on a bonding resolution that's ten years old, needs to be reauthorized.

The short answer is –

**MR. BEATTIE:**

No.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Right, no.

Also, the process – the money was never bonded. They don't bond money. They have the authorization to bond it. They don't bond the funds until they start the project and there's a need for those funds. The County did not go out and borrow any money, that I'm aware of, for the seaplane hangar, that \$3 million, and for the restoration of the waterfront until they started to go forward, and then they bond what they feel they need in the short run. If they did a partial part of the project and Public Works said they were doing \$500,000 worth of work, they would only bond \$500,000 even though they may be authorized to bond \$3 million.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Thank you.

**MR. MULE:**

Mr. President, may I –

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Sure.

**MR. MULE:**

Lance, I think you mentioned that there are two seaplane hangars on Long Island.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

No, I said it's one of the last remaining in the United States.

**MR. MULE:**

In the United States?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Yes, in the United States.

**MR. MULE:**

Do you know how many there are?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

No, I think it's under three or four, though.

**MR. MULE:**

In the whole United States?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Privately owned.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Willie has another one down in Fisher's Island. It's a twin of this one.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

I didn't know that. Is it still standing?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Yes, it's still operational. Yes, it's super.

**MR. MULE:**

Do you know if there are any on Long Island?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

I'm not aware of any seaplane hangars on Long Island.

**MR. MULE:**

Thank you.

**MS. CAMBRIA:**

I have a question regarding Normandy Manor. You said – I don't understand some of this. The project has an appropriation balance of \$450,000 for construction. You are requesting that they give us money for wiring and roofing?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Right, there are two different projects. There's a project specifically for Normandy Manor. There's \$450,000. Those are appropriations the County already authorized Public Works to spend those funds. Assuming that the County Executive approves the purchase orders, that project can go forward. Those are real funds.

**MS. CAMBRIA:**

What would they use that for?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Re-roofing of Normandy Manor. Then the \$200,000, which we're getting ready to request a resolution for that's in another project, can be used to supplement Normandy Manor if that needs to be done. Then the \$100,000 is a third project that can be used for any of the buildings on the estate. But right now, we're finishing up with the marine museum. A lot has been done over the years in the mansion to use those funds for Normandy Manor.

**MS. CAMBRIA:**

I'm concerned that when they start to do the roof, we would lose the revenue from the rental, if it's not done in a timely manner.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Well, we're working in a timely manner at this point in time. To coordinate between the tenants leaving and new tenants and having it done before the bad weather next winter, so that we don't lose – if it's the Board's desire to continue to license that facility as a residence that we can do it without a loss of too much time.

But you're right; there will be a period of time when it's probably prudent to wait until the roofing is done. They're assessing the expense that they have to replace the roof. When we last looked at it about a year or so ago, they said about a third of the roof from the eaves up needed to be replaced. There is a lot of rotten wood there.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Any other questions for Lance? Is that the end of your report?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

No. I was just getting warmed up. I'll make this quick.

The Stoll Wing, the heads are starting to go up. It looks really good. The heads were restored on the new painted surface, and they really pop out.

The boathouse we talked about at previous meetings. We have a raccoon problem in there. We're starting – and it should be done in the next couple weeks, we'll have a raccoon relocation program.

(LAUGHTER)

That should be starting. We had a lot of tree service done this past winter.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Excuse me, but are they going to be relocated in the Stoll Wing?

(LAUGHTER)

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Good question. We had tree work done on the property. It was halted because of the weather. They came back this week. I think they might have finished it today.

But I do have some disturbing news about one of our trees that is near and dear to us. We have two trees in the courtyard, two original trees. The one by the arcade is fine.

We discovered after the storm melt that when things were pushed against the tree, the base of the tree, there's a little section that opened up. We looked in there, and you can stick your head in this hole.

We had an arborist come and look at the tree this week and do drillings. He said he went up six feet and after drilling an inch, it's hollow on that tree.

It's his professional opinion and looking at this tree, that that tree has to come down. It's red oak. That's the tree in front of the Memorial Wing. It breaks our heart because when we trim that – even the wedding photographers were upset because it impacts the lighting so the whole atmosphere and looks of that courtyard are going to be really adversely impacted when that tree is removed.

I wanted to bring this forward to the Board so that no one is caught by surprise. But I had a professional look at it. Even a non-professional,

a layman – when you look at the hole that’s in the base of this tree, seriously you could stick a head in there, and it’s all hollow at the base.

**MR. GUARNISCHELLI:**

That’s where the raccoons are going to move.

(LAUGHTER)

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

I’m surprised when I looked in there, there wasn’t a raccoon looking back at me.

**MR. ROGERS:**

I would leave it alone.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Okay.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

I take my orders from the Board. It might be good to go slowly. We can have another arborist come in and take a look at it. I don’t want to do something that is adverse to the museum without being sure. I trust this arborist, but that’s up to the Board.

**MR. ROGERS:**

Many times they can heal themselves. They won’t be the same, but they can last. Before you take it down, I would watch it and see what happens to it.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

I seem to remember that that tree does, though, kind of lean toward the tower and a little bit toward the Memorial Wing. So as long as we don’t think any of those structures would be in danger of damage –

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

He feels that there is really no structural integrity to that tree, the weight of the tree. I agree with you. I don’t think it’s a public safety issue more than it is protecting the artifacts, which is the building. When and if that tree does fail, that it doesn’t damage the building.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

So why don’t we look at it in that sense. Then you can report back at the next meeting.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

I'll have somebody else look at the tree.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

And just the risk factor to the buildings. That's got to be our primary concern. If it looks like the buildings are in some kind of imminent danger, I mean, we've had a lot of bad weather. If weather comes in, the tree goes down and if it hurts the tower or the stairs or the Memorial Wing, etc., I just want to make sure that those are safe.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

It all depends on the direction of the wind and the weight of the tree.

**MR. MULE:**

If I may ask Lance, how big is this tree?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

It's big. It's taller than the Memorial Wing. The base is probably a four foot trunk at the base in diameter or three and a half. I would say three and a half. It's a good size tree.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

It's at least 25 feet.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

It's an original tree. When Willie was here, it was here.

**MR. MULE:**

If we could perhaps have a motion to have a second opinion, and if this thing is in grave danger of damaging the structures, that it should be removed, if the second opinion comes in the same as the first opinion. I would like to propose that as a motion.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Okay, a motion has been made.

**MR. DEMASI:**

Second.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Without objection? **(Vote 12/0/0/3 Not Present: Mr. Glascock. Absent: Mr. Peterman. One vacant position.)**

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

The traveling classroom, just to go over what Gretchen had said, Brentwood School District has booked three dates for a total of 315 people. Wyandanch has booked three dates for a total of 153 -- I should say students, not people. Also libraries, we booked Mattituck and Bayport. Southampton is also interested.

It's a good policy to get this van out there and to go east. It helps us from a perspective that now the Vanderbilt is not in one district. It's not in one town. We're traveling and servicing all of Suffolk County. We are putting on a fuel surcharge for these schools and libraries that are out there. But I think it's a good program to take out to the libraries. This is the result of showing it out there in Bayport.

A couple of quick things, then I'll finish up. The Legislature voted to continue with PFM as the investment advisor for one more year. That's the last and final one-year option.

While they're doing that during this year, they should send out an RFP to start to look for the possibility of another investment advisor or keeping PFM. They certainly have the option of keeping them after they go through that process.

In lockstep with the PFM coming before the Legislature's committee, Budget and Finance, Legislator D'Amaro introduced legislation to broaden the investment objective of the endowment. Right now it's 50/50. It can fluctuate up to 60/40. They're broadening that so it can go 70/30, a combination of stocks and bonds.

I spoke before the committee as an individual. I didn't represent the Board, but I think with changing markets, to be locked into 50/50, especially with the strong possibility of interest rates picking up, that's going to take a hit on the income side of the investments.

We should be able to have the flexibility or the investment advisor should have the flexibility to respond to those markets to protect the capital appreciation and the bonds and be able to shift over the stocks if the market warrants that. That was just laid on the table.

That concludes my report.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Thank you. Any questions for Lance?

**MS. GEGWICH:**

I have a couple, Lance. First, you said that when the new website is up and running, you will be able to buy tickets online.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

You can buy tickets online now.

**MS. GEGWICH:**

For planetarium shows?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

At night, during the evening, not during the day.

**MS. GEGWICH:**

Okay.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Yes, that's an option.

**MS. GEGWICH:**

With the new website, will there be more communication between our membership email and our constant contacts' email? Because I still know numerous people who have joined but don't get our emails. Is there a way to marry those two?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

They're two separate systems. Our emails are through constant contact, so if they're not getting emails, they're probably not on our constant contact list.

**MS. GEGWICH:**

But they're members. So how does our membership emails get into the constant contact emails?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

We have to physically do that, and we should be doing that. If you have people that you're aware of, let us know because I'm sure things have fallen through the cracks in that regard.

**MS. GEGWICH:**

Okay. Then lastly, can you tell me the policy for planetarium shows for members? Is there not a fee?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Yes, we changed the policy, and we looked at it because we couldn't sell memberships – the economics wasn't there to sell memberships and then have members pay for the shows. This is going back to what we originally had before the planetarium was renovated. Membership allowed you to come in and see planetarium shows. We're going back to that. It's working. We're getting more memberships.

Membership is the lifeblood of an organization. We need to have a body of supporters that we can communicate with and that we can count on their support on a financial budgetary basis, also. It's important to cultivate the visitors and ask them and to encourage them to support us, not only for their own entertainment but from a cultural and educational perspective to support us.

**MS. GEGWICH:**

Thank you.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Okay, any other questions for Lance?

**MR. MULE:**

Yes, Lance, as far as the memberships, can you explain the process a little bit? When we get a membership, is it by – are we talking about online memberships when people give emails? Are we talking about physical paper when people give emails?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

I think it's the physical paper. We do get quite a few -- even if they do it online, we still have to manually put them into constant contacts. It's both ways.

**MR. MULE:**

That's one of the questions. If we get it online, is there a way for us to work the website where it automatically gets sent to constant contact or to our account at constant contacts? This way it's automatically updated and we don't have to go through an additional step?

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

I will check on that.

**MR. MULE:**

Okay. Thank you.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Very good. Anything else for Lance regarding the President's Report?

For the sake of time, I'm going to keep it very short. I just want to thank all you guys. You know, we've had some tough meetings. You know that I try not to inundate you guys with emails, but the last couple of weeks I have been, and I apologize for that. We've been tackling these tough issues. We're all volunteers here. I appreciate your time in coming here, especially when we're dealing with tough issues.

With that, unless you have any questions for me regarding the President's Report, we'll ask for any old business.

**MS. GEGWICH:**

My old business is memberships. I got one tonight. Hopefully everyone is a current member. I think everyone is now.

I encourage you to send emails to your friends with links to the website and bring cards when you go places. If there's one thing that we need to do as a Board is we really need to work on increasing our membership, as Lance just said. This is important not just for this year but for every year going forward. With all the exciting things going on, it's a great time for people to join and then we can keep them as we move forward.

Then maybe we can think about, at some point, over the next month, too, if we all have some time to do some research on the seaplane hangar. Maybe we could look for outside grants to be had. Maybe there are bigger funds that we can tap into and not just rely on what Lance is finding. If we all have time, let's get some information in. If this is something we want to commit ourselves to, let's do it. Thank you.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

Thank you, Michelle. Any other old business? How about new business? How about a motion to adjourn?

**MR. ARMSTRONG:**

Motion.

**MS. OLDRIN MONES:**

Second.

**MR. BEATTIE:**

We have plenty of motions to adjourn. Ann Marie will pick the right now. Without objection? Thank you again. **(Vote 12/0/0/3 Not Present: Mr. Glascock. Absent: Mr. Peterman. One vacant position.)**

**(Mr. Ron Beattie adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.)**

**RB:ap**

**Attachments**

# **Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum**

## **March 2014 Meeting Agenda**

March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014 / Planetarium / 7:00 PM

- I. Pledge of Allegiance**
- II. Public Address to the Board**
- III. Previous Meeting Minutes**
- IV. Committee Reports**
  - A. Finance / Treasurer Report**
  - B. Education & Exhibit**
  - C. Development**
  - D. Planning / Strategic Plan**
  - E. Community Relations Committee**
  - F. Operations**
    - 1. Buildings and Grounds**
    - 2. Technology**
      - Website
      - Planetarium Lobby Displays
    - 3. Human Resources**
- V. Executive Director Report**
- VI. President's Report**
- VII. Old Business**
- VIII. New Business**
- IX. Adjournment**

# SUFFOLK COUNTY VANDERBILT MUSEUM

## Treasurer Report

January 2014

	Actual	Budget	Variance
	January	January	
<b>Revenue</b>			
Admission	\$ 37,235	\$ 9,000	\$ 28,235
Membership	\$ 2,790	\$ 7,916	\$ (5,126)
Museum Store	\$ 4,413	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,413
Special Events	\$ 8,197	\$ 10,000	\$ (1,803)
Suffolk County Funds	\$ -	\$ 85,697	\$ (85,697)
Endowment	0	0	\$ -
Site Use	\$ 8,722	\$ 2,000	\$ 6,722
Donations & Gifts	\$ 1,159	\$ 1,819	\$ (660)
Real Estate Rental	\$ 5,500	4,167	\$ 1,333
Other General	\$ 142	\$ 42	\$ 100
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 68,158</b>	<b>\$ 122,641</b>	<b>\$ (54,483)</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Salaries & Wages	\$ 84,955	\$ 84,500	\$ 455
Benefits	\$ 23,170	\$ 19,500	\$ 3,670
Maintenance & Equipment	\$ 2,740	\$ 11,679	\$ (8,939)
Insurance	\$ 7,215	\$ 7,250	\$ (35)
Professional	\$ 20,034	\$ 12,500	\$ 7,534
Museum Store	\$ 2,782	\$ 2,916	\$ (134)
Telephone	\$ 2,209	\$ 2,833	\$ (624)
Utilities	\$ 17,991	\$ 15,000	\$ 2,991
Supplies, Programs, Gala	\$ 4,536	\$ 7,583	\$ (3,047)
General Expenses	\$ 2,875	\$ 2,500	\$ 375
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 168,507</b>	<b>\$ 166,261</b>	<b>\$ 2,246</b>
<b>Excess / Deficiency</b>	<b>\$ (100,349)</b>	<b>\$ (43,620)</b>	<b>\$ (56,729)</b>

**SUFFOLK COUNTY VANDERBILT MUSEUM  
2014 ADOPTED SUFFOLK COUNTY OPERATING BUDGET**

	Actual January	Budget February	Budget March	Budget April	Budget May	Budget June	Budget July	Budget August	Budget September	Budget October	Budget November	Budget December	Project Year End	Business Plan	Dollar Variance
<b>REVENUE</b>															
<b>EARNED INCOME</b>															
Admissions	37,235	9,000	60,000	72,000	75,000	75,000	95,000	95,000	45,000	40,000	40,000	35,000	678,235	650,000	28,235
Membership	2,790	7,916	7,916	7,916	7,917	7,917	7,917	7,917	7,917	7,917	7,917	7,917	89,874	95,000	(5,126)
Museum Store	4,413	2,000	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000	12,500	12,500	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	87,413	85,000	2,413
Special Events	8,197	2,000	3,000	4,000	5,000	15,000	30,000	17,000	18,000	5,000	10,000	6,000	123,197	125,000	(1,803)
Suffolk County Funds	0	85,697	85,697	85,697	85,697	85,698	85,698	85,698	85,698	85,698	85,698	85,698	942,673	1,028,370	(85,697)
Endowment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Site Use	8,722	5,000	11,000	11,000	12,000	14,000	12,000	22,000	22,000	8,000	4,000	7,000	136,722	130,000	6,722
Donations & Gifts	1,159	1,818	1,818	1,818	1,818	1,818	1,818	80,000	1,818	1,818	1,818	1,818	99,340	100,000	(660)
Real Estate Rental	5,500	4,167	4,167	4,167	4,167	4,167	4,167	4,167	4,166	4,166	4,166	4,166	51,333	50,000	1,333
Other General	142	42	42	42	42	42	42	42	41	41	41	41	600	500	100
<b>Total Earned Income</b>	<b>68,158</b>	<b>117,640</b>	<b>182,640</b>	<b>195,640</b>	<b>200,641</b>	<b>212,641</b>	<b>249,142</b>	<b>324,324</b>	<b>189,640</b>	<b>157,640</b>	<b>158,640</b>	<b>152,641</b>	<b>2,209,387</b>	<b>2,263,870</b>	<b>(54,483)</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>															
Salaries & Wages	84,955	84,500	92,500	92,500	92,500	97,500	97,500	97,500	97,500	94,500	94,500	94,543	1,120,498	1,120,043	455
Benefits	23,170	19,500	20,000	20,000	20,000	22,000	22,000	22,000	22,000	20,000	20,000	19,948	250,618	246,948	3,670
Maintenance & Equip.	2,740	11,679	11,679	11,679	11,679	11,679	11,679	11,679	11,679	11,679	11,680	11,680	131,211	140,150	(8,939)
Insurance	7,215	7,250	7,250	7,250	7,250	7,250	7,250	7,250	7,250	7,250	7,250	7,250	86,965	87,000	(35)
Professional	20,034	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500	157,534	150,000	7,534
Museum Store	2,782	2,916	2,916	2,916	2,917	2,917	2,917	2,917	2,917	2,917	2,917	2,917	34,866	35,000	(134)
Telephone Communic.	2,209	2,833	2,833	2,833	2,833	2,833	2,833	2,833	2,834	2,834	2,834	2,834	33,376	34,000	(624)
Utilities	17,991	15,000	15,000	14,000	14,000	15,000	19,000	19,000	18,000	10,000	10,000	11,000	177,991	175,000	2,991
Supplies, Prgm., Ball	4,536	7,583	7,583	7,583	7,583	7,583	7,583	7,583	7,584	7,584	7,584	7,584	87,953	91,000	(3,047)
General Expenses	2,875	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	30,375	30,000	375
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>168,507</b>	<b>166,261</b>	<b>174,761</b>	<b>173,761</b>	<b>173,762</b>	<b>181,762</b>	<b>185,762</b>	<b>185,762</b>	<b>184,764</b>	<b>171,764</b>	<b>171,765</b>	<b>172,756</b>	<b>2,111,387</b>	<b>2,109,141</b>	<b>2,246</b>
<b>Excess / Deficiency of Revenue</b>	<b>(100,349)</b>	<b>(48,621)</b>	<b>7,879</b>	<b>21,879</b>	<b>26,879</b>	<b>30,879</b>	<b>63,380</b>	<b>138,562</b>	<b>4,876</b>	<b>(14,124)</b>	<b>(13,125)</b>	<b>(20,115)</b>	<b>98,000</b>	<b>154,729</b>	<b>(56,729)</b>

***Historical Thatched Cottage  
at the Vanderbilt Museum  
445 East Main Street  
Centerport, NY 11721  
(631) 261-1900***

Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board of Trustees  
Board of Trustees  
180 Little Neck Road  
Centerport, NY 11721

March 19, 2014

Dear Respected Members of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board,

**This letter will serve to request the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board to execute a viable contract with the Historical Thatched Cottage at the Vanderbilt Museum as per the authorization by the Suffolk County Legislature over six months ago.**

The Historical Thatched Cottage at the Vanderbilt Museum was selected as a preferred concession vendor. Noel Gish, Vanderbilt Museum Director at the time, sent a note stating that the final contract would be sent to the Suffolk County Legislature and the Vanderbilt Board of Trustees for approval (see attached). It took approximately two years for the contract to arrive. On March 6, 2013, I signed and forwarded to you in good faith, the **Vanderbilt Museum Food Catering Concession Licensing Agreement** which was prepared by the Legislative Attorney, Mr. George Nolan with my input. On May 1, 2013 a meeting took place with the **Suffolk County Parks & Recreation Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature. Mr. Reinheimer and Mr. Dujmic** attended and spoke in favor of the Historical Thatched Cottage of the Vanderbilt Museum proposal in an effort to encourage an authorization of a concession agreement at the Vanderbilt Museum (which received a motion and second to approve with a vote of 5-0-0-0 -- also attached). On July 30, 2013 the Suffolk County Legislature unanimously voted to authorize the Vanderbilt Museum, through its Director or Board of Trustees to execute a license agreement to be executed with the Historical Thatched Cottage at the Vanderbilt Museum (see attached document). **The Legislature specifically requested that the Museum strengthen its fiscal position by finding new sources of revenue and that it generate new revenue to support its operations. The contract with the Historical Thatched Cottage at the Vanderbilt Museum was one of the ways that this request was to be fulfilled.**

**For almost eight months I have been requesting a final copy of the executed contract.** Is it not the fiduciary responsibility of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board to execute that contract upon approval from the Suffolk County Legislature in a timely fashion in order to begin generation of revenue?

I responded to the original "Request for Proposal" because like the Thatched Cottage, I consider this Museum a historic treasure. When I received confirmation that we were to proceed forward and work in partnership with the Vanderbilt Museum Board to boost its financial stability, I proceeded in good faith as I awaited the executed contract. I was committed to ensure the implementation of a successful concession program at the Vanderbilt Museum. I was encouraged to continue forward with planning of logistics which would serve as the foundation of our plan. I was so committed to this project that I invested my own funds and expended considerable effort, time and energy in setting up a viable corporation as was proposed. I also created an initial cross marketing campaign outreach announcing our partnership and illustrating the upcoming opportunities which would take place for the Museum (this marketing was shared with the public by the Vanderbilt Museum Director). And, I invested in the development of a sound catering business plan to benefit the Museum.

In addition to the above, I began outreach to the local community and its members to ensure that everyone was working together to support this project. As you can imagine, I have strong relationships with the community. Because of the nature of my business, restaurants and catering establishments deal with ongoing concerns from the community and its residents due to their operations and how it affects the community as a whole. Like the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum, I have had to address those concerns by the community about operations and its affect on the local residents. I have built strong relationships within this community and

work closely with everyone, including the community activists who have filed lawsuits against municipalities, institutions and businesses and who are committed to maintaining the integrity of our local town. We are all committed to working in harmony for the best of the community. With the support of the community and as a stakeholder in Centerport, this neighborhood and with the Vanderbilt Museum, I believe that through listening and addressing a community's concerns, harmony can be achieved as long as we deal together ethically, honestly, transparently and maintain clear, committed communications on an ongoing basis.

All this was done in good faith trusting the word of the Vanderbilt Museum Board and Director. I was assured on numerous times that the contract would be fully executed by the Board in a timely fashion yet nothing arrived. So, I continued forward in good faith without the executed contract. And still, to date, after approximately eight months of work, I have not received an executed contract.

Instead, within the last few weeks, I was informed that the Board would not proceed forward with the contract and would consider other options. The reasoning was because I was restructuring another business which is not involved in our agreement due to recent economic challenges caused by hurricane damage and the slowness of the insurance companies to react and respond. We are very much alike. The Vanderbilt Museum is a national treasure that, like my business, has fallen upon tough economic times. In my financial plan, I had to seek bankruptcy protection just as the Vanderbilt Museum had to seek Legislative assistance. It was clear to me that I had to restructure my business model and address recent challenges which have taken place as a fiscally responsible citizen. And, my actions should be considered an asset to the Museum. Due to my experience with the restructuring, I am in a unique position to assist the board to turn around this national and local treasure and boost the financial foundation of this historic landmark while balancing concerns of the community.

After all this time, to not proceed forward with the agreement we had is not ethical and not dealing in a fair manner. I am a local businessman who was led to believe by the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board as well as the Suffolk County Legislature that my proposal to the Museum was the best and most viable opportunity for the Museum and that we would proceed forward with an executed contract in an effort to work in partnership to strengthen the fiscal position of the Museum. I, in good faith began preparations to execute my proposal, relying on the words of the Vanderbilt Museum Board and its Director. The investment into the Vanderbilt Museum was based on my trust that the Board was operating in an honest, professional, ethical and trustworthy manner and that the board was representing the public, the local residents and Suffolk County's best interest.

**What happened? Mr. Reinheimer and Mr. Dujmic** went to the Legislature to present my company as a viable fiscal option. Their recommendation was authorized but still the final contract has not appeared. I have been told that another vendor has directly approached a specific member of the Board following my company's approval by the Legislature in order to obtain the contract. If that information is true, it would have been the responsibility of that other vendor to have submitted a timely response prior to the selection of the Historical Thatched Cottage at the Vanderbilt Museum's proposal and authorization so a selection would be fair.

I am committed to this relationship. I am committed to ensuring that the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum is successful. I am committed to helping the Museum become fiscally stable. **I even offered to invest more into the contract by increasing the contract annual license from \$135,000 to \$270,000 which would be phased in over a five year period in order to insure the success of the project.** I offered to invest substantial money into this project providing additional revenue-generating amenities that would only benefit the museum and Suffolk County as well as the Town of Huntington. I committed to providing a state-of-the-art tent for outdoor events which, through the latest German technology, is soundproof and will address the concern of local residents about lighting. We discussed the possibility of including a \$4.5 million green building, trolley service to help transport people around the property and restoration of the historic landmarks on the property such as the airplane hangar. As I have stated all along, our agreement would result in providing valuable equity into the Museum, would address any concerns from local residents that may arise and would support the Town and County and re-establish the Vanderbilt as a viable regional tourist attraction here on Long Island. My work will help the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum and is designed to fulfill the request of the Suffolk County Legislature to the Vanderbilt Museum Board to **strengthen its fiscal position, finding new sources of revenue and generating new revenue to support its operations.**

Please understand that I have worked hard to proceed forward in good faith. I have expended an abundance of resources to prove my commitment and dedication to this project. I believe that my experience and dedication to our local community including my many years of philanthropic support for numerous local charitable organizations uniquely qualifies me to partner with the respected members of this Board to support this wonderful cultural and historical resource.

I am requesting that you uphold the agreement and decision of the Suffolk County Legislature to approve the execution of the contract which I signed with the understanding that we are building a relationship together. Please let me to continue to work with this board and the community to serve their respective needs. Please do the ethical thing. I would trust that each of you, in your heart, would not decide to go against the Board's original promise, commitment and word to my company. To do so, would undermine the commitment and dedication the Board is supposed to have towards the Vanderbilt Museum, to the Suffolk County Legislature and towards the general public in providing an opportunity to offer them a fiscally strong cultural and historical venue which will improve quality of life in the local community. To do so, would also serve to damage a local business owner who depended on the word and actions of the Vanderbilt Museum Board of Trustees and the Suffolk County Legislature and invested time, money and effort into a project which was designed to benefit the cultural and historical landscape of Long Island.

Upon your receipt of this letter, please note that a copy has also been provided to each member of the Suffolk County Legislature.

I am available to any of you to discuss this in further details. Please feel free to contact me. I look forward to being involved in the future success of this agreement.

Kindest Regards,

**Ralph Colamussi**

Ralph Colamussi  
President



## 2015-2017 Vanderbilt Museum Capital Program Request

- **7428 Restoration and Stabilization of the Seaplane Hangar:** The County is closing out the \$2.1 million appropriation balance in this project and the \$1.1million appropriation balance in CP7427, Revitalization of William & Mollie Rogers Waterfront (\$1.1M) as no funds have been spent in over 5 years.
  - **2015-2017 Capital Request:** \$200,000 for planning and permitting in 2015 and \$3M for construction in 2016 to remove seaplane hangar ramp, repair seawall in front of hangar and to provide required structural support to the foundation in conjunction with removal of the ramp.
  
- **7430 Improvements to Normandy Manor:** This project has an appropriation balance \$450,000 for construction, no additional funds were requested. Public Works is planning to repair/replace roofing this year once the tenants move out (now projected for October 2014).
  
- **7433 Restoration of Driveways, Gutters:** Appropriation balance, \$100,000 for planning. DPW will send out RFP in 2014 to hire consultant to determine the extent of the re-construction.
  - **2015-2017 Capital Request:** \$1M for construction in 2016 for reconstruction of bridge, same as current capital program.
  
- **7437 Improvements to VM Planetarium:**
  - **2015-2017 Capital Request:** \$10,000 for planning and \$80,000 for construction in 2015 to retrofit storage room to a cafe. \$200,000 for construction in 2016 to re-construct front entrance roof along with the installation of energy efficient front doorway airlock with handicapped accessible automatic door.

- **7439 Waterproofing & Roofs:** Current Capital Program schedules \$200,000 for construction in 2014 and \$400,000 for construction in 2015. The \$200,000 for construction in 2014 can be used to supplement the \$450,000 appropriation balance in CP7430, Improvements to Normandy Manor, for re-roofing. 2015-2017 Capital Request: \$200,000 for construction in 2014 to re-roof Normandy Manor, \$400,000 in 2015, \$200,000 in 2016 and \$200,000 in 2017 for on-going water intrusion problems specifically for the mansion and marine museum.
  
- **7441 Facades:** \$2.9M appropriated, no additional funds requested. VM is requesting to use the appropriated funds for the Marine Museum and for the mansion (bell tower is a priority)
  
- **7445 Re-wiring of Historic Structures:**
  - **2015-2017 Capital Request:** \$100,000 in 2015 to re-wire Normandy Manor.
  
- **7450 Compliance with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA):** \$635,000 appropriated, no additional funds requested. Projects scheduled in 2014 include:
  - modifying and expanding the public restrooms at the rear of the guard booth building
  - installation of glass doors at the Marine Museum.
  - Construction of a ADA compliant "family" restroom in the planetarium
  
- **New Capital Project: Reconstruction of Vanderbilt Seawall:**
  - **2015-2017 Capital Request:** \$35,000 for permits in 2015 and \$250,000 for construction in 2016 to reconstruct, re-point seawall to prevent runoff into the bay and protect the property from storm surges.

## Summary of 2015-2017 Capital Program Request

Capital #	Title	2014 Adopted/ Modified	2015	2016	2017	SY	
7428	Restoration and Stabilization of the Seaplane Hangar	\$0	\$200,000	\$3,000,000	\$0	\$0	
7433	Restoration of Driveways, Gutters	\$0	\$0	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$0	
7437	Improvements to Vanderbilt Planetarium	\$0	\$90,000	\$200,000	\$0	\$0	
7439	Waterproofing and Roofs	\$200,000	\$400,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$0	
7445	Re-wiring of Historic Structures	\$0	\$100,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Van-01 NEW	Reconstruction of Vanderbilt Seawall	\$0	\$35,000	\$250,000	\$0	\$0	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$200,000</b>	<b>\$825,000</b>	<b>\$4,650,000</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$5,875,000</b>