

VETERANS & SENIORS COMMITTEE
OF THE
SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Minutes

A regular meeting of the Veterans & Seniors Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York, on February 27, 2007.

Members Present:

Legislator Steven H. Stern, Chairman
Legislator Jack Eddington, Vice-Chair
Legislator Cameron Alden
Legislator Jon Cooper (Not Present)
Legislator Jay H. Schneiderman

Also In Attendance:

George Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature
Ian Barry, Assistant Counsel to the Legislature
Renee Ortiz, Chief Deputy Clerk
Verna Donnan, Budget Review Office
Deborah Harris, Aide to Legislator Stern
Holly Rhodes-Teague, Director/Office for the Aging
Tom Ronayne, Director of Veterans Service Agency
Paul Perillie, Aide to Majority Leader
Brendan Chamberlain, County Executive's Office
Debra Alloncius, Legislative Rep for AME
Elizabeth Lorenz, Town of Islip Senior Services Department
Ira Bernstein, Town of Brookhaven, Senior Service Division
All Other Interested Parties

Minutes Taken By:

Diana Kraus - Court Stenographer

Minutes Transcribed By:

Denise Weaver - Legislative Aide

(THE MEETING COMMENCED AT 1:26PM)

CHAIRMAN STERN:

The Committee on Veterans and Seniors will come to order. Please rise and join us in the Pledge of Allegiance led by Vice-Chairman Legislator Eddington.

SALUTATION

I would ask everybody to remain standing and join us in a moment of silence keeping all of our very brave men and women fighting for us overseas in your thoughts and prayers. And as we do that also if you can also keep in your thoughts Ed {Seigerman} who recently passed away who was such a champion for seniors and the rights of seniors and their families here throughout Suffolk County and will be sorely missed certainly throughout the senior citizen community.

Moment of Silence Observed

PUBLIC PORTION

Thank you. We have one card. And we'll go to public portion and I'll call up Ira Bernstein. Sir, why don't you come to the podium? Good afternoon.

MR. BERNSTEIN:

Hi everyone. I'd like to thank you.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

If you can state your name just for the record.

MR. BERNSTEIN:

Okay. Ira Bernstein. I'm with the Town of Brookhaven Senior Citizen Division. I was recently appointed to the Brookhaven Town Senior Advisory.

(Microphone not working properly)

All right, I'll start again.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Very good.

MR. BERNSTEIN:

Hi. I'm Ira Bernstein. I'm with the Town of Brookhaven Senior Citizen Division. I was recently appointed to the Senior Advisory Board. And there were certain things I wanted to mention to the committee.

Number one, we're building our first senior center as you know. And that's about three quarter's built. There are things that we still have to ask in terms of getting support for some of the programs, but we'll, you know, we'll mention that in future meetings.

Right now I just wanted to mention to the committee that our interest is in having some type of a senior mobile van, which would go in an outreach to get to seniors that can't come to some of the services at our Town Hall. And I've spoken to Legislator Losquadro about it. And he mentioned to me he was going to do something with this committee to get that underway. It's very similar to what you have in the County van, but just on a town level. So I hope the committee will at least

listen to ideas about that and for programs that we have in the Town of Brookhaven.

And I spent the last few months speaking to some Legislators and I've gone to some senior centers. I've been to the Huntington Center. I've been to Riverhead. And we're hoping to use some of the ideas that those agencies have in serving the need for the Brookhaven seniors. Right now we estimate there's over 65,000 seniors that live in the Town of Brookhaven. And we feel in our department many more could be reached if we have programs that are accessible and will benefit them, you know, for the -- especially the divisions that we're working with now.

And, you know, I just wanted to introduce myself to the committee and I appreciate the work you do and hopefully we'll do some good things together.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Mr. Bernstein, thanks so much for coming and congratulations on your appointment. Just one question --

MR. BERNSTEIN.

Yeah.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

-- to be clear, when you talk about a senior van --

MR. BERNSTEIN:

Right.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

-- are you talking about a van that brings a person or personnel into the Town of Brookhaven where seniors would come and be teamed up and receive services in that way? Or are you talking about a van for purposes of transportation to various programs?

MR. BERNSTEIN:

No, no. We have our own transportation system. Our system is limited for medical and various other uses based on a priority need. No, I'm talking about outreach going in with a personnel that could either perform financial things or medical services. And this way we'd reach many seniors that are not being dealt with right now. Okay.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Thank you.

MR. BERNSTEIN:

Thank you.

PRESENTATIONS

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Okay, Holly.

MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:

Hello everybody.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Good afternoon.

MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:

I just wanted to talk a little bit about our certificate of necessity that we're requesting for next

Tuesday's meeting. We have the EPIC Reimbursement Program which I'm know you're all aware of. We do the reimbursements based on information that is given to each senior by New York State EPIC. They receive a letter from New York State saying you've paid out this much in fees, this much in co-payments and you may be eligible for reimbursement from Suffolk County. And that letter goes out. The seniors put their social security number on it, sign it and send it back to us and we process for payment.

Back in July, there was an issue with the letters going out from New York State EPIC and that -- the problem was that with Medicare Part D, they could not get reliable data with their computer system. So they have been struggling with this for, you know, six months. They recently fixed the issue. Reimbursements are going out. However, the money that we would have spent on 2006 reimbursements is now shut off because of the end of the budget year.

We are requesting a CN to reappropriate 1.1 million dollars to pay those 2006 claims that are for '06 that we have not yet been able to pay. The claims are coming in now and we would like to be able to put that funding in place so those payments could come out of 2006 funds as opposed to '07 funds.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Legislator Alden.

LEG. ALDEN:

What happened in the past when --

MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:

There was never a problem before with the system. Because of Medicare Part D, they -- the state had trouble with the interphase between people going in and out of Part D and being on the EPIC Program. It's -- it was a computer problem that they had. So they finally resolved the issue but it took them six months to do. So we had approximately, I want to 9000 people who have claims from July to December that are now coming into the office.

LEG. ALDEN:

Is it going to happen next year? It shouldn't really because of the switchover.

MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:

It should not happen. They've gone to a different system and it should be fine. They went to a different type of accrual system for the program.

LEG. ALDEN:

Good. Thanks.

MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:

So this should be a one-shot deal. The money is just going to be used for EPIC reimbursement.

LEG. ALDEN:

Good.

MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:

So I just wanted to give everybody a heads up before next Tuesday.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Okay. Yeah I appreciate that.

MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:

Thanks.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Holly, you heard the comments from Mr. Bernstein and the need for certainly in the Town of Brookhaven. And I'm assuming that this is the kind of need that is there county-wide for perhaps greater outreach in bringing information to seniors and their families; not just about County programs but maybe things that are going on in the town.

Do you see there being a possibility of teaming up in that way? I mean certainly don't need to have two or three vans going to a particular location in any one time. But what about the possibility of say, Legislator Eddington arranging for the County senior mobile van to go to -- somewhere in the Town of Brookhaven and bring, you know, the Town of Brookhaven personnel and information along at the same time?

MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:

Just a little bit about how our outreach is done from our office. We have approximately 50 sites we go to every month in terms of our advocates. They go to libraries, senior centers, housing complexes. In addition to that the van is out there as well two days a week at different sites. And all the Legislators have the, you know, they can certainly request for us to go some place and we will try to accommodate that request. In fact, I think we were just out in your district. So we do go wherever we're requested to go. The person who is on the van is an advocate, you know, he drives the van but he's also been trained as an advocate and he has sites and he's able to pretty much do whatever any of the advocates do.

So we do, you know, complement what the towns do as well. Because at the town sites where they have nutrition sites and adult daycares, the staff there are aware of the services that are out there. And they also provide outreach. So I think, you know, on a county level with the van, we're doing as much as we can with it. And our advocates are out, you know, in the sites, you know, as well.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Would the advocate who's driving the van and giving that information to seniors coming to the van to receive it know specifics about the programs that are offered in each individual town? Do they -- are they armed with that information and perhaps materials to distribute when they appear in a particular town?

MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:

We could certainly, you know, we could certainly take information from the towns and put that on the van. That's not an issue for us. You know, I mean all our advocates are trained as jack of all trades, you know, they kind of know a little bit about all the programs. And whatever they don't know about we really try very hard if somebody has a question we can't answer, then we take their phone number and get back to them. We try not to tell somebody they're on their own because we don't know the answer. That is something that we try very hard to impress upon everybody who works in our office.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Right. I think we would want to make it so that if somebody's going to take the time and the effort to go visit with the advocate at the mobile van and that person resides in the Town of Islip and Legislator Alden's arranged for the mobile van to appear somewhere in the Town of Islip, that the senior who's visiting the van get all information including those services offered by the town.

MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:

We frequently refer back to the towns, you know, with somebody -- you know, if they're looking for a specific program that we fund but the towns actually operate for us, because we contract out a lot of our services; you know, we definitely give them the number for, you know, where to get that specific service.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Very good.

MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:

So.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Anybody? Okay. Holly, thanks.

MS. RHODES-TEAGUE:

Thanks.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Okay. We have a guest with us today, Elizabeth Lorenz, from the Town of Islip; Town of Islip's Senior Services Department. And we welcome you. And thanks so much for being with us today.

MS. LORENZ:

Is this close enough? Can you hear me?

CHAIRMAN STERN:

It's pretty good.

MS. LORENZ:

Okay. Legislator Stern and committee members, thank you for having me here today. I welcome the opportunity to be here to discuss the programs and the services that Islip provides for its resident seniors.

I do work with Senior Citizens Division but I am the Commissioner of Human Services. And as Commissioner I do oversee the Divisions of Senior Citizens, Services to the Disabled, Human Development and Access, which is our drug and alcohol counseling services. And to provide youth services I work closely with the Youth Bureau.

The Town of Islip has a long history of being dedicated to providing seniors with essential services, trying to keep them in their homes and maintaining their independence as long as they can; and providing them with social, educational and cultural type activities.

When I knew I was coming I thought, let me look in -- I never really looked at the history. I've been in Islip for 20 years. And I found that the Senior Citizen's Division started out as a department. And in 1974 it was providing some services and programs but became a division and was put under Human Services. And when they started to work closely with some of the other divisions I've mentioned, the programs really took off.

So in '74 it was the first time that the Senior Citizen's Division provided a nutrition program; both congregate on-site meals and the home delivered meals. Between then and now it's grown from being provided at one center to being provided -- the nutrition program's provided at six centers throughout the town. And the centers have become a real focal point for us to bring seniors in and give them the opportunity to find out what other services are available.

So I'll start with the Senior Center since that's one of the our biggest programs. Islip has six community based centers. And they're open Monday through Friday 8:30 to 4:30. And they're located in West Islip, East Islip, Central Islip, Ronkonkoma, Oakdale and Brentwood. And these centers serve as a gathering place for people to have social connections with people from the same area. They provide congregate nutrition meals as I said. They provide a meeting place for the senior citizen clubs. There are 19 clubs that are affiliated with the Town of Islip; and so we have meeting rooms there for that. Transportation to and from the centers is available on a daily basis. And these centers serviced over 2000 participants last year.

The clubs I mentioned; there are 19 of them. The clubs meet in our centers. And they have their own set of by-laws and they set up their own special events and parties and trips and things like that. The club officers do meet on a bi-monthly basis at a president council's meeting. And we encourage participation in that as they do determine some of the things that will go on at the centers. And these clubs -- let's see, there were approximately 1,000 participants last year in our clubs.

We have a social model adult day-care program. This is located in the Central Islip Senior Citizen Center. This is for our frail elderly and we have about 25 participants at any time. This is for both the person who is frail and for the family members in that it gives the family time to be away at work and not have to worry about their loved one at home alone when they are starting to have developmental and problems and medical and health problems. This is -- I mentioned medical problems but we don't provide any medical care. It's strictly a social model.

These services at the adult day-care program are in conjunction with our services to the disabled. Many of our programs do overlap with one or more divisions. And, again, in the last year in 2006 we had about 25 participants throughout the year.

Our congregate and homebound home delivered meals, the nutrition programs, have -- let's see -- last year we had -- we provided -- 694 participants combined those two programs. The congregate meals of course on-site. And they are provided at all six centers five days a week. The home delivered meals are brought directly to the homes by our van drivers Monday through Friday. And these -- both these programs are designed to meet the nutritional needs of the seniors. Hopefully we're helping them live a healthier life and again maintaining their independence; being able to stay in their home a little bit longer.

Essential Transportation Program. We provide transportation to medical and health care facilities, government agencies, food shopping. And all of this within the Town of Islip, of course. It's Monday through Friday. And it is by appointment only. Services for people who need disabled vans, we do have that through Seniors and also through our Disabled Services. Transportation is available to the six centers everyday through this same transportation program, also to special events that are sometimes off-site. And the Town of Islip provides transportation for approximately 2,000 participants a year.

We have ISEP, which is an expanded In Home Services for the Elderly Program. This is a program designed for those seniors who are not eligible for Medicaid but do need housekeeping services. And we send people in. They provide that kind of a service where they help light house cleaning. And they also go out and do some food shopping for the participants. And again this is allowing someone to remain in their home, being independent as long as they get this little bit of help. We had 146 participants last year.

We have a Home Shore Residential Repair Program. We have -- we contract out with people who can -- who are handy and could go out and do small repairs. We do not do electrical or plumbing repairs but we do replace doors, hinges, fix windows, you know, just minor light work like that. The -- there's no charge, there's no fee for the service, for the labor; but the homeowner is required to pay for the materials. And while we don't charge a fee, we do suggest a contribution.

Our Brief Respite Program. This provides relief to the caregivers of the frail or disabled persons over 60. Hopefully we're relieving them from the stress and responsibility of providing constant care. Our program includes a four hour -- up to a four hour visit each time the caretaker -- the relief person goes. This program services a very small number of people at this time. But we do recognize the growing need for this type of service and we are looking to expand this program. The growing need in that program it's not particular to that program. It is across the board. We do know that there are -- the needs of senior citizens are continually changing and growing. With increased longevity and a dramatic swell in the population, the Town of Islip is seriously looking at what we need to do to provide new services and how we will find the funding for that. The Town of

Islip is at this time attempting to keep with the trends of the aging population. We're submitting requests and proposals for various types of funding to provide its resident seniors with the utmost care and a wide variety of interesting educational, cultural and social activities.

So we know what kind of programs we need to develop. And we know we need the money for that. One thing may be peculiar to Islip, I'm not really sure about the other towns, but having six community centers -- each center is small. And it was done by design. Over the years things have changed. And we do find that we sometimes have a need for a larger area to bring all the seniors together. So while the small community based -- having six of them works in one way, it's very limiting in another way. We're trying to reach out to younger seniors who are more active than some of the seniors who have been participants thus far. And to do so we need to have a different design of a center.

So that's we're headed in Islip, is to get a new building. And have perhaps, you know, the exercise room and a different way of having food prepared and having the design more inviting to young active seniors.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Okay. Thank you.

MS. LORENZ:

You're welcome.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

And thanks for your presentation. And then I think that your presentation like many other presentations that we've had the opportunity to hear from representatives at the town level, for me continues to strike the importance of having professionals like yourself come to us, because at our level of government we can help formulate policy now and going forward into the future. But of course it's the professionals at the town level that have the hands-on, everyday experience in dealing with the senior citizen population. And so thanks. I do have a couple of questions. And I know my colleagues will as well.

MS. LORENZ:

Sure.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Right now in the Adult Daycare Program, that is operated out of Central Islip facility?

MS. LORENZ:

The adult daycare, yes.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

And there are about 25 participants?

MS. LORENZ:

Yes.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

In that program do you receive applications for a higher number than just 25? What's the significance of -- do only 25 come to you for those kinds of services? Or is that a cap?

MS. LORENZ:

We have a very short waiting list. It really has to do with how often each client comes during the week. And we have a certain ratio of staff to clients that we have to keep. We generally don't have people waiting too long. I would say perhaps a month, maybe a month to two months of a wait before we can get someone in. But if we had a larger building for it, then if we could accommodate

more, I'm sure we could just with some simple advertising get a lot more people. It's a very good program. And once people do find out about it, they usually stay with it.

We have transportation, you know, we pick them up. It's door to door service. And they're not brought home until -- they don't leave the building until three o'clock. So between 3:00 and 3:45 they're all back home. So people who work might only have to deal with an hour, maybe two hours of time where they need someone to watch their family member. So it's very popular once people know about it. But we don't advertise as much as we could because we are full.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

And what would be the cost?

MS. LORENZ:

It's on a sliding scale. Depending on what might be covered if they're on Medicaid and then the income. So -- and we provide a lunch through New York State Office of Department of Health and that is covered also.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

So can you give me an example of what a particular cost would be?

MS. LORENZ:

Someone might pay \$15 a day or -- anywhere from, I would say, maybe \$10 to 20 would be probably an average.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Okay. And you had said that there are -- last year anyway there were 694 meals that were prepared. Was that a combination number between home and onsite?

MS. LORENZ:

694 participants?

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Oh, I guess that was my question to you. Was it 694 participants? Or was it meals?

MS. LORENZ:

We're going to the Nutrition Program?

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Yeah.

MS. LORENZ:

Or Adult Daycare? Okay. Let me just find exactly. It was 694 participants so that is an unduplicated count. So 694 different names appear, each one may be many, many times. But that's the number of people that participated in the program.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

And do you have idea as to the split between -- of that 694, what were home delivered meals and how many were delivered on-site?

MS. LORENZ:

The majority are home delivered.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Yeah.

MS. LORENZ:

We deliver 145 meals a day. We're on-site at the six centers. There might be -- I would say maybe 50 meals a day. So it would come out to maybe three-quarters of this number is homebound.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Homebound.

MS. LORENZ:

Sorry, I didn't break it out.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

That's fine. And you had mentioned that there were 2,000 -- you used the number of 2,000 that were served by the town's transportation system. My question is were those 2,000 people or 2,000 rides?

MS. LORENZ:

Those are 2,000 people.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Two thousand people?

MS. LORENZ:

Yes.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Okay.

MS. LORENZ:

We run, you know, the transportation brings people to and from the centers and doctor's appointments. So they're on the road -- eight full-time drivers are on the road five days a week, 8:30 -- well, 8:00 to 4:00. So --

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Yeah. Working hard.

MS. LORENZ:

Yeah.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

And you talked about the expansion or hoped expansion of the Respite Program, which of course as you point out is such a critical program now and well into the foreseeable future, it's only going to be an increasing need. What would be necessary for that kind of expansion? Is it a question of bringing in the right people? Is it just simply a matter of costs and more funding? Other than funding are there any other challenges to expanding that important program?

MS. LORENZ:

Well, I became Commissioner a year and a half ago of Human Services. But I had worked in Seniors for a number of years prior to that. And the Brief Respite Program has always had a problem with maintaining the continuity of staff people. So people continuously getting used to new faces; and it's difficult. So that being the problem, it slowly started to decline in number. And we just recently in the last six months have received some additional funds. And we're going to try a few new things. So we're kind of in a time of transition you might say, where we're trying a new thing -- a few new things. So we're going to try to increase the number of people we get. We do it sometimes on a contract basis, but we're thinking of hiring part-timers who might have a, you know, a longer stay with us than a contract worker. So we're not sure about that but we're going to try it.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

All right. Well, as you go through these new things, please keep us up to date --

MS. LORENZ:

I certainly will.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

-- along the way. Legislator Alden.

LEG. ALDEN:

Good day, Commissioner.

MS. LORENZ:

How are you doing?

LEG. ALDEN:

Thanks for coming down. At our last committee meeting there was a gentleman that came in. And he asked a question. And I think I know the answer to it. If all the towns have a veterans service or a veteran agency or a veterans commission or committee or something like that, I think I know the answer, but -- does Islip? A specific department or agency that would cater to veterans? I think that the answer's no.

MS. LORENZ:

To my knowledge, no.

LEG. ALDEN:

No. If Islip had one, would that fit somewhere under your human resources, your department? And what I'd like to do is --

MS. LORENZ:

I would certainly be interested in considering being part of something like that, yes.

LEG. ALDEN:

Because I'd like to just throw out the concept, then, and maybe you and I we can get together at a later date and just try to flush a few things out because he said sometimes, you know, it's inconvenient for a veteran to get up to -- you know, our offices are up here in Hauppauge. So -- not Islip so much but, you know, if go further east in Suffolk County, I can see where there would be transportation problems and things like that. But even for Islip for a veteran to have a town based, certainly a starting point for -- if he's having a problem with either housing or benefits and things like that, and then just to be able to come in and then maybe be referred out to the proper jurisdiction or whatever. But I think that it's something, you know, I'd like to pitch and just, you know, maybe we should consider it over in Islip.

The second thing I just would like to touch on, the concept of people when they request transportation to and from a doctor's appointment or from a hospital, I know that we're geographically bound to keep, you know, only the parameters, I guess, or perimeters of Islip. Is that because of the funding for the vans or is it because of -- what reason would that be that -- is the basis for that?

And here's the problem, just, you know, so I -- I'll lay all the cards on the table. For instance, if your doctor or if you have to go for chemo, you might have to go from Islip, you might have to go into the Town of Babylon. Or you might have to actually go up to the Veterans Administration or sometimes you have to go up to Stony Brook because Suffolk County partnered with Stony Brook a number of years ago and there's some special treatments for cancer tumors that, you know, we provided funding for.

And I was just wondering if there's some way that we can start thinking about a more global type of

use of our transportation because Islip's got a lot of vans. And like you said most of them are busy almost everyday, you know, all day long. But there are some towns and there might also be some programs in Islip where the vans aren't really out there, you know, like a full eight hours a day that could possibly be used for, you know, an integrated type of transportation system. And I'm thinking more like towards veterans and seniors, you know, maybe would expand to another part of the population. But, you know, surely in the veterans and seniors end that if we could start looking at maybe crossing those geographic boundaries and what mechanism we would have to do; whether Suffolk County has to provide more funding for the vehicles or maybe we look to New York State or the feds, you know, something along those lines but to make it a little bit more -- we have to recognize what the system's like now. And that's -- you know, back in the day, Southside Hospital and, you know, your local hospital and your local doctors offices that could actually provide almost everything you needed. But not the specialties and the specialized medicine that people are seeking sometimes is outside the town jurisdiction.

So those are a couple of things. And also Brookhaven pitched the idea of maybe a combined Islip and Brookhaven center. And I'm going to say maybe the north -- northeast end of Islip. And so that would be about the middle of Brookhaven because I think they run from sea to shining sea, right? So, you know, if we could think about a couple of those different programs.

MS. LORENZ:

Yeah.

LEG. ALDEN:

Thanks.

MS. LORENZ:

If I could address your question on the transportation?

LEG. ALDEN:

Sure.

MS. LORENZ:

We do have a -- it's more of a guideline, a general guideline that we stay within the boundaries of Islip, but it's not a hard and fast rule. There are times when we have a client whose doctor's office -- the doctor's office moves and we will assist them if we can until they've made a transition to a new doctor. We also accommodate people who are already are clients and then they do have to go Stony Brook for a particular thing. It's not that often because what it does is it pulls a full-time driver out of the pattern of servicing agreed number of people. And if they have to go up to Stony Brook for one person, they're probably going to be up there a half a day.

But we do cross the line of Islip. We -- we will try to accommodate when there's enough reason to do that. And if there's no other way that the person can continue on with a particular type of care, we try to accommodate them until they can figure out another way to do that.

LEG. ALDEN:

If it's okay through the Chair, you focused on one of the points that I was trying to get through, I guess. My family was involved with the Rusy Bohm American Legion Post, and with the VFW and also with the AMVETS. And they have a lot of problems getting to and from -- they can actually get to the Post itself because almost everybody's from the East Islip, Islip area. But getting from that Post up to Northport and then back again sometimes poses a major problem. And if there's some way we could all like sort of partner together, because I know we have resources. And sometimes if the resources are sitting somewhere, if we can make better use of them. And maybe that -- maybe it would just be a simple thing like, you know, almost like 9/11 goes into a, you know, central command type of situation.

If you have a need for transportation, somebody could post that need. And other people that have

vans that are not being used at certain hours could post the availability of that van at a certain hour. And I'm sure that we could actually expand a little bit more on the volunteers that will drive those. So it might be a win-win situation for everybody.

MS. LORENZ:

Yes, because we do have enough vans. It's -- our drivers would be our problem.

LEG. ALDEN:

What you said before, what's a younger senior?

MS. LORENZ:

Well --

LEG. EDDINGTON:

Us.

LEG. ALDEN:

The Chairman?

MS. LORENZ:

Actually we're thinking more of younger in mind and spirit. Some people, the age isn't really what determines the activity level --

LEG. ALDEN:

Good.

MS. LORENZ:

-- all times. So we just have some people who want to sit and play bingo and some people want to be up and moving and on a treadmill or something. So we need to start to address the new while we continue to, you know, continue the services to the people who want to sit and play bingo.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Legislator Alden, I certainly appreciate your comments. And, in fact, that by design really is one of the main issues that we want the Countywide Senior Citizens Task Force, which is going to be beginning public hearings at the end of March, to focus on the idea of senior transportation and making sure that the system that we have in place or one that we need to put in place going forward will get seniors to the services that they need, even if they happen to be on the other side of some arbitrary town line. And what role -- what expanded role the county government should play in expanding transportation options for seniors. So that's certainly something that we're going to be looking at in the coming months.

LEG. ALDEN:

I'd like to sit down with you then and I'll give you my ideas. Because at one time we ran a transportation system that actually serviced all of Suffolk County. And that was mainly with vans. And that for BOCES. So, you know, that on demand type of transportation is tough, but it's worked in the -- actually in the for-profit world they're doing a lot of it with like jets and things like that. So that if you have a jet that's available, you post it and then somebody would go onto that site and find, you know, like a need for it. And then you try to work out the crews and things like that. But I think if we looked globally we're going to help the people in Suffolk.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Very good. Thank you.

MS. LORENZ:

Thank you.

PROCEDURAL RESOLUTION

CHAIRMAN STERN:

We have one other item on the agenda today, that is **Procedural Resolution PM 02: Designating veterans organizations to receive funding for Memorial Day Observances for 2007. (Stern)**

LEG. EDDINGTON:

Motion to approve.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Motion to approve by Legislator Eddington.

LEG. ALDEN:

I'll second it. But just quick --

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Second by Legislator Alden. On the motion.

LEG. ALDEN:

This includes the list that you circulated?

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Yes, it is part of the resolution.

LEG. ALDEN:

Good. I think it was pretty inclusive.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Yeah. We made sure to reach out to as many people as we could to get that information. Okay. All in favor? All opposed? Any abstentions? Resolution passes. **(VOTE: 4-0-0-1. Not Present: Legislator Cooper)** Okay. Very good. And that is it for our agenda. I'll take a motion to adjourn.

LEG. ALDEN:

Motion.

LEG. EDDINGTON:

Second.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Second by Legislator Eddington. We are adjourned. Thank you.

(The meeting concluded at 1:52 PM)

{ } DENOTES SPELLED PHONETICALLY