

HEALTH COMMITTEE, HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

VETERANS & SENIORS COMMITTEE

of the

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

2013-2015 Joint Capital Budget Meeting

A special joint meeting of the Health Committee, Human Services Committee and 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 Thursday, May 17, 2011 at 11:30 a.m., to discuss the matter of the 2013-2015 Capital Budget.

Members Present:

Legislator DuWayne Gregory - Chairperson/Human Services
Legislator Steven Stern - Chairman/Veterans & Seniors
Legislator Sara Anker - Vice-Chair/Veterans & Seniors
Legislator Thomas Barraga - Member/Veterans & Seniors
Legislator Browning - Chair/Health Committee

Also In Attendance:

Deputy Presiding Officer Wayne Horsley
Barbara Lomoriello - Deputy Clerk
Gail Vizzini - Director/Budget Review Office
Craig Freas - Budget Analyst/Budget Review Office
Margaret Bermel - Suffolk County Department of Health Services
William Shilling - Aide to Legislator Anker
Alan Schneider - County Personnel Director
Richard Meyer - AME
All Other Interested Parties

Taken By:

Lucia Braaten, Court Stenographer

(*THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 11:36 A.M. *)

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Good morning, everyone. Welcome to today's Health and Human Services, Vets and Seniors Capital Budget public hearing. We're going to start off with the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Legislator Barraga.

(*Salutation*)

Good morning, as I said. I guess we'll start off with the Human Services Committee. I am not Legislator Stern, although the plate in front of me says that, but I don't mind filling in. We don't have any cards, but is there anyone that would like to speak during the section for our Human Services Committee? Okay. Seeing none, we will move on to Vets and Seniors, I guess.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

I'll say the same thing. Good morning, slash afternoon, everyone. Is there anybody who would like to speak on the Veterans and Seniors portion of today's public hearing?

MS. KANDELL:

We're here from Office for the Aging, if you have questions. Holly's at the Senior Celebration.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

Very good.

MS. KANDELL:

I'm Joanne Kandell from Office for the Aging.

MS. PORTA:

And I'm Maureen Porta, Office for Aging.

LEG. BROWNING:

What is the Senior Celebration today?

MS. KANDELL:

The Senior Celebration is held every year at Villa Lombardi's for all the seniors.

MS. PORTA:

Older American's Month.

MS. KANDELL:

Older American's Month. Thank you, Maureen.

LEG. BROWNING:

Okay. Doesn't look like I have it on my calendar. Yeah, I usually get it every year. Might want to find out why we don't have it this year. Did anybody else get it?

LEG. HORSLEY:

I had it. I can't make it.

LEG. ANKER:

How long is it going on?

LEG. BROWNING:

What time does it start and what time is it over?

MS. KANDELL:

I believe it started at ten and it ends usually around three.

LEG. HORSLEY:

I think the announcement's about 11:30; did I hear that?

LEG. BROWNING:

Yeah.

D.P.O. HORSLEY:

That's what I heard.

MS. KANDELL:

That sounds about right.

LEG. BROWNING:

No, I'm here.

CHAIRMAN STERN:

All right. No questions. Thank you for being here.

MS. KANDELL:

Thank you.

MS. PORTA:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Okay. Is there anyone here from the Health Committee? Are you on the Health Committee, Sarah?

LEG. ANKER:

I am.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Okay. Would you like to run the Health portion?

LEG. BROWNING:

Is this Health Committee too?

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Yeah.

LEG. BROWNING:

I mean, I'm on the Health Committee, too, but I again -- oh, sorry Margaret. I guess Margaret's here. I guess -- do you have any comments as far as Capital Budget or --

MS. BERMEL:

Good morning. No. Actually, the Commissioner was called over to the 12th Floor this morning, so that's why he couldn't be here at this session. And I'm Margaret Bermel from the Health Department. We don't have any comments or presentation. The Budget Review report essentially concurred with the proposed Capital Budget, so we have no comments. But if there's any questions, I'd be happy to respond. Thank you.

LEG. BROWNING:

Thank you. And any comments from Budget Review?

MS. VIZZINI:

As Margaret indicated, generally speaking, as far as the Health Department is concerned, it wasn't a restrictive program. We agreed with a lot of -- including a lot of the projects. However, we did differ in three areas. One is the consolidated laboratories. Our laboratories are something that the County needs to address. We're actually recommending that -- recognizing that fact that we restore funding for effectuating one or more of the consultant's recommendations and that would be ten million dollars in 2015. The other project is -- as far as the Skilled Nursing Facility, we believe that there are certain building management systems that need to be replaced and upgraded for the protection of the residents. We're recommending \$500,000 in 2013. That consists of -- \$75,000 of that is planning for the building management system. And the final recommendation that differs from the proposed is equipment?

MR. FREAS:

Yes, well-drilling equipment.

MS. VIZZINI:

Well-drilling equipment. Recognizing the uncertainty in terms of staffing levels and where we're going with that, there are still peripheral equipment that needs to be purchased to augment the existing crew. So we're recommending -- it's actually \$50,000 be advanced to 2013.

LEG. BROWNING:

Okay. Is that the fire wall thing on some of the electrical work?

MR. FREAS:

No. The fire -- the fire wall and the electrical mitigation work was -- is included in Capital Project 1710 from last year. If you look at our review, the table that the Department of Public Works provided does not address the John J. Foley projects in it. However, the funding that is at least in the '12 budget is funding that we put in -- the amount that we put in is specifically for John J. Foley. I understand that the Department of Health Services and DPW are working together to make sure that that particular project moves forward as scheduled. The fire wall and the electrical work that's required at the building are required because of a notice of deficiency that we received during a New York City Health Department survey at John J. Foley.

LEG. BROWNING:

Okay. Thank you. Any questions?

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

I have a question. Kate, I have a question.

LEG. BROWNING:

Yeah, go ahead.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Hi, Margaret. And I'm not sure if you know what the status is. I know that the County Executive has been in favor of moving the MLK Health Center to a new location. When he was the Town Supervisor, I know he had this whole plan that he approached the previous County Executive with. I sent the e-mail. I haven't gotten a response yet, but I was just curious if the Health Department has been in any discussions regarding moving the MLK Center to a new location. I know it's not in the Capital Budget, but has it been put off, maybe next year, or --

MS. BERMEL:

Legislator Gregory, I believe that the Space Committee would have that on their agenda to review as a future consideration, but it's not something that the Health Department by itself would be addressing. But it would go through the Space Committee, and with the input of the department. But, as far as I know there is nothing, no policy decision or determination that has been made at this point in time.

CHAIRMAN GREGORY:

Okay. All right. Thank you.

MS. BERMEL:

You're welcome.

LEG. BROWNING:

Okay, Sarah.

LEG. ANKER:

Again, it was so disappointing to hear about all the layoffs that the Health Department specifically has and having what you have to deal with. And, you know, Suffolk County, one of the main focuses and main priorities is with Health Services. So, you know, I just wanted to comment and put on public record that myself, as well as every Legislator around the horseshoe, is regretful that the layoffs had to take place. And if there's anything that we can do to try to make sure the services that the County provides continues, please let us know. You know, we're not here to create more issues with government, we're here to make government run better.

So again, you know, we and myself thank you for all the work that you've done and, you know -- and, regretfully, the stress that it's caused for you, your staff, your department. And again, I mean, I can reiterate from all of us here. Thank you.

MS. BERMEL:

Thank you very much, Legislator Anker. Thank you.

LEG. BROWNING:

I guess no more comments. Real quick, though. The Jail Medical Unit, I know that we're talking about whether it's going to open or not. I mean, are we still -- as far as any capital monies are concerned, that's all still in place and --

MR. FREAS:

The capital funding for the unit, including its equipment, is included in the larger capital project for the jail itself, it's not -- it's not listed as a separate project. With respect to the jail opening, obviously, whenever the jail opens, it's going to need a medical unit.

LEG. BROWNING:

So nothing's changing anyway.

MR. FREAS:

Yeah, no.

LEG. BROWNING:

Okay, good. Well, thank you. I guess that's it. Nobody else? Okay. So I guess we're adjourned.

*(*THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 11:47 A.M. *)*