

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

SPECIAL MEETING

NINETEENTH DAY

NOVEMBER 30, 2001

MEETING HELD AT THE WILLIAM H. ROGERS LEGISLATURE BUILDING

IN THE ROSE Y. CARACAPPA AUDITORIUM

VETERANS MEMORIAL HIGHWAY, SMITHTOWN, NEW YORK

MINUTES TAKEN BY

LUCIA BRAATEN, COURT REPORTER

[THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 11:20 A.M.]

P.O. TONNA:
Roll call.

MR. BARTON:
Good morning, Mr. Chairman.

(Roll Called by Mr. Barton)

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Here.

LEG. GULDI:
Still here.

LEG. TOWLE:
(Not Present)

LEG. CARACAPPA:
Here.

LEG. FISHER:
Here.

LEG. HALEY:
(Not Present)

LEG. FOLEY:
Present.

LEG. LINDSAY:
Here.

LEG. FIELDS:
Here.

LEG. ALDEN:
Here.

LEG. CARPENTER:
Here.

LEG. CRECCA:
Yes, here.

LEG. D'ANDRE:
Here.

LEG. BISHOP:
(Not Present)

LEG. BINDER:
(Not Present)

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LEG. COOPER:
Here.

D.P.O. POSTAL:
Here.

P.O. TONNA:
Here.

MR. BARTON:
Fourteen present.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay. Thank you very much. All rise for the pledge led by John Michael -- you don't want to lead the pledge? Okay.

LEG. GULDI:
You don't know the words?

MR. MARTIN:
No, I forgot.

P.O. TONNA:
All right. Led by Ilona.

(Salutation)

Okay. We'll sit gown and we'll dispense with the prayer, unless anybody is so moved. I know the Quakers, they just wait a little while, and, you know, so if we want, we can --

LEG. CARACAPPA:
We all can use a little prayer.

LEG. GULDI:
As long as we don't try to raise any money.

P.O. TONNA:

All right. Here we go. From what I understand, Legal Counsel, just do I -- Henry, do you have to read something?

MR. BARTON:

If you'd like me to read the notice of the special meeting, I will.

P.O. TONNA:

Right. The agenda? Okay. Henry, can you, please, read the special meeting notice?

MR. BARTON:

Yes. Filed with my office and before -- and in front of each Legislator is a notice of a special meeting, dated November 28th, 2001, to all County Legislators, from Paul J. Tonna, the Presiding Officer. "Please be advised that a special meeting -- please be advised that a special meeting of the Suffolk County Legislature will be held on Friday, November 30th, 2001, at 11 a.m. in the forenoon in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium, located at the William

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H. Rogers Legislature Billing, Building 20, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Hauppauge, New York, pursuant to Section 2-6(B) of the Suffolk County Administrative Code for the following purposes." The first item is a one-hour public portion, followed by thirteen additional items.

P.O. TONNA:

Thank you very much. Okay. Just for everyone's to know, there is no meeting on December 11th, this is in lieu of the December 11th meeting, so just --

LEG. D'ANDRE:

It's my birthday, there can't be.

LEG. CARACAPPA:

The warrant, the warrant meeting.

P.O. TONNA:

There you go.

LEG. CARACAPPA:

Mr. Chairman.

LEG. FISHER:

It's the warrant.

P.O. TONNA:
What?

LEG. CARACAPPA:
The warrant meeting.

P.O. TONNA:
This is the warrant meeting, yes.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
Yes, thank you.

P.O. TONNA:
So we're not going to have a meeting on December 11th. So just for anybody, there has been some questions about this, this special meeting held today will replace the need for the December 11th meeting. Please, adjust your calendars.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Will there be a meeting subsequent to that?

LEG. FOLEY:
The general meeting.

P.O. TONNA:
Yes, general meeting December 18th. Okay.

MR. BARTON:
Mr. Chairman.

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P.O. TONNA:
All right.

MR. BARTON:
Mr. Chairman.

P.O. TONNA:
Yes, Henry.

MR. BARTON:
For the first time in the 11 years that I've been here as an employee of the Legislature, I'm proud to say that we have been able to meet the statutory requirement and have the warrant prepared prior to December 1st. With the cooperation of the Towns, and with Mike Martin's work, and with Budget Review, and the cooperation of Legislative Counsel, we have met the statutory requirement.

P.O. TONNA:
Michael Martin, thank you very much.

(Applause)

Clerk of the Legislature and their staff and everybody else, thank you very much. Okay. So, see, we're just like New York State --

LEG. CRECCA:
Doesn't mean it's going to happen.

P.O. TONNA:
-- we're meeting budget deadlines. Oh, no. I guess forgot, yeah.

LEG. GULDI:
Mr. Presiding Officer.

P.O. TONNA:
Yes.

LEG. GULDI:
Point of clarification.

P.O. TONNA:
Sure.

LEG. GULDI:
The committee week scheduled to meet Monday the 3rd of December was for the December 11th meeting, or is that for the December 18th meeting, and does that stand as scheduled?

P.O. TONNA:
That stands, stands as scheduled.

LEG. GULDI:
Thank you for the clarification.

P.O. TONNA:
Thank you.

LEG. LINDSAY:
Good question.

P.O. TONNA:
Good, yes.

LEG. CRECCA:

Yeah, I thought that was a good question, too.

P.O. TONNA:

Right, great. So now that we all feel that George just has a good question, we have a decent answer. Okay. Now we're going to -- the public portion, Paul, I'm going to ask, there are no cards, nobody to speak -- anybody want to speak? No. Good. Now, what we're going to do, we need a ruling from Legal Counsel for a second. Go ahead, Paul.

MR. SABATINO:

Since the meeting began at 11:00 and it's now 11:24, you need a motion to be approved by 14 votes to terminate the public portion --

P.O. TONNA:

Okay.

MR. SABATINO:

-- early.

P.O. TONNA:

Fine. There's a motion by Legislator Caracappa, seconded by Legislator Fisher. All in favor? Opposed?

MR. BARTON:

Fifteen.

P.O. TONNA:

Thank you very much. Okay. Now to the agenda.

LEG. CARACAPPA:

Let's set a record.

P.O. TONNA:

Yeah, let's -- okay. We have I.R. 2057 (A Local Law to enact Probation Fees). I make a motion, seconded by Legislator Postal.

MR. SABATINO:

You've got to discharge it.

P.O. TONNA:

Oh, we got to discharge it?

MR. SABATINO:

Right.

P.O. TONNA:

Motion to discharge and -- can we do both?

LEG. TOWLE:

Explanation.

MR. SABATINO:

No. Just a motion to discharge from committee, and then it would take a vote on the merits.

P.O. TONNA:

Okay. Is that true with all of them?

MR. SABATINO:

That's true with Two through --

P.O. TONNA:

Eight?

MR. SABATINO:

Nine.

P.O. TONNA:

Okay, Two through Nine. Okay. I make a motion to discharge, seconded by Legislator Postal. All in favor? Opposed?

MR. BARTON:

Fifteen.

P.O. TONNA:

Discharged. Now I make a motion to approve 2057. Motion by myself, seconded by Legislator Postal.

LEG. TOWLE:

Explanation.

P.O. TONNA:

In favor? Explanation. Legislator Towle has asked for an explanation. Legal Counsel, please explain.

MR. SABATINO:

Okay. This local law is going to amend existing fees, which were already on the books, by -- for probation by increasing the administrative fee of \$30 per month to \$50 for Vehicle and Traffic Law violations, and the presentence investigation fee will be increased from \$50 to \$100. That will generate approximately --

P.O. TONNA:

Criminal.

MR. SABATINO:

-- \$619,000 per year.

P.O. TONNA:

Okay.

LEG. ALDEN:
On the motion.

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P.O. TONNA:
Yes.

LEG. ALDEN:
Paul, you had raised a question as far as whether we were precluded from doing this under State law. That's not the case, then.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
Mr. Chairman.

MR. SABATINO:
No. This is being done consistent, not in conflict.

LEG. ALDEN:
So there was no cap that we were butting up against.

MR. SABATINO:
Well, no. We're going to the cap.

LEG. ALDEN:
Good.

MR. SABATINO:
We're not going above the cap.

P.O. TONNA:
Thank you. Legislator Caracappa.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for my colleagues' information, during the budget hearings, the Probation Director, Vinnie Iaria, came before us at the Public Safety Committee and requested the increase in fees himself, so I think this is consistent with what the Department is looking for.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Mr. Chairman.

P.O. TONNA:
Yes, Legislator Caracciolo.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Who pays the fees?

P.O. TONNA:
The probationers.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Something funny, Angie?

P.O. TONNA:
Hold it, hold it.

LEG. CARPENTER:
Excuse me? Yes. Legislator Crecca said something. Is that okay with you?

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P.O. TONNA:
Okay. Legislator Caracciolo, the question that was asked, who pays --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Who pays the fees?

P.O. TONNA:
-- the answer is the probationee -- er.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Thank you.

P.O. TONNA:
Ees, ers, whatever. Probationers. Okay. All in favor? Opposed?
Let's go to the next one.

MR. BARTON:
Sixteen.

P.O. TONNA:
Thank you, Henry.

MR. BARTON:
Two not present. (Not Present: Legs. Haley and Bishop)

P.O. TONNA:
2058 (A Charter Law to authorize one-year rolling debt under 5-25-5 law). Motion to discharge by myself, second by Legislator Postal. All in favor? Opposed?

LEG. GULDI:

Mr. Presiding Officer, why don't we make a motion to discharge all the bills in the packet instead of doing twelve extra motions?

LEG. POSTAL:
I thought you did.

P.O. TONNA:
Can we do that?

MR. BARTON:
We did that.

P.O. TONNA:
Or did I?

LEG. POSTAL:
I thought you did.

LEG. CARPENTER:
You did.

LEG. POSTAL:
Yeah.

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LEG. CRECCA:
We discharged through Nine.

LEG. GULDI:
Discharge them all.

P.O. TONNA:
Hey, if you say I did it, I did it. Did we?

MR. SABATINO:
No, we --

P.O. TONNA:
I did one bill.

MR. SABATINO:
We did one.

P.O. TONNA:
But from this point on.

LEG. GULDI:

Why don't we -- motion to discharge everything in the packet.

MR. SABATINO:

You can discharge Items Three through Nine with a motion.

P.O. TONNA:

I would like to discharge Items Three through Nine, seconded by Legislator Postal. All in favor? Opposed? Great.

MR. BARTON:

Sixteen, two not present. (Not Present: Legs. Haley and Bishop)

P.O. TONNA:

Now they're all discharged. Now let's go one by one.

LEG. TOWLE:

Mr. Chairman.

P.O. TONNA:

Can we make a motion first, Fred?

LEG. TOWLE:

Yeah, go ahead.

P.O. TONNA:

Okay.

LEG. TOWLE:

You're running the meeting.

P.O. TONNA:

Motion to approve 2058, second by Legislator Postal. Mr. Towle, on the motion.

LEG. TOWLE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just on the Section 1 of the Legislative Intent, I think it's probably the same on all of these, I thought we were removing that language from the bill. I mean, this is the third time I've brought this issue up.

MR. SABATINO:

Okay. If it's Legislative Intent, strike it. I was only told to take it from the titles, but if you want to take it from the intent, on the record, it was being --

LEG. ALDEN:

Motion to reconsider 2057.

MR. SABATINO:

With the consent of the sponsors.

LEG. CRECCA:

Second.

P.O. TONNA:

Oh, to strike it from that, too? Okay. Let's just get this one done first. Let's just -- the Legislative Intent, do we need a motion or anything else like that, or are we done with that?

MR. SABATINO:

As long as the sponsor agrees, then it's been stricken on the record.

P.O. TONNA:

Okay, fine. Okay. Can we also say that about 2057?

MR. SABATINO:

If it's in 2057 --

LEG. POSTAL:

That was voted on and approved.

LEG. TOWLE:

Think it's in all the bills.

MR. SABATINO:

Yes, okay.

LEG. TOWLE:

I'd make a motion to remove it from all the bills.

MR. SABATINO:

Same ruling for 2057.

P.O. TONNA:

There you go. We don't need to reconsider it. Okay?

LEG. TOWLE:

Just an explanation on 2058, too.

P.O. TONNA:

Okay. Explanation on 2058. Legal Counsel?

MR. SABATINO:

2058 would suspend the requirement for the 5-25-5 Pay-As-You-Go law provisions for the period of one year only, which would be the period of January 1st, 2002 through December 31st, 2002. And then the requirement to go Pay-As-You-Go for those various categories of capital items would revert back to the current rule.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Question.

LEG. TOWLE:

Just if I could finish on that. Sorry.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Oh, I'm sorry.

P.O. TONNA:

. Legislator Postal.

LEG. POSTAL:

Yeah. I just wanted to ask, wouldn't that also, or would that come about in the appropriating resolutions, have a shorter payback than the traditional borrowing resolutions?

MR. SABATINO:

What the Budget Review Office has proposed is what they call the rolling note concept, so that you wouldn't be -- if you decide to exercise the right under this one-year suspension, that you wouldn't be doing longer term debt, you'd be doing shorter term debt.

P.O. TONNA:

Okay.

LEG. CRECCA:

Mr. Presiding Officer.

P.O. TONNA:

Yes, Legislator Crecca.

LEG. CRECCA:

Just before we move on, I'm looking at the Legislative Intent in each of these and I don't -- I just want to make it clear as to what we're doing. Are we removing the entire Legislative Intent? Because some of them have -- like the Probation one, for example, that we're looking at or we did before, there's other paragraphs that are relevant.

P.O. TONNA:

No, just that quote.

LEG. GULDI:

Just that first paragraph.

LEG. CRECCA:

The problem is, in some of the other bills, if we remove the first paragraph, it changes the wording on the second paragraphs. So I'm not trying to be difficult, I just want to make it clear so we know what we're doing.

P.O. TONNA:

Paul, give a ruling.

MR. SABATINO:

Which one are you on, though?

LEG. CRECCA:

On 2057, it's very clear, you can eliminate the first paragraph --

MR. SABATINO:

Right. 2057, we struck the first one. On 2058, we're striking the first one.

LEG. CRECCA:

Well, then you have to change the second paragraph.

MR. SABATINO:

Strike the words "arising out of," to the end of that sentence.

LEG. CRECCA:

And also the "therefore," so it will just read, "The purpose of this law"?

MR. SABATINO:

That's what I'm referring to, is I'm just saying that it would -- "In order to deal with economic dislocation," the sentence would end there.

LEG. CRECCA:

All right. You're going to eliminate the entire first paragraph, correct?

MR. SABATINO:

Yeah. You want the entire first paragraph out, right?

LEG. CRECCA:

On 2058.

MR. SABATINO:

I'm on 2058, right.

LEG. CRECCA:

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What I would request is that when we do each bill, we just make -- it will take an extra second on each one, we make a motion for the exact change on the intent language, rather than do them all at once, because they're all different, Fred. There's some of them, they intertwine, and so --

P.O. TONNA:
Fred?

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LEG. TOWLE:
However you want to do it great.

LEG. CRECCA:
I think it will be clearer that way.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay. No problem.

LEG. CRECCA:
On 2058, the motion is to now change the Legislative Intent to eliminate the entire first paragraph, the word "therefore" in the second paragraph, and the words "arising out of that terrorist attack" in the second paragraph.

LEG. BINDER:
It wouldn't be a motion, it's just a request of the sponsor.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay, great. So ruled.

LEG. TOWLE:
Mr. Chairman.

P.O. TONNA:
Legislator Alden, then Legislator Binder. I'm sorry.

LEG. TOWLE:
Add me to the list, too?

P.O. TONNA:
Okay. That was it? Okay. Legislator Binder.

LEG. BINDER:
My concern on 2057 is that it was passed --

P.O. TONNA:

Fred, you had -- you want to --

LEG. TOWLE:
I thought I did, too.

P.O. TONNA:
I'll get you back. Sorry.

LEG. BINDER:
I hate to be difficult, but it --

P.O. TONNA:
No, you don't, but go ahead.

LEG. BINDER:
Well, in this case, I do. In this case, I do. On 2057, we actually passed it with the language. I would recommend that you do reconsider it and pass it again without the language, because striking it after

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the fact of a vote is a bad precedent to set.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay.

LEG. BINDER:
So I would recommend that you do that.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay. So let's finish 2058 --

LEG. BINDER:
Right.

P.O. TONNA:
And then we'll go back to 2057. Legislator Towle.

LEG. TOWLE:
Thank you. I want to finish up on my conversation with Counsel.

P.O. TONNA:
I apologize, Fred.

LEG. TOWLE:
That's okay. Basically, Paul, now items -- the 5-25-5 law is items under \$5,000, is that the case? Purchasing items under \$5,000, we would --

MR. SABATINO:

What it means is that for the -- for Fiscal Year 2002, the obligation, the requirement to do pay-as-you-go for a whole series of items, not just under 5,000, there's a whole series of items like dredging that's under \$100,000 and certain types of equipment purchases, you normally would be required to go pay-as-you-go. For the period of the one year, you'll have the option to either do pay-as-you-go or to do the short-term borrowing.

LEG. TOWLE:

Okay, thanks.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Question.

P.O. TONNA:

Yes, Legislator Caracciolo. Are you done, Legislator Towle?

LEG. TOWLE:

Yes.

P.O. TONNA:

Great. Legislator Caracciolo, and then Legislator Alden back? No.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Fred. Fred Pollert, would this policy change be a prudent one, and would it be consistent with the rating agency's desire to see us have a pay-as-you-go program?

MR. POLLERT:

The one-year waiver, because it's not a rescinding of the law, would indicate that it's not a long-term policy. Therefore, it would not, in my opinion, raise too many concerns with respect to the rating agencies. Number two, it primarily deals with items that are currently in the Capital Program, just being able to change the source of funding from G to bond proceeds. And number three, it's not too much of a change because there is \$2 1/2 in for pay-as-you-go. So it primarily just deals with those items in the Capital Program that are currently shown as being funded with general fund transfers. It will now enable us to bond with respect to the total cost. Now is perhaps the best time to bond, because you have extremely low interest rates at this point in time.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Well, just as we saw interest rates precipitously drop over the last 12 months, they could precipitously rise if we get into an inflation

spiral. But that aside, since the inception of 5-25-5, how much have taxpayers benefitted by the policy, and exactly how have they benefitted?

MR. POLLERT:

Specifically, how they have benefitted is the County Legislature has included approximately \$10 million a year in the Operating Budget for pay-as-you-go, and more importantly, has no longer included in the Capital Programs items which previously used to be bonded such as light bulbs or bullets for the sworn personnel. Those costs have been included in the County's Operating Budget. The net savings to the taxpayers, my recollection, is in the neighborhood of between 20 to \$30 million.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

And when did 5/25 begin? It's about five or six or seven years?

MR. POLLERT:

I'm not sure exactly what the local law was.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

How long has it been --

MR. POLLERT:

It began in 1994.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Yeah, I thought so, about seven years.

MR. POLLERT:

It was Local Law Number 23.

MR. SABATINO:

No. It took effect January 1st of '96.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

'96, so it's five years. That said, I think the danger, Mr. Chairman --

P.O. TONNA:

Yes, sir.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

I think the danger -- and I see you're a sponsor of this resolution.

P.O. TONNA:

Yes.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

From my perspective, the danger with this approach is that we are starting to go down a very slippery slope in this County of following practices that got Nassau County into trouble. And you could say, "Well, a lot of things got Nassau County into trouble," but it begins with actions like this. I mean, just a recent opinion in what do you call, in Newsday, editorial opinion about Nassau County's \$2 billion debt service is the kind of thing by taking actions that were not prudent, were not wise and were piecemeal like this is, could lead us down that road. And while I appreciate what the Budget Director says, that a one-year absence, I don't have any assurance that it's just a one-year absence, I think we could see this resolution come back for the following year and the following years. I think it sets a very dangerous precedent.

P.O. TONNA:

I think, Michael, just in response to it, since I am the sponsor, although not the only person who has advocated for this position, is I think when you take the large picture and say that there needs to be balance, there needs to be balance at times when we have diminishing sales tax revenues, when we know that there are diminishing sales tax revenues at no fault to our own, that there are going to have to be increases, therefore, in property taxes. And when you balance all of that out and try to figure out what are your -- what are the priorities in providing the public safety, you know, the public health, the public assistance, the public works, that you say, "Look, we have a very good program in the 5-25-5," something that I don't think to a Legislator here would ever want to see this initiative end. But, on the other hand, in tough times, and the irony is, is that when we have diminishing sales tax, when all of a sudden maybe our economy is -- and it's been announced this week that there is going to be a recession, and that we've been in a recession since March, that you have to balance how are we going to fund this. And I think that those Legislators who supported this initiative as part of an overall plan in balancing a budget said, "You know what, we don't want all of this to roll to the -- to the property taxes, that we would like to seek a balance." Let's see how things go for a year, and then, hopefully, everyone is hoping that we can get right back into our initiative, because everyone realizes we still need road resurfacing and all the things that are a pay-as-you-go program, dredging, although I'm not a big advocate of dredging, you know, because I don't have any.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Why not?

P.O. TONNA:

Because they don't dredge ponds in my district, there's no water in my district.

LEG. TOWLE:

And we're going to keep it that way.

P.O. TONNA:

But the fact is, is that we wanted to make sure -- and I think that the majority of Legislators felt that it was like pulling a tooth, but it was a tooth that needed to be pulled for a year, so that we can balance the burden that we're placing, and that's -- I think that was basically the philosophical call. I know Legislator Postal wanted to be recognized, then Legislator Alden.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Well, I --

P.O. TONNA:

And then I -- and then you'll be recognized, Mike.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

I had a question to you. That was a question to you as a sponsor .

P.O. TONNA:

Okay.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

So I'd like to continue.

P.O. TONNA:

Well, I thought that -- no, Michael. I think you finished, and then I recognized myself, and you will be recognized again. But there are three other people, or two other people --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

That's fine.

P.O. TONNA:

-- who would like to speak, and then you can --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

That's fine.

P.O. TONNA:

You know. Legislator -- oh, Fred Towle is next.

LEG. TOWLE:

Yeah.

P.O. TONNA:

I'm sorry, Fred.

LEG. TOWLE:

Mr. Chairman, just one point of clarification. Did we do a fiscal impact on this at all?

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MR. POLLERT:

The fiscal impact statement is indeterminate, because it really depends upon whether or not you want to change the source of funding from G to B, and is really dependent upon the number of projects which you change. What's important is what is being waived for one year is the 5-25-5 law, and what is not being waived is the capital offset law, which means that you can't go outside of the scope of the Capital Program. You can change the source of funding, but you can't decide to start to bond a whole group of low cost projects with this waiver.

LEG. TOWLE:

One of my concerns -- one of my concerns, Fred, is, obviously, our bond rating has been increased at least four times that I could remember since I've been here, and I think one of those factors, or one of the factors was the fact that, you know, well, we stopped the borrowing money for things that we should actually go out and purchase. And my concern would be what impact is this bill going to have on that effort?

MR. POLLERT:

Prior to making the recommendation in the tobacco securitization special report, we sought the advice of Evensen Dodge, which is the County's financial advisor. We met with them and they brought one of their vice presidents, which used to be a manager at one of the major rating firms. He did not believe that there would be any impact on our bond rating. He saw it as being a totally neutral event. In fact, he saw it as a better alternative to the tobacco securitization. So when he prioritized it, he had said that this is a better alternative than tobacco securitization.

LEG. TOWLE:

And he put that in writing or that was his verbal?

MR. POLLERT:

No, that was in testimony before the Finance Committee meeting.

LEG. TOWLE:

Thank you.

P.O. TONNA
Legislator Postal.

LEG. BINDER:

Paul.

LEG. POSTAL:

Yeah, thank you. The Presiding Officer really I think expressed the sentiments of those Legislators who are sponsoring this bill very fully and completely. I just wanted to point out that the Legislature does not give up its discretion, that with regard to any appropriation that's made in the course of the year, a resolution comes before the Legislature, so that we have the opportunity to either examine the -- I guess the priority of that particular project, or purchase, and also we have the opportunity to evaluate any resolution in light of changing fiscal circumstances, you know, things get better. We may

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have a very different point of view about moving away from 5-25-5 for one year. But the other question that Legislator Caracciolo raised was a concern that this could be extended, and not merely a one-year waiver, but it could go on. If that was the case, again, it would have to come back to the Legislature for action. So that in either of those circumstances, we don't relinquish our discretion and judgment.

P.O. TONNA:

Thank you. Legislator Alden, then Legislator Caracciolo again, and then Legislator Binder.

LEG. ALDEN:

I think the problem that Mike points out is, it's true, that this is dangerous to go down this path. But, if you look at it in connection with what happened with our sales tax revenues, to keep an option open, I think I believe that -- I'm convinced that this might be a prudent way to go. But, we also have to be very prudent in looking at every resolution that we do approve this year coming up --

P.O. TONNA:

Absolutely.

LEG. ALDEN:

-- and really weigh the fact of, you know, now we're going to be bonding some things and we should have been paying cash for, because that's the best way to go, really, to pay cash. And if we all exercise that due diligence and that prudence, I think that this really leaves an option open to us. And as the Deputy Presiding Officer mentioned, that this is just an option. So, as the resolutions come before us, this is just one tool that we can use to get past this -- and it is a devastating blow as far as the economy going into a recession. So while I normally would not support something like this, I will be.

P.O. TONNA:
Legislator Caracciolo, and then Binder.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Fred.

MR. POLLERT:
Yes.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
What are the latest figures we have on sales tax revenues?

MR. LIPP:
The latest figures were for the month of November, which is ending today. The November figures are down considerably. Statewide they were down fifty --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
No, no, I just want Suffolk County.

MR. LIPP:
Suffolk County is down a little over 10% compared to November of the

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previous year.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Okay. Year to date, what's your current forecast for 2001.

MR. LIPP:
Excuse me?

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Year to date and your year end forecast for 2001.

MR. LIPP:
Okay. Roughly, at this point, there's reason to suspect that we could be about 9 million dollars below what we adopted in the budget, which is a considerable reduction of I believe about 15 million across all funds from the recommended budget.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
And what's the total amount of sales tax receipts we forecasted for this year?

MR. LIPP:
I believe seven hundred and eighty something odd million.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Yes. So on a percentage basis, what does that represent?

MR. LIPP:

Percentage, you mean what the growth would be?

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

What would 15 million dollars -- a 15 million dollar shortfall represent out of 785 million dollar forecast?

LEG. BINDER:

Nine million dollar shortfall.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Well, it's nine, but 15 million across all funds is what Bob said.

MR. LIPP:

That's about roughly 2%.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

About 2%. When in 2002 will the numbers kind of be reconciled? Because we always have this lag between 2001 to carry over, if you will. So it's not until when, the spring that we really know what --

MR. LIPP:

Okay. What we actually do is we accrue a portion of February receipts back to 2001. So we will know by mid February what's going on there. The books won't be actually reconciled by the outside accountants until typically sometime in the summer, though, but we'll have a very close idea by February.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

But I'm saying in February, we may find out that that 15 million dollar may be less than that, it may even be a surplus.

MR. LIPP:

Yes. In fact, we'll have a lot more information January 12th when we get the last quarter of this year's check in, because there are lots of strange things going on in terms of monies that we -- there's noise in the data now because of a whole bunch of institutional things that I could talk about forever and bore you to death.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Okay. If we go back to the last time the County experienced significant shortfalls, and I would not consider a 2% projection as

being significant, some might, I don't, when was that, and what was the primary cause? It wasn't a terrorist attack.

MR. LIPP:

No. This is the first terrorist attack I'm aware of that affects us directly. I believe the last recession, which was like '91, '92.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

And what -- and what happened?

MR. LIPP:

And that was related to the Persian Gulf crisis. Well, typically, what happens, and we stated this --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

No. I mean, do you recall, do you have a recollection of what the actual shortfall was in --

MR. LIPP:

Off the top of my head, no. I'd have to go back and look at the data.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

I'd appreciate if you'd do that, because I really take exception to those who, and these resolutions by virtue of the titles and the intent, and I'm glad they were stricken, are trying to make a case that we are all of a sudden experiencing financial hardships as a result of an event that took place on September 11th. Has it contributed? Certainly. I mean, your November forecast would indicate that. But we also know, and I'm talking to the Budget Review Office, we also know that in October, nationally, there were significant increases in automobile sales, and we do receive sales tax revenues in this County on automobile sales, do we not?

MR. POLLERT:

Yes, we do. It's a major consumer durable.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Okay. So --

P.O. TONNA:

Michael, while we had that -- while we had that big increase in automobile sales, our sales tax was still down 10%.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Well, but they're adjusted, Paul, and that's my point, you really don't know -- we really don't know what happens -- what is happening

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right now for months. So I really take exception. And the comment I made was I take exception to those who are trying to finger the blame on an event, a tragic event that took place as being the cause for all of Suffolk County's economic woes. That's -- that's part of it, perhaps, but it's certainly not.

My point, though, is I think when you go back, Robert, and look at '91 and the shortfalls the County experienced then, clearly, it wasn't because of terrorist attacks. The Persian Gulf War was a long way away from the United States and Suffolk County. There were other factors at play, and my recollection is it was quite a significant shortfall. Fred, do you have any recollection?

MR. POLLERT:

No, I don't. But part of the reason that the shortfall has been moderated is that there was a quarter percent increase in the sales tax rate. If not for the quarter cent increase in the sales tax rate, total sales tax would have been down by 15%, not the 10%.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Yeah. And unlike some people who voted for the property tax increases, I voted for the sales tax increases, because that was supposed to be the fix. Okay? But what I see happening in this County, Mr. Chairman, what I see happening in this County is there is one increase in taxation after another, fee increase after fee increase after another. Now we see a change in a very prudent financial policy. Where does this end? There doesn't seem to be any end in site.

P.O. TONNA:

Okay. I just want to ask, what's your plan, Michael? What's your plan?

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Well --

P.O. TONNA:

I just want to know, what's your plan?

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

You'll be seeing my plan in January.

P.O. TONNA:

We have a plan.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

You'll be seeing my plan. You didn't have a plan.

P.O. TONNA:

It might not be the perfect plan.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
That's not a plan.

P.O. TONNA:
We had a plan, we passed a plan.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
You took the -- you took the easy way out.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
Mr. Chairman.

P.O. TONNA:
Michael, what's your plan?

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Showed no political courage two days after an Election Day.

P.O. TONNA:
You've been asking questions for three months. You have more raw data than any other person I know.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
You sound like Judy Jacobs.

P.O. TONNA:
I just want to know, what's your plan?

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
You sound like Judy Jacobs.

P.O. TONNA:
You didn't offer it in the budget, you didn't offer it anywhere?
What's the plan?

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
You didn't want to hear what I had to offer in the budget, nor did the other people.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
Mr. Chairman.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Okay?

P.O. TONNA:
With all due respect, I love you Michael, I know you love me.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Okay.

P.O. TONNA:

This is one of the things that on a policy level we disagree. Where is the Mike Caracciolo plan? We go down slippery slopes. I agree with you. Nobody here, and those people who voted for this, every single person, to the "T", including the sponsor, Dave Bishop, who

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sponsored the 5-25-5, said nobody wants to see that go. But given we're choosing, as Saint Augustine said many years ago, you're choosing between the lesser of two evils. If you have a solution, Michael, I swear, I will be glad to appropriate money on the private sector to erect a statute of Mike Caracciolo to say that you have settled this problem. If you could get us out of this, I will spend hour by hour --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

No. You already got us out of it.

P.O. TONNA:

-- to watch you with your plan.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

You got us out of it.

P.O. TONNA:

No. I haven't heard one thing, except if we cut the Law Department, their salaries. That wasn't the plan to save us the --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Well, the difference --

P.O. TONNA:

-- millions upon millions of dollars.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

The difference is, unlike some who find it easy to do business as usual, I'm willing to take a new course and go in a direction where, when you have financial times like this, you should do some belt tightening --

P.O. TONNA:

Let's see.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

-- and demonstrate to the public --

P.O. TONNA:

Let's see. You had how many stand-alones that did belt tightening?

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Well, I'm not going to talk over you. I'll wait until you make your statement.

P.O. TONNA:

I know I'm foaming from the mouth. This has been building up. I know that you've asked a million questions, Michael, but all I know is when you take data in, it's processed and then something comes out. I got the processing of coming in.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Well, you only get out --

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P.O. TONNA:

I want to see something come out.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

You know, garbage in, garbage out, Paul, I mean, that's an easy one. An that's really --

P.O. TONNA:

No. I'm saying that you have had --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Look.

P.O. TONNA:

-- information, good information given to you. Where's the plan?

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Well, let me ask you. The County Executive in January announced a number of initiatives he was taking, including a hiring freeze, limiting expenditures on travel and equipment.

P.O. TONNA:

So is that part of your plan?

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Let me ask you a question.

P.O. TONNA:

Yeah.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Did you or anyone on the, quote, work group --

P.O. TONNA:

Right.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

-- find out when you sat down what progress was made on those fronts, what savings?

P.O. TONNA:

Absolutely, but that's --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

No, no, no.

P.O. TONNA:

Wait, wait.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

I'd like to hear from a member of that group.

P.O. TONNA:

No, Michael. Wait, wait, wait. Michael.

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LEG. CARACCIOLO:

You tell me what the turnover savings were.

P.O. TONNA:

Mike, I had -- I asked you a question.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

You tell me --

P.O. TONNA:

Don't come back and ask me a question.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Well, you see, you can't answer the questions.

P.O. TONNA:

What does Mike -- yes, I can. I can clearly answer the question.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

No, you -- well, then answer my question.

P.O. TONNA:
I want to ask you your question, Michael.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Answer my question.

P.O. TONNA:
You were part of that work group. Did you ever ask?

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
No, I'm --

P.O. TONNA:
No.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
I have --

P.O. TONNA:
You never asked the question, we did ask. We asked questions of turnover savings. We asked questions about vacancy. We asked questions about travel.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Well, then you have the answers. Show the answers.

P.O. TONNA:
We asked every single one of those --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Let's put it on the record, Paul.

P.O. TONNA:
It is, it's part of our budget.

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LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Where are the answers?

P.O. TONNA:
It's part of our budget. The plan is there.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Don't go to Budget Review.

P.O. TONNA:

No, not --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
You're the elected official.

LEG. TOWLE:
Not Budget Review. It is part of our budget plan. That's our plan document.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
You can't answer my questions.

P.O. TONNA:
We passed it.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
How much money have we saved this year on turnover savings? To anyone who was on that, quote, work group, do you have the answer?

P.O. TONNA:
Michael. Michael, just give me your plan.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
Mike, you were part of the work group, and if you --

P.O. TONNA:
Micheal. Michael.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
And if you showed up for maybe more than ten minutes, you would have the answer.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
I know the answers.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
God bless you.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
That's the difference.

P.O. TONNA:
Michael, do you have a plan?

LEG. CARACAPPA:
God bless you.

P.O. TONNA:

Do you have a plan, Michael? Did you offer a plan?

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

That's the difference.

P.O. TONNA:

Did you give us any sense at all of what the Legislator Mike Caracciolo plan is?

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Well, obviously, I'm striking a nerve here, because you can't answer my questions.

LEG. CARACAPPA:

Mr. Chairman.

LEG. CRECCA:

Paul, just move on, please.

LEG. CARACAPPA:

Mr. Chairman, let me continue.

P.O. TONNA:

Okay. I'm sorry I even engaged you.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

We're not going to move on, Andrew. I have the floor, thank you very much, and I am going to continue.

P.O. TONNA:

I apologize. I interrupted the Legislator and it's my fault. I apologize to you. I'm sorry.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Okay.

P.O. TONNA:

It just was a momentary lapse.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

I mean, I'd be happy to engage you or anybody else in a debate on facts any day.

P.O. TONNA:

Okay. Legislator Caracciolo, you still have the floor.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Thank you.

P.O. TONNA:

Then Legislator Binder.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Now I will ask the question.

P.O. TONNA:
Legislator -- let me just -- MP.

LEG. POSTAL:
That's me.

P.O. TONNA:
That's Legislator Postal, Crecca. I thought we were going to get somebody to come in and pistol whip us, and MP.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
I'd like to ask those questions, Mr. Chairman --

P.O. TONNA:
Crecca, and then Caracappa. Thank you.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
-- to a representative of the County Executive's Office. And what I have noted repeatedly at our meetings is a disrespect by the Executive Branch of government in Suffolk County by not having all of the appropriate officials here to answer questions. And Brian is shaking his head in the affirmative, because he knows what I'm talking about.

P.O. TONNA:
Brian, you give nonverbals like that and you start, believe me --

LEG. FOLEY:
Well, that's the truth, it's the truth.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
It's the absolute truth.

LEG. FOLEY:
That part I have to agree with.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay. All right. What is --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
They are supposed to be here to answer Legislator or elected official's questions. I mean, the staff is big enough over there that they could afford to send some of the people that have answers to questions here, because I'd like -- I'd like to have some answers to questions like I just raised. What were the projections for turnover savings? What is the year-to-date savings that's been accumulated,

and what's forecasted for year end? How much money was projected to be saved in equipment purchases, and what are -- what are the numbers? Because I have the information.

P.O. TONNA:

Okay.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

But I'd like to hear everybody else hear the information, because what you're going to hear, if someone's here to talk to it, and I'd like to

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find out if there is or not --

P.O. TONNA:

Well, is part of your plan, then, if we were able to reduce that, then you would be able to keep the 5-25-5 program intact?

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

No. I think -- I think when you make announcements and pronouncements, you should keep them.

P.O. TONNA:

Okay.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Not just spew words that you don't follow-up on and you don't ensure projections and goals are met.

P.O. TONNA:

Okay.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

So what happens is the Legislature gets roped into, because we don't know, what was supposed to be done isn't being done, and that just exacerbates a worsening financial economic condition. There are things, Mr. Chairman, that we can do. And all I'm saying is that if there are people in this County who want to lead this County, then let them come forward and demonstrate that they are leading.

You know, the Executive doesn't appreciate when the Legislature meddles into, quote, micromanaging County government, because that's the Executive's job. But one of the things I would have done is I would have said to the Executive, "You know what, you're the Budget Officer. You sent over here a phony budget, now fix it and repair it." Legislator Bishop and I were willing to be signatories to a letter to tell him to do just that. Okay? And then I got shut out of the process, as you know and I've discussed with you. Don't shake your

head no, because it's a fact.

P.O. TONNA:
Michael, wait, wait, no. You know what, instead of --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
It's a fact.

P.O. TONNA:
Forget my nonverbal. That is -- Michael, with all due respect, and you know, Michael, all I can say is that is the -- that is not the largest, I've heard bigger revisionist history --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Not revisionist history.

P.O. TONNA:
But I will say that is not at all --

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LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Paul, there were two meetings called on two successive days, and the Chairperson of the Finance and Financial Services Committee of this County Legislature doesn't get invited?

P.O. TONNA:
Michael.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Well, then either you're at fault or whoever organized the meeting is.

P.O. TONNA:
I take full responsibility.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Thank you. Okay.

P.O. TONNA:
One hundred percent.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Very good.

P.O. TONNA:
Because, you know what Michael, if you were there --

LEG. CARACCILO:
Yeah.

P.O. TONNA:
-- at the meeting when we decided to have it --

LEG. CARACCILO:
Then you would have heard some of my -- some of my hard-to-swallow suggestions.

P.O. TONNA:
-- you would have sat there and just like anybody else who was there and said, "Yeah, we have another meeting." It isn't my job to call up absent members.

LEG. CARACCILO:
Well, who called those meetings?

P.O. TONNA:
I did.

LEG. CARACCILO:
You did.

P.O. TONNA:
Yeah. I called every single one of those meetings.

LEG. CARACCILO:
So you intentionally -- you intentionally made certain that the Chairperson of the Finance Committee wasn't there.

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P.O. TONNA:
No. I intentionally made sure --

LEG. CARACCILO:
You yourself served as the Chair --

P.O. TONNA:
No.

LEG. CARACCILO:
-- of the Finance Committee.

P.O. TONNA:
No.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Did you not?

P.O. TONNA:
Michael. Michael.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Did you, or did you not?

P.O. TONNA:
Michael, there were meetings --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Did you --

P.O. TONNA:
What? I can't hear.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
-- or did you not serve as Chair of the Finance Committee?

P.O. TONNA:
Yeah, absolutely.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Okay.

P.O. TONNA:
And then when I attended a meeting --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Were you ever omitted from any discussion?

P.O. TONNA:
To tell you quite honestly, I'm not sure. I'm not aware of them, but I do know this. When I was at a meeting and actually attended the work group meetings, and they said, "By the way, quickly, we're going to have a subsequent meeting," I was there, because I attended the meeting prior and knew when the next meeting was coming.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
You know and I know those meetings that I'm referring to were called --

P.O. TONNA:
When we were in our work group meetings, Michael.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

No, you weren't. No, you weren't.

P.O. TONNA:

In response to a letter that you and Legislator Bishop wanted to send.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Thank you very much.

P.O. TONNA:

Should have been there.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Thank you very much.

P.O. TONNA:

Anyway, that's not the point of the resolution, and I would like to get on.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Well, I'd like to get an answer to my questions. Is there someone here from the Executive that could answer my questions?

P.O. TONNA:

You want to answer this? I want you to -- I want you to understand this is a loaded question. Go right ahead. All right. And being a retired police officer, he's used to loading a gun. So here, please, ask your questions.

MR. KNAPP:

I'll try to answer it as best as I can.

P.O. TONNA:

Then give him your perfunctory answer, and then let's go to four other people who want to speak on the issue. Legislator Postal.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Okay.

P.O. TONNA:

I have an hour meeting, which I'm sure I'll still be in the debate. I'll be right back.

D.P.O. POSTAL:

No problem. I think Legislator Binder --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

I have the floor, Mr. Chairman.

D.P.O. POSTAL:
Oh, you still have --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Yes.

D.P.O. POSTAL:
You still have questions?

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Yes.

D.P.O. POSTAL:
Go head.

P.O. TONNA:
You're going to ask questions right there.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Yes, yes. He's there. First, can we recap what the announcement was back in January in terms of dealing with the County's financial condition, and what measures were being implemented to deal with that?

MR. KNAPP:
Basically, you hit a couple of the key points before about what the County Executive laid forward in his State of the County. There was a hiring -- a temporary hiring freeze.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Temporary?

MR. KNAPP:
Well, it was a hiring --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Was it announced as a temporary hiring freeze?

MR. KNAPP:
It was a hiring freeze that I believe I even spoke in front of the Finance Committee and stated that positions will be released when it saves money in overtime, and when it is -- involves public safety. Anything more to that I cannot answer to, but that was the policy that I was aware of in the Budget Office. And in addition to that, he talked about that there was striking of appropriations for travel, equipment, supplies. Legislator Crecca and the Legislature adopted a resolution doing such that. In the 2002 budget, we used that as our starting point for the dollar amounts for those appropriations. We did not revert back automatically to the 2001 adopted numbers, we used new modified.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
What were the pronouncements as far as cutbacks in travel and

equipment?

MR. KNAPP:

There was a percentage used in Legislator Crecca's bill. I believe

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it's 5%, off the top of my head, but I'll defer it to Budget Review or to the sponsor of the bill for that.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

That was my recollection. Do you have any figures with you to share as far as how we are doing in terms of meeting those 5% reduction targets?

MR. KNAPP:

Those five percents were stricken from the budget.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

From which budget?

MR. KNAPP:

From the 2001 adopted budget.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

No. I'm talking about this year.

MR. KNAPP:

I'm talking the 2001 adopted budget this year. Those numbers were taken out of the Department's availability of funds.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Okay. But for this year --

MR. KNAPP:

So those targets were reached, because they were no longer available to the departments.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Okay. If you look at this year, 2001, budgeted was \$15,360,000 for equipment. As of the date that Mr. Weiss responded to my request for this information, the County had expended \$18,502,000, which is approximately \$3.2 million more than what was budgeted --

MR. KNAPP:

That is correct.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

-- less 5% that should have been saved.

MR. KNAPP:

The number is not including -- the modified number does include -- let me correct that. The modified number includes any grants that have been accepted from January 1st. A lot of grants come through here where we accept and appropriate dollar amounts. That goes into the modified budget. So that new amount that is over what was adopted is directly attributed to the grants.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

So you're saying this \$18 million doesn't reflect \$18 million in County actual cost?

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MR. KNAPP:

No.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

What does?

MR. KNAPP:

That would be something that we would have to go through our accounting system and see if we can piece it apart to get that.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Well, I'd like that information.

MR. KNAPP:

It's going to be -- it could be very extremely difficult to do it through the accounting system.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Well, I would think, if this were a corporation and you were in the budget office or the accounting office, and a member of the board of directors requested that information, there would be a computer program somewhere that you could just punch in and get this information very rapidly. I don't know why it should take a great deal of time and effort.

MR. KNAPP:

With the most of the grants -- Legislator, with most of the grants, it would be easy to get, because of -- the dollar amounts are appropriated in a new appropriation that is not tied to existing appropriations. But there are some grants that get rolled into existing appropriations, and that would be the number that would be difficult to get. The other numbers, a majority of them would be easy

to ascertain for you.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

What was the goal -- I mean, yeah, what I'm hearing here is the usual double-speak, but that's the way it goes around here. Very few people are paying attention, because they've already made up their minds what they intend to do and that's unfortunate. But in terms of what was hoped for in turnover savings -- and we could smile and laugh about this. It's going to catch up with everybody. I'm very patient. I'm confident it will. The year-to-date turnover savings, do you know what the goal was there, what was hoped to be achieved?

MR. KNAPP:

I believe, when Mr. Weiss sent you with that information, I don't know if there was any follow-up conversations or memos between yourself and the Budget Director --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Should there have been?

MR. KNAPP:

I'm sorry?

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LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Should there have been?

MR. KNAPP:

Well, I know that the Budget Director sent you information and I don't know if you responded back to him with any follow-up questions, so that I would have to apologize.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

No. You pretty much answered the questions and I was satisfied with that, but now I'm hearing that there are some other bits of information that this did not provide, so I'd be curious to have the additional information.

MR. KNAPP:

The turnover savings is something that, and I don't want to speak for Fred or Jim, but Budget Review doesn't control it, they monitor that more than we do in the Budget Office. We monitor direct expenditures that are made and we forecast out what we believe the anticipated payroll will be for a certain department or a certain appropriation, and the turnover savings is taken out before we get to that number. So as long as we don't go over that 110 adopted number, we are within

turnover savings. However, in this situation with this year, there has been numerous contract negotiations that contracts approved, which when the bills were passed in front of the Legislature, it was mentioned by Budget Review and by the Budget Office that there will be resolutions possibly coming forward, transferring --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

So, in other words, County spending went up, and up, and up, and continues to go up, one of my underlying points precisely.

MR. KNAPP:

Not necessarily, because that money has been adopted in the budget underneath a Legislative contingency account -- not a Legislative -- I'm sorry, let me -- a miscellaneous undistributed salaries contingency account.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Well, we're talking about --

MR. KNAPP:

For that --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

We're talking about funds in excess of that. Let me just --

MR. KNAPP:

No, we are not.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Let me just ask -- interrupt you for a second.

MR. KNAPP:

The numbers I was giving you and the information is not in excess of that contingency account.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Fred, year over year, how much has County spending increased in the last three years? Yes.

MR. POLLERT:

County expenditures, I believe, have been up in the neighborhood of -- hold on just one moment, we'll get you the exact number.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

While Budget Review are crunching those numbers, let me raise this issue of -- at the beginning of the year, how many employees did the

County have on its payroll? This is for the Budget Office.

MR. KNAPP:

I don't have that information directly with me now. I can have that for you at the next Finance Committee meeting, but I don't have that information.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

I would appreciate that. And, at the same time, could you break it down and advise how many of those were in public safety or areas that would have been exempt under the County Executive's directive to, you know, have, as you put it, temporary hiring freeze?

MR. KNAPP:

I will go -- well, I corrected myself on that.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

I don't recall it being called a temporary hiring freeze, but --

MR. KNAPP:

I corrected myself on the temporary hiring freeze.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Okay. It was a hiring freeze, with the exception of being public safety, as I recall. Okay. Fred?

MR. POLLERT:

Yes. With respect to the general fund, the costs have been increasing it looks like an average of about \$50 million per year. There was a large increase in 2001 and 2002 primarily associated with mandated costs. There was an increase in Social Services of about \$60 million this year. In the Police District, the costs have been averaging more consistently in the neighborhood of about 22 to \$23 million dollars a year.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

So when you average that out, you're saying in the last three years, it's gone up 50 million a year, or in total, about \$150 million?

MR. POLLERT:

That's correct.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

And as a percentage, what would that represent?

This last year, roughly 10%.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Ten percent. And what was the cost -- what was inflation? What has inflation been?

MR. POLLERT:

The rate of inflation this last year was about 3 1/2% -- well, it was about 2 1/2 to 3%.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Right. So we have expenditures going up in excess of cost of living, and significantly higher than cost of living.

MR. POLLERT:

That's correct. But I also need to qualify that part of the reason that there was a large increase this last year from 2000 to 2001 is there was a significant amount of money included for contractual salary increases, which went back over a period of time.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Right. I could appreciate that.

MR. KNAPP:

Legislator Caracciolo.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

The point, the point being, Madam Chair, is that, from my perspective, what the County needs to do as we go forward, because, obviously, the die has been cast for next year, is I would encourage my colleagues to look at a process that shares with the public. If we're going to go to the public and say, "You have to dip into your pocketbooks, even though your pocketbooks are getting thin because of the economic condition that they experience, as well as government," then, by the same token, we are going to start doing some belt tightening. You can't have expenditures going up 10% a year or \$50 million a year and just continue to pass those costs along. We all have a fiduciary responsibility to manage County finances, not just the County Executive. And where I take issue with some is that I don't believe the Legislature has done, for next year at least, as good a job as we could have done collectively, but, again, that's water over the bridge.

And what I finally want to say is that when you look at pronouncements, there needs to be a mechanism within this Legislative body to follow-up to see that goals are met and that we don't continue to just exceed spending without bringing it in check at some point in time, or waiting until the whole year has gone by to say, "Oh, my goodness, how did that happen?" And, "How come we didn't have as much money in turnover savings as we thought we were going to have?" And, "How come we spent more on equipment than we were supposed to?" I mean, I think those are just prudent policies that should be part of everyday business in County government, just as it would be in a private business, where people watch their payroll and they watch

their operating expenses, and they try to balance that with their -- with their revenues. Thank you.

MR. KNAPP:
I'm sorry.

D.P.O. POSTAL:
Did you want to respond?

MR. KNAPP:
One, one comment. Legislator Caracciolo asked me for information as far as the January hires, and when I answered quickly that I'll have it ready for you by the next Finance meeting, it didn't dawn on me that the committee cycle is exactly next week. I will try to get you as much information as I can by then, but it's only about a two-day turnaround.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Well, since we're not meeting until the 18th, I'm going to reschedule that meeting, so it will be the following week, and I'll advise you as to the date.

MR. KNAPP:
Okay.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Thank you.

D.P.O. POSTAL:
Legislator Binder.

LEG. BINDER:
Madam Chair, before I speak, I suggest the absence of a quorum and ask for a quorum call.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
We don't need a quorum.

LEG. BINDER:
You were in the middle of a vote. We're in the middle of a -- we're in the middle of a vote on -- and I'm calling a quorum and it's --

LEG. FOLEY:
You suggest or you observe --

LEG. BINDER:
And I ask for a request to quorum call.

D.P.O. POSTAL:

Will Legislators report to the auditorium.

LEG. FOLEY:

You're not suggesting, you're observing. Allan, you're not suggesting an absence, you're observing an absence of a quorum.

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LEG. BINDER:

I'm suggesting, observing and asking for a quorum call. Let me -- Fred, let me ask real quick questions and then make a statement. The County's debt service, can you give me kind of a general state of the County's debt service, where it is, and then maybe in comparison to where it was, and also kind of comparison to other counties of our size.

MR. POLLERT:

Yeah. The County's debt service has been increasing on an annual basis. It has been driven in the last few years primarily by land acquisition costs. There was a major referendum which increased the bonding for land acquisitions. The trend in debt service growth has, however, been slowed rather dramatically with the pay-as-you-go program. The County continues to have relatively low debt service costs with respect to other counties our size. The reason that that positive has not weighed too heavily with respect to the rating agencies are factors such as reliance on sales tax and the outstanding Shoreham tax certiorari, which has not been completely resolved, as well as the Suffolk County Tax Act. So it would be a good positive in our bond rating, but there are other factors that are really beyond our control at this point in time that would reflect the relatively good shape that we are in with respect to debt service. And we have a large amount of debt which is going to be redeemed over the next five years.

LEG. BINDER:

The fact is that our debt service is in good shape because this Legislature has acted prudently over the years, and we are in a position to do exactly what we're talking about doing. I have to disagree that this would be an imprudent move, this is actually a prudent move, and the reason is in years where you have revenues coming in at a nice clip, you have the -- you have the ability to pay-as-you-go and not hurt the taxpayers for it and not affect the economy. So in an economic and a fiscal sense, it's the right thing to do, pay-as-you-go in good times. The importance is that we did that and by doing that we have protected our debt service, and in protecting our debt service, we've allowed ourselves the room, in

times where the choice is hurting the taxpayers, to do bonding. So this is -- this is beyond the right thing to do, it is absolutely the prudent thing to do. When things go bad in the economy, you don't turn to the taxpayers, that's when you do a little extra bonding. That's when you turn to moves like this, and this is exactly when they are prudent. And so, while I might have disagreed with other things done during the budget process, I have to say that this is a smart move, it's something that I can support, it's something we should support.

And when we talk about the rating agencies, I would hope members would start thinking a little bit differently than we've been thinking. We have been slaves to the rating agencies, and always the question is what are the rating agencies going to do? Well, you know, the rating agencies would be very happy if we doubled or tripled taxes, they don't care, and they would give us a great bond rating. So while we double and triple taxpayers and hurt the taxpayers and hurt the economy, we pay a little bit less on bonds. And I don't want to -- I

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won't go into the questions, but if you ask Budget Review and you found out how much really do we save if we went from a AAA to a -- or AA to AAA or -- I mean, little moves in on our bond rating, they don't cost us that much money. So we shouldn't be focused on what will the bond rating be affected, we should be focused on what is the prudent fiscal and economic moves. There are two things. We should be focused on that, and this is exactly the right thing to do at exactly the right time, and so I strongly support this.

D.P.O. POSTAL:

Thank you. I'm next on the list. I think Legislator Binder makes a really good point. And he used wonderful budgeting and financial terms, but, you know, I have to relate it to kind of pragmatic terms, where, yes, it's nice if you need a new roof on your house and you can pay for it out of your savings in the bank, but if you don't have savings in the bank, there are times you have to go out and borrow money to repair that roof before it leaks.

But I wanted to address some of the I think false messages that came out of Legislator Caracciolo's comments and questions, because the first message that I think is inaccurate is that the drop in sales tax is something that we've seen before and it shouldn't require a tax increase of a magnitude of the tax increase that we have, it shouldn't require us to suspend 5-25-5 for a year. And I think that, first, we need to clarify some things. We need to talk about the fact, and it was brought up, I believe, by the County Executive's representative, that Medicaid costs increased dramatically, that we had increased costs due to the binding arbitration that imposed a contract. So I

think what was being said is that with all of the other things that took place, and, certainly, there will be information coming to the Finance Committee on how successful the curtailment of travel was, how successful the hiring freeze was, but I think that it's important to recognize that there were other factors that increased spending beyond anyone's control that had to be factored into this budget.

But there was -- there's another statement, too, that I think is really important, or another, I guess, recognition that needs to be made, having to do with September 11th, because there's been a lot of talk about September 11th. And I don't think any of us wants to use September 11th as an excuse for this fiscal situation in which we find ourselves, but the fact of the matter is that we have had increased costs subsequent to September 11th. And in the Public Safety Committee, if I remember correctly, we have police officers who have been in New York City and were not going to be reimbursed for anything but the overtime of those police officers, so that the other costs associated with those public safety assignments are not going to be reimbursed to us. But the thing that strikes me more than anything else, and I asked the Budget Review Office about it probably about a week ago, is what happened to Suffolk County because of New York State's actions in withholding monies that should have come to the County of Suffolk? And I know Fred answered this question for me, but I'd like him to answer this for all of us. I don't know that we ever got a bottom line. You have gave us kind of a ballpark figure. My question, Fred, had to do with the loss that Suffolk County is experiencing due to monies which are not going to be coming to Suffolk County from New York State, for example, the FIT aid, CHIPS money, all

of the other reimbursements and normal State aid that we generally secure, because those were, whether you want to blame them on the failure to adopt a State budget -- well, if you would just explain.

MR. POLLERT:

Yeah. The larger impact with respect to September 11th is that the State of New York did not restore funding which was anticipated. There were a variety of revenue sources which were impacted. In total, the estimate is approximately \$25 million net cost to Suffolk County based upon New York State not coming back and doing more than the bare bones operating budget. Part of those are both revenue costs, as well as State of New York increasing eligibility. For instance, the State of New York has increased the number of pharmaceuticals which they will reimburse on. So there are both direct revenue losses as well as indirect expenditure increases. The total is approximately 20 to \$25 million, and we are continuing to calculate a whole host of other items, which even the departments are not sure of what the budgetary impact is.

D.P.O. POSTAL:

Thank you. So that we're also -- this budget addressed at least a \$25 million shortfall in anticipated revenue from New York State, which could grow even beyond that. I'll put you on the list. Is -- Legislator Caracappa.

LEG. CARACAPPA:

Thank you, Madam Chair. It's actually more a point of personal privilege just to respond basically to the cross-fire that Legislator Caracciolo had with the Presiding Officer earlier. And just to Legislator Caracciolo, I sat on the working committee. And first, before I go into it, just let me say, I respect you as a Legislator and as a colleague, and I think you do a fantastic job as Finance Chair, and you've been very thorough in your assessment to budgets, in not only this year, but in years past. But this year you were part of the working group and you didn't participate much, if at all. I know you sent your Aide to many of the work groups, which was at least an effort, and it should have been at that point where you were contacted through those -- through a correspondence through her that there was subsequent meetings with the County Executive's Office and their Budget Office were taking place. And know that was -- that that conversation transpired in the room, because I was there.

You've mentioned that the goals and objectives that were brought forward during the budget process were basically nonexistent and you asked for facts and figures. The facts and figures are, as we came up with a fiscal document that is going to get us through what is probably the most difficult year we -- any of us as Legislators, new, old, are going to be facing. Where I find -- where my biggest problem is, is that year after year, at my six budgets, there's always been either an omnibus or there's been a tremendous amount of stand-alones, or separate omnibuses. Case in point would be year after year after year, Legislator Steve Levy would not sign on to the omnibus package, but we would sit here for a good two, maybe three hours going through a hundred different budget amendments that was his package. Also, there would be other Legislators, Legislator Hackeling, I remember, and Legislator Tonna, they would -- Legislator Rizzo, for that matter,

they would bring forward hundreds, literally, of budget line amendments, their package, their plan. This year, when I received the amendment sheet, I was shocked to see that there was -- there was less than half a page. My problem is that if you're going to throw bombs and if you're going to fly high and stay far from being hit from the arrows and the missiles, such as a B-52 bomber, at least have a plan. And don't say, "I'm going to have one in January." Our time came and our time went. We all had two months to present budget amendments, a

budget document, and a sound fiscal policy for what is again a very troubling Fiscal Year 2002.

And I don't say this to be hard-nosed or mean-spirited towards you, it's just that we worked very hard and we made very hard decisions. And from the second we sat down as Legislators, whether it was a working group or individuals, looking at the budget with Budget Review, we saw the landscape was exceptionally rocky, and we were willing to go over those rocks and to deal with the troubles that laid ahead and we did. And we got hurt walking over those rocks, but I think it was for the betterment of the Suffolk County taxpayer in the long-term.

D.P.O. POSTAL:
Michael.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Would you suffer an interruption?

D.P.O. POSTAL:
Michael.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
I'm done.

D.P.O. POSTAL:
You know, I can put you on the list, but there are other people, so --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Okay.

D.P.O. POSTAL:
Let's move to Legislator Crecca.

LEG. CRECCA:
Yeah. I think Legislator Caracappa said a lot of what I was going to say, so I'll just say that I support his comments wholeheartedly. As someone who was not necessarily part of the original work group, I did put myself into the process, both by meeting with Budget Review, as well as by attending those meetings. I find it offensive and somewhat shocking that the attacks that have been made on not just the budget, it's one thing to attack the budget that we've passed and all that, but to attack the process or individuals that didn't want to include Legislator Caracciolo. I just find it difficult, because at the meetings that I attended, many of the people have said, "Where is Legislator Caracciolo," you know, "why isn't he here?" And as head of the Finance Committee, I mean, that specifically came up, too, "Why isn't the head of the Finance Committee not here?" Your Aide was

there often, but all of the things, including the meetings with the County Executive, were brought up at that meeting. It was an open process. There were one or two meetings I could not attend, and I got the information from Budget Review and from other Legislators. I certainly feel like I influenced the process by recommending specific cuts, by certain fee increases. I expected to be filing many of my own stand-alones, but found instead that the Committee was very receptive to a lot of the cuts that I wanted to make and things that I wanted to do. And being part of that process, I may not have agreed with or liked everything in that budget process, in the budget, but I feel like the Committee worked very, very hard in putting that budget together. And more importantly, while I was there, I never heard a suggestion from you or your Aide, when they attended, or with regard to the budget, or your recommendations for the budget.

And while I respect as I fellow Legislator your right to criticize, and that is -- that's what's great about this process, that we can all do that, I would just say, you know, it's one thing to criticize, it's another thing to step up to the plate and be a leader and to offer a plan or to offer things that are constructive towards resolving a problem. And to date, and maybe there's some magical plan that you have in January, I'd love to see it, but it would have been nice to have seen it during the process when it could have really influenced the 2002 budget. And for that, I just want to say that, you know, to attack individual Legislators, or to attack a process, you had every right to not only participate in that process, but to strongly influence it. As Chairman of the Finance Committee, I find that disingenuous.

D.P.O. POSTAL:
Legislator Carpenter.

LEG. CARPENTER:
When you were speaking earlier about some of the unanticipated increases that we might be expecting, in Newsday today, there was an article about the affects of welfare reform, and that the five-year period is up when people have to come off welfare, and then the safety net that has to be provided, and exactly what that increased cost now is going to be to Suffolk County. And I don't know if Budget Review, you may have those numbers, but can you confirm that the figure quoted in Newsday at \$5 million might be what we're looking at as increased cost?

MR. POLLERT:
That's just the increase cost with respect to the safety net. There are a whole host of other costs, including institutional care and Medicaid, as well as the cost of the homeless that we have to put up that have increased far more than that.

LEG. CARPENTER:
Okay. Thank you.

D.P.O. POSTAL:
Legislator Caracciolo.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

I'm not going to belabor the points I made earlier, except I do want to comment on a few things, and one that Legislator Caracappa raised and, I appreciate, Joe, your kind remarks. But let me say that in terms of the direction I would have preferred, under the changes in the process that have taken place around the Legislature in the last half a dozen or so years for filing budget amendments, any omnibus resolution required four Legislators. And there are Legislators sitting here, and I'm not going to point them out or ask them to acknowledge, that I did reach out to the cosponsor an alternative omnibus, and for their own reasons, and I'm not going to question motives, they were not comfortable in cosponsoring an omnibus. So I did attempt during this year's budget process to put something together. As Fred Pollert could acknowledge, I probably spent more time in Budget Review this year than anyone individually going over next year's budget.

P.O. TONNA:

I'll confirm that. I'll confirm it.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Looking for ways to come up constructively, Andrew, with options, more options than I thought were considered. My criticism is not of individual Legislators, it's not about motives, it's about a process that I think as we go forward has to -- has to be revised, it has to be changed. It shouldn't be a process of where you need four Legislators. Granted, when Legislator Levy was here and some of the others that you mentioned, including the present Presiding Officer, who filed numerous individual stand-alones, that elongated the process, it was a process that, while it may have taken more time to accomplish, did allow alternatives. So what I'm saying, when you stifle alternative means, then it's kind of an all-or-take-nothing proposition, and I have difficulty with that, I don't think that's really what a democratic process should be about.

LEG. CRECCA:

If I can just quickly respond.

D.P.O. POSTAL:

Well, why don't you let Legislator Caracciolo finish.

LEG. CRECCA:

To that extent, I mean, I'm not -- I would be happy to reexamine the process, Legislator Caracciolo. It's just, you know, I just -- to

that extent, I don't disagree with your comments, to look at the process, but you got -- you know, I still think that we need a --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Yeah. And, Andrew, and I say this with fondness, you know, as a Legislator who just, and I want to congratulate you on your reelection, completed your first term, you weren't familiar with the past practices in the budget process and how it worked, but things have changed. And when you change sometimes, it's not always for the good, just like I don't believe this resolution, just to sum up and get to the matter before us -- with all due respect to Legislator Binder, I think any time you finance something you can pay cash for, and given

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the amount of money we may be talking about, 5 or \$10 million, that would not inordinately increase taxes at all, at all, but it will increase cost in years ahead, because you're financing debt that should be paid for in cash now. My last point.

P.O. TONNA:

Right. Michael, I have one, one thing. That same logic, I'd like you to come home and talk to my wife, because my wife is right now in the midst of financing things that I say, "Hon, we can't pay cash right now." "Oh, that's okay." So I need you to make that argument to her. If you can convince her, I'm willing to reconsider. But I guarantee you this, you're not going to convince her. Thank you.

LEG. D'ANDRE:

Moving right along.

P.O. TONNA:

Let's move the question. We have a motion and a second to approve. All in favor? Opposed?

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Opposed.

LEG. HALEY:

Opposed.

P.O. TONNA:

Okay. Legislator Caracciolo, Legislator Haley. Okay. Now we have before us I.R. 2059 (A Local Law to impose motor vehicle use fee in Suffolk County). I'll make a motion, seconded by Legislator Postal.

MR. BARTON:

16-2 not present -- two no.

P.O. TONNA:

Okay. We'll go back to 57 later. Let's just go with the flow here.

LEG. TOWLE:

Explanation.

P.O. TONNA:

We'll do it next, I forgot. Let's just get this one done. And we are amending this. Andrew, can you be our amender?

LEG. CRECCA:

Sure. I would just ask the sponsor if they would consider eliminating the entire first paragraph and leaving the rest -- I'm sorry, the first and third paragraphs.

P.O. TONNA:

Great. That's fine. That's consistent with our Legislative Intent. Okay. On the motion. All in favor?

LEG. TOWLE:

Explanation.

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P.O. TONNA:

What?

MR. BARTON:

Who was the motion?

LEG. TOWLE:

Explanation.

P.O. TONNA:

Read the --

MR. BARTON:

Who was the motion?

P.O. TONNA:

The motion is by myself and Legislator Postal.

MR. BARTON:

Thank you.

P.O. TONNA:

And then you'll find that that basically would be the deal.

MR. BARTON:
That should be pretty consistent.

P.O. TONNA:
Yes, today.

MR. BARTON:
Okay. Thank you.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay.

LEG. TOWLE:
Mr. Chairman.

P.O. TONNA:
Is somebody asking a question on the motion?

LEG. TOWLE:
Yeah, I am.

P.O. TONNA:
Legislator Towle.

LEG. TOWLE:
Explanation from Counsel.

MR. SABATINO:
Okay. This would, pursuant to existing State law, amend an existing local law to adjust the fee for passenger motor vehicles, which is currently \$4, and make it \$5 if the vehicle is 3,500 pounds or less. It would change the fee from \$7 to \$10 if the vehicle is more than

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3,500 pounds. And it would change the fee from \$8 to \$10 for trucks, buses and commercial vehicles used in a business context.

P.O. TONNA:
Thank you. Okay. Fred? Motion and a second.

LEG. BINDER:
Roll call.

P.O. TONNA:
All in favor? Opposed?

LEG. BINDER:
Roll call.

P.O. TONNA:
Roll call.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Opposed.

LEG. TOWLE:
Opposed.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay. Roll call.

(Roll Called by Mr. Barton)

P.O. TONNA:
Yes. Just their last names.

LEG. POSTAL:
Yes.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
No.

LEG. GULDI:
Yes.

LEG. TOWLE:
No.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
Yes

LEG. FISHER:
Yes.

LEG. HALEY:
No.

LEG. FOLEY:
Yes.

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LEG. LINDSAY:
Yes.

LEG. FIELDS:

Yes.

LEG. ALDEN:
Nope.

LEG. CARPENTER:
Yes.

LEG. CRECCA:
Yes.

LEG. D'ANDRE:
Yes.

LEG. BISHOP:
Yes.

LEG. BINDER:
No.

LEG. COOPER:
Yes.

MR. BARTON:
13-5.

LEG. FOLEY:
What's the total?

P.O. TONNA:
Okay? Thank you. Let's go to our next vote, which is to I.R. 2060 (A
Local Law to impose Motor Fuel Facilities Use Fees in Suffolk County).
Motion by myself, seconded by Legislator Postal. Mr. Crecca.

LEG. CRECCA:
I would ask the sponsor to delete under
the first -- the entire first paragraph, and to delete the words "in
order to deal with the economic dislocation arising out of the
terrorist attack."

P.O. TONNA:
Thank you.

LEG. ALDEN:
On the motion.

P.O. TONNA:
Wait. Just --

LEG. CRECCA:
And the word "therefore."

P.O. TONNA:
That's our Legislative Intent. Okay.

LEG. CRECCA:
And the word "therefore," yeah.

P.O. TONNA:
Thank you. Legislator Alden.

LEG. ALDEN:
Just to bring to everybody's attention, this was looked at in my committee. We tabled it for a public hearing. There were some representatives that came in and felt that they were being unfairly singled out, and that this could hurt their business because it's a penny type of business as far as profits, and that in the long run, it actually -- it has to be passed on to the motorist. I'm just bringing that up in case everybody did not see the minutes yet, but just so you're aware of that.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay. Thank you.

LEG. TOWLE:
Mr. Chairman.

LEG. HALEY:
Same motion, same second, same vote.

LEG. BINDER:
Roll call.

LEG. TOWLE:
Mr. Chairman.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay. So could I make --

LEG. TOWLE:
Mr. Chairman.

P.O. TONNA:
-- the same motion, same second, same vote?

LEG. TOWLE:
Hold on. Mr. Chairman, over here.

P.O. TONNA:
You want to -- you might want to change? Hold it. Legislator Towle.

LEG. TOWLE:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Counsel, just --

P.O. TONNA:

I have a hard time moving my neck this way. I'm sorry.

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LEG. TOWLE:

Yeah. I'll just -- I'll yell a little louder. Just a quick explanation.

MR. SABATINO:

On the motor fuel facilities, the application fee, which is a one-time fee, would be increased from \$25 to \$50, and the biennial, that's every -- I'm sorry, the annual, rather, registration fee would be increased from \$25 to \$50.

LEG. TOWLE:

Is that for individual stations or --

MR. SABATINO:

That's for each business, each operation, not each pump, but each operation, so each business.

LEG. TOWLE:

So why are there two fees for each business? Just explain that to me. I heard you say one was a \$25 fee, we're moving it to --

MR. SABATINO:

One is an application fee to get yourself started. Then after you get -- after you're in, there's a registration fee that's \$25 a year.

LEG. TOWLE:

So it's \$50 a year, in other words.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Mr. Chairman, could I comment, too?

P.O. TONNA:

Yes. Wait, wait. Sorry.

LEG. TOWLE:

It's \$50 a year?

MR. SABATINO:

It's \$25 a year right now, it's going to be increased to 50.

LEG. TOWLE:
Okay.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay. Legislator Lindsay.

LEG. LINDSAY:
The only point that I want to make, and I'm on the Consumer Affairs Committee, is that our Consumer Affairs Department do regulate these gas stations to make sure that the public isn't being taken over; that the octane levels are right that we buy at the pump. So the County expends money to protect the consumer and, you know, there's a cost to that. I don't think this fee has been raised for ever and ever and ever, and we're talking about \$25, which is about the cost of one fill-up.

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P.O. TONNA:
Thank you. Okay.

LEG. CRECCA:
Well said, Bill.

P.O. TONNA:
Roll call.

(Roll Called by Mr. Barton)

LEG. TONNA:
Yes.

LEG. POSTAL:
Yes.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
No.

LEG. GULDI:
Yes.

LEG. TOWLE:
Yes.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
Yes

LEG. FISHER:

Yes.

LEG. HALEY:
No.

LEG. FOLEY:
Yes.

LEG. LINDSAY:
Yes.

LEG. FIELDS:
Yes.

LEG. ALDEN:
Nope.

LEG. CARPENTER:
Yes.

LEG. CRECCA:
Yep.

LEG. D'ANDRE:
Yes.

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LEG. BISHOP:
Yes.

LEG. BINDER:
No.

LEG. COOPER:
Yes.

MR. BARTON:
14-4.

P.O. TONNA:
Thank you very much. Okay. Now we have Resolution Number 2061 (A Local Law to impose occupational licensing fee). Motion by myself, seconded by Legislator Postal. Legislator Crecca?

LEG. CRECCA:
Yeah. I would ask that the sponsor delete the first paragraph under Section 1 in its entirety, and that they delete the words "in order to

adequately meet the demands of economic dislocation arising out of the 9/11 terrorist attacks" from the last paragraph under Legislative Intent.

P.O. TONNA:

Thank you very much. On the motion, Legislator Towle?

LEG. TOWLE:

Explanation from Counsel, Mr. Chairman.

P.O. TONNA:

Explanation from Counsel.

MR. SABATINO:

This legislation would take every fee that is imposed in the following categories that are licensed by the County: Home improvement contractors, home appliance repair business, precious metal exchanges, dealers in secondhand articles, charitable solicitors, the septic industry, commercial and industrial painting, home furnishing and dry cleaning establishments. Those are nine out of the eleven occupations that are currently licensed by the County, the electricians and plumbers not being part of this, because they previously had their fees increased. And all of the fees, you know, right across the board, whether it's a registration, or an application, or a duplication fee, all of those would be doubled.

P.O. TONNA:

Thank you. Okay. Roll call.

(Roll Called by Mr. Barton)

P.O. TONNA:

Yep.

LEG. POSTAL:

Yes.

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LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Pass.

LEG. GULDI:

Yes.

LEG. TOWLE:

Yes.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
Yes

LEG. FISHER:
Yes.

LEG. HALEY:
No.

LEG. FOLEY:
Yes.

LEG. LINDSAY:
Yes.

LEG. FIELDS:
Yes.

LEG. ALDEN:
Nope.

LEG. CARPENTER:
Yes.

LEG. CRECCA:
Yes.

LEG. D'ANDRE:
Yes.

LEG. BISHOP:
Yes.

LEG. BINDER:
No.

LEG. COOPER:
Yes.

LEG. CARACCILO:
No.

MR. BARTON:
14-4.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay. Thank you very much.

LEG. FOLEY:
What's the number?

MR. BARTON:
14.

P.O. TONNA:
Now Resolution 2062 (A Local Law to impose tax map verification fees).
Motion by myself, seconded by Legislator Postal. Legislator Crecca.

LEG. CRECCA:
I'd ask the sponsor to direct the Clerk to delete the entire first paragraph under Section 1, Legislative Intent. In addition, Paragraph 2, to delete the word "therefore," as well as the words "in order to adequately meet the demands of economic dislocation arising out of the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks."

P.O. TONNA:
Thank you very much.

LEG. ALDEN:
On the motion.

P.O. TONNA:
Wait. On the motion, Legislator Towle, and then Legislator Alden.

LEG. TOWLE:
Just an explanation, Mr. Chairman.

P.O. TONNA:
Explanation, Counsel.

MR. SABATINO:
Okay. This local law would amend an existing local law that was most recently amended in 1991, and it would take the tax map verification fee, which currently is applied to 47 different types of instruments that are filed at the County Clerk's Office that involve property. And for each of those types of instruments, the fee would be doubled.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay. Thank you very much. Legislator Alden.

LEG. ALDEN:
Paul, I'm going to address the question to you, but Legislator Towle might know, also. Are we the only state that does -- I mean, the only County in the State that does tax map verification fees? I believe we --

MR. SABATINO:
I don't believe so. I mean, the last time -- the last time I looked at it, which was probably in, you know, 1991, I know that other counties were doing it, but I have no knowledge in terms of what the ranges are.

LEG. ALDEN:

Okay. We might be the only one, or a very small number of counties that actually do this. The second part of that is that this creates -- when we do a verification, this creates a legal obligation on the part of Suffolk County where in certain instances, where we make mistakes when we verify these numbers, there's a legal obligation on our part to go and do corrective procedures, sometimes costly to the County. I just want to point that out to the --

P.O. TONNA:

So we should up the fees.

LEG. ALDEN:

-- Legislative body. Okay.

MR. SABATINO:

But just to make it clear, though, we're already --

LEG. ALDEN:

We're one of the only ones that do in the State, though.

P.O. TONNA:

We're already doing it, though.

MR. SABATINO:

We've already undertaken the --

LEG. ALDEN:

And we're already making the mistakes and we're already costing --

MR. SABATINO:

We're doing it.

LEG. ALDEN:

-- the County more money by --

MR. SABATINO:

Right.

LEG. ALDEN:

-- by making the mistakes.

P.O. TONNA:

So they should probably up the fee, then.

LEG. ALDEN:

No. They should probably do away with the fee, but -- or the fact of --

P.O. TONNA:

Or the verification process.

LEG. ALDEN:

Exactly.

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P.O. TONNA:

Okay.

LEG. ALDEN:

So I'm just pointing it out.

P.O. TONNA:

I'll wait for that piece of legislation.

LEG. TOWLE:

Hopefully, the Ways and Means Committee will look at that next year.

P.O. TONNA:

I don't mind. If we're saving money, I'm with you. Okay. Thank you very much. You want to roll call, Allan?

LEG. BINDER:

Sure.

P.O. TONNA:

Or can we just do same motion, same second, same vote?

LEG. BINDER:

No, because every once in awhile you'll see a difference crop up.

P.O. TONNA:

Well, okay. Go ahead, roll call.

(Roll Called by Mr. Barton)

LEG. TONNA:

Yes.

LEG. POSTAL:

Yes.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
No.

LEG. GULDI:
Yes.

LEG. TOWLE:
No.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
Yep.

LEG. FISHER:
Yes.

LEG. HALEY:
No.

LEG. FOLEY:
Yes.

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LEG. LINDSAY:
Yes.

LEG. FIELDS:
Yes.

LEG. ALDEN:
Nope.

LEG. CARPENTER:
Yes.

LEG. CRECCA:
Yep.

LEG. D'ANDRE:
Yes.

LEG. BISHOP:
Yes.

LEG. BINDER:
No.

LEG. COOPER:

Yes.

MR. BARTON:
13-5.

P.O. TONNA:
Thank you. Okay. Now it's going to be Resolution Number 2065 (To impose fees for use of County Clerk's Office for title examination purposes). Motion by myself, seconded by Legislator Postal. And I would ask Andrew Crecca.

LEG. CRECCA:
Is this 2065?

P.O. TONNA:
Yes.

LEG. CRECCA:
I'd just ask that we delete the entire "whereas" clause?

P.O. TONNA:
The first or the whole?

LEG. CRECCA:
There's only one there.

P.O. TONNA:
There's only one? Okay. Thank you very much. And now well go to Legislative Intent.

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LEG. ALDEN:
On the motion.

P.O. TONNA:
And then we'll go -- yeah. Paul, what is this?

MR. SABATINO:
This amends a fee schedule that the Legislature first adopted in 1997 for title examiners, or title companies, or abstract companies that make use of the County Clerk's Office out in Riverhead, and this would impose a 5% increase for Fiscal Year 2002, beginning on January 1st of 2002.

P.O. TONNA:
Thank you very much.

LEG. TOWLE:
Mr. Chairman.

LEG. FISHER:
Mr. Chairman.

LEG. TOWLE:
Mr. Chairman.

P.O. TONNA:
Legislator Alden, then Legislator Fisher.

LEG. ALDEN:
Just to point out to the rest of the Legislative body, that in 1997, when we -- when that was adopted, there was already an escalator clause that calls for incremental increases every year on this -- on the user fee. So in the same vein as we eliminated the electricians and things like that from the -- from a previous resolution, I think that to stay consistent, we really should not pass this resolution at this time.

P.O. TONNA:
Legislator Fisher.

LEG. FISHER:
I wanted to ask Counsel a question. There had been an individual who complained about the hours of using the Clerk's Office. It would be somebody with this kind of licensing agreement?

MR. SABATINO:
That's exactly -- I've seen some copies of those letters, but those letters pertain to this type of activity, yes.

LEG. FISHER:
And the hours are clearly posted in the Clerk's Office as to when individuals with these licensing agreements can use the facilities?

MR. SABATINO:
Well, the letters that I've seen, which are probably the same ones you've seen, seem to talk about something from 9 to 5, or 9 to 4:30,

but I would assume that the license agreements that are being executed by the Clerk's Office would specify as a term and condition what the hours are. I haven't seen the documents, so I've recommended that those individuals come to the pertinent committee to make their allegation, because I can't document one way or the other based on what they submitted.

LEG. FISHER:
Okay.

LEG. TOWLE:
Mr. Chairman.

LEG. FISHER:
And Cameron, I had to ask you, Legislator Alden, what is the percentage increase?

LEG. TOWLE:
2.5% a year.

LEG. FISHER:
Oh.

LEG. TOWLE:
2.5% percent a year.

LEG. ALDEN:
I'm just throwing my voice over there.

LEG. TOWLE:
He has an echo no. 7.5%, yeah.

LEG. FISHER:
Well done. Thank you.

LEG. TOWLE:
Mr. Chairman.

P.O. TONNA:
Legislator Towle.

LEG. TOWLE:
Just a couple of points. First of all, the letters, aside from this issue, are from one of the people who actually held a license, and I've met with that person and discussed some of his concerns, having been the original sponsor of the bill that created the licenses. What's the fiscal impact on this, Fred, to the budget? How much additional revenue are we going to generate?

MR. POLLERT:
There's no net increase, because under the requirements, what happens is we're going to make improvements to the Clerk's Office in the same amount of the revenues, because the revenues are dedicated to either making improvements in the cubicle area or to doing the bindings. So we had anticipated that the total revenue increase is \$25,000. The County Clerk's budget was increased by \$25,000 to make improvements

bookbinding.

LEG. TOWLE:

Okay. And just to follow up on one additional point. The rate increase, then, for 2002 for these individuals would be 7.5%, because we're doing a 5% increase, and there's an automatic 2.5% increase already in place on the contract; is that right?

MR. POLLERT:

Yes, that's correct.

LEG. TOWLE:

Counsel, how can we amend an increase in a contract that's already been signed by the County and by the individuals midstream in the contract, legally?

MR. SABATINO:

Because they're licenses, not contracts. And it won't be 7.5%, because the 2.5% actually kicks in in I believe it's July 1st. So, in effect, it would be 2.5% for half of the year, which would be 1.25, plus the 5%. But the basic answer is that it's a -- it's a license.

LEG. TOWLE:

Just to respond to that --

MR. SABATINO:

It's a license.

LEG. TOWLE:

Just to respond to that, it actually would be worse for these people, because they're then going to get 5% in January, and then 2 1/2% on top of that new rate, which has obviously increased. So I don't know what the percentage would be there, but it's obviously not going to come out.

MR. SABATINO:

That's why it was limited to the one year.

LEG. TOWLE:

Okay.

P.O. TONNA:

Yes. Legislator Crecca. Sorry.

LEG. CRECCA:

Fred, the improvements -- Fred, the improvements that you're talking about, they're costing approximately \$25,000?

MR. POLLERT:

The two are matched to dollar for dollar, so that whatever the increased fees are would be expended in the County Clerk's Office either for improvements to the cubicles or for improvements to the

binding of records, which are used by the title searchers.

LEG. CRECCA:

That was my next question I think he just answered. In other words,

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the improvements are directly related to the people who are benefitting --

MR. POLLERT:

That is correct.

LEG. CRECCA:

Who are paying more, they'll benefit directly from these improvements.

MR. POLLERT:

That's correct.

LEG. TOWLE:

Legislator Crecca, if I may, with the Chairman's permission.

LEG. CRECCA:

I would be happy to defer to Legislator Towle.

LEG. TOWLE:

Yeah. What we basically did when this was created was a dedicated fund to do improvements within the office, and then the money is put in there from the fees, it doesn't go into the General Fund at all, so there'd be no impact to the taxpayers as far as that goes. And then the Clerk's Office submits requests to access that fund, whether it's for computer equipment, cabling, telecommunications, whatever it happens to be.

LEG. CRECCA:

But the improvements are -- I would assume they're usually done in response to the people who are using that room in that area.

LEG. TOWLE:

Those and the public both, because both the public and these companies use the same facilities.

LEG. CRECCA:

Got you.

P.O. TONNA:

Roll call.

(Roll Called by Mr. Barton)

P.O. TONNA:
Yes.

LEG. POSTAL:
Yes.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
No.

LEG. GULDI:
No.

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LEG. TOWLE:
No.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
Yep.

LEG. FISHER:
Yes.

LEG. HALEY:
No.

LEG. FOLEY:
No.

LEG. LINDSAY:
Yes.

LEG. FIELDS:
No.

LEG. ALDEN:
Nope.

LEG. CARPENTER:
Yes.

LEG. CRECCA:
Pass.

LEG. D'ANDRE:
Yes.

LEG. BISHOP:
Yes.

LEG. BINDER:
No.

LEG. COOPER:
Yes.

LEG. CRECCA:
Yes.

MR. BARTON:
10/8.

P.O. TONNA:
Thank you. Okay. Number 8, 2066 (To Impose Civil Service Fees).
Motion by myself, seconded by Legislator Postal. Legislator Crecca, I
recognize you for --

LEG. CRECCA:
This is the last one that I need to be recognized on. I would ask
that we delete the entire "whereas" clause contained in this

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resolution. I ask the sponsor to direct the Clerk to do that.

P.O. TONNA:
Thank you very much. We have one more after that, Legislator Crecca,
for -- just to reconsider.

LEG. CRECCA:
57, right?

P.O. TONNA:
Yeah.

LEG. CRECCA:
Yeah. I'm sorry.

LEG. TOWLE:
Mr. Chairman, explanation.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay. Legal Counsel, could you explain the bill?

MR. SABATINO:

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This does two things. It, again, amends local legislation, first for increase the application fee for law enforcement promotional examinations from \$15 to \$50 beginning January 1st. Second thing it does is it takes the entry level examination fee for nonlaw enforcement titles and increases that from 15 to \$25 beginning January 1st of 2002.

LEG. ALDEN:
On the motion.

P.O. TONNA:
Yes, Legislator Alden.

LEG. ALDEN:
Did this recommendation come from the Director of Civil Service in a review of the history of Civil Service imposed fees. Does anybody know that? I'll direct it through the Chair, you know, whoever wants to answer that.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay. Who -- let's take -- it will be like at a bakery, who would like to -- you know, we're calling number one. No? Fred, can you answer this?

MR. POLLERT:
Yes. It did not come from the Department of Civil Service. This was a recommendation which we had looked at that -- when we did the Operating Budget review.

LEG. ALDEN:
Can I direct a follow-up then now?

P.O. TONNA:
Sure you can.

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LEG. ALDEN:
What was the analysis as far as --

P.O. TONNA:
Through the Chair, you would be glad to follow up with that question.

LEG. ALDEN:
Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer. Was there analysis done of the history of that fee?

MR. POLLERT:

There was a great deal of debate over the years with respect to the fees. The fees that are provided promotionally for a lot of the sworn personnel titles do not completely recover the cost of preparing either a locally prepared test or processing and renting space, because there's such a large turnout for sworn personnel fees. We have to go to high schools, we have to go to churches, we have to go to different areas to be able to do the exams, and the costs, between the proctors and the rentals, or higher than what we were recovering through the fees.

LEG. ALDEN:

Well, is -- so that's similar to the argument that took place, I believe it was two years ago, or when we raised the fee for police officer from 50 to --

MR. POLLERT:

Yes, that's correct. Part of that debate, however, dealt with the background checks as well. So, specifically, what we were dealing with here was an adjustment to the fees, in part, because of the costs that were associated with a lot of the exams.

LEG. ALDEN:

Now these fees will actually then -- fees collected will cover -- hold it. I can't hear for a second.

P.O. TONNA:

Sorry.

LEG. ALDEN:

These fees will cover the cost of giving the exam and all the other work that we have to do with it when we raise it to this level.

MR. POLLERT:

Hopefully, they will, depending upon what the turnout is for a variety of the different titles. But it's expected that these fees will enable the County to recover the costs.

LEG. ALDEN:

Okay. And now, just to make sure it's clear on the record, these are for promotional tests, and what else, Paul?

MR. SABATINO:

Promotional is the law enforcement. The nonlaw enforcement component is just for an entry level examination. So it's promotional for law

LEG. ALDEN:

And that goes from what to what?

MR. SABATINO:

It goes from 15 to 50 for the law enforcement, and it goes -- I'm sorry. It goes from -- I'm sorry, from 15 to 25 for the entry level, and it goes from 15 to 50 for the promotional.

LEG. ALDEN:

Would you know when the last time the entry level fee was raised?

MR. SABATINO:

I believe 1991.

LEG. ALDEN:

Thanks.

P.O. TONNA:

Okay. Roll call.

LEG. TOWLE:

Oh, wait, I have a question.

P.O. TONNA:

Oh, sorry, Fred.

MR. SABATINO:

No, I take it back. I'm sorry. For entry level, it was 1997. I'm sorry, it was 1997. Promotional was 1991. 1997.

P.O. TONNA:

There we go, Fred.

LEG. TOWLE:

I have a question of Budget Review first. What's the fiscal impact in the funds that we anticipate on raising from this resolution?

MR. POLLERT:

In 2002, it would be \$74,750, in 2003, \$94,500, In 2004, 59,000, and in 2005, 59,000, and in 2006, 74,750.

LEG. TOWLE:

Okay. Just go back to the first number for next year, will you base that on how many applications? Let' say nonlaw enforcement for a second.

MR. POLLERT:

Seven thousand two hundred and --

LEG. TOWLE:

Now, on that question, Fred, if I could, just follow through a bit. How man vacant positions nonlaw enforcement are there in the budget for next year?

MR. POLLERT:
Probably about 2,000.

LEG. TOWLE:
Two thousand positions. And how many of those have already been used for turnover savings, in essence, which won't be filled at all, or we don't have money for?

MR. POLLERT:
We have increased turnover savings rather substantially. It would be safe to say that the bulk of those would have to remain vacant.

LEG. TOWLE:
Give me an idea and a number ballpark. Fifteen hundred are vacant, a thousand are vacant? What are we talking about?

MR. POLLERT:
Probably in order of magnitude, you would be able believe to fill somewhere in the neighborhood of approximately 200 new positions next year.

LEG. TOWLE:
Okay. So out of 2,000 positions, 1,800 are going to remain vacant because of turnover savings, and on top of that, we're going to imply to people that those positions are in the budget, so they go and take tests and pay double fees, in which they can't serve in a position at all, because there is no position, really, in the budget.

MR. POLLERT:
Well --

LEG. TOWLE:
Okay.

MR. POLLERT:
-- turnover savings is made up two components. There's going to be normal staff turnover, not just the filling of titles. So, if you have a vacancy occur because someone left County service, those spots will be backfilled.

LEG. TOWLE:
Okay, thank you.

LEG. POSTAL:
Point of information, Mr. Chairman.

P.O. TONNA:
Yes.

LEG. POSTAL:

Am I correct that these Civil Service exams are not only for Suffolk County, if somebody wants to take a Civil Service exam for a particular Civil Service title, they take the exam, they get on a list, and they could be hired by a school district or a town, or any employer that hires Civil Service employees?

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MR. POLLERT:

Yes, that is correct. In addition to that, the County also prepares many of the exams in-house as opposed to relying upon just the State of New York exams.

LEG. POSTAL:

Thank you.

P.O. TONNA:

Thank you. Roll call -- oh, Legislator Caracciolo.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Yeah. Counsel, is there anything that would prohibit the County from charging back to the entity, be it a village, town or district, that has a Civil Service position for which the County Department of Personnel administers a Civil Service exam? Is there any prohibition?

MR. SABATINO:

I can't think of a prohibition, but it probably -- it would probably require an agreement.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

I think that's a direction that should be pursued. I'd like you to prepare legislation for me along those lines.

P.O. TONNA:

It generates more revenue to do that?

MR. SABATINO:

You can't impose it, you would need an agreement, that's the point.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Okay. Well, who would the agreement be between, the County --

MR. SABATINO:

Well, the Civil Service Personnel Director would have to --

P.O. TONNA:

Negotiate it?

MR. SABATINO:

To negotiate an agreement with whoever he's doing it with.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

And I think the question, Bill, Legislator Lindsay is going to raise is who in their right mind on the other side is going to negotiate and pay fees?

LEG. LINDSAY:

No, not at all. What I was going to bring up is simply I know people that take Civil Service tests get on a list, they don't know who's going to hire them. They might apply to two or three government entities, so how do you backcharge someone until you know who is going to hire?

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P.O. TONNA:

Well, they're talking about --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Good question.

P.O. TONNA:

They're talking about -- I think what Legislator Caracciolo is talking about is backcharging a municipality for some of the associated costs, which once they hire them, then you know who.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Then you know who after the fact.

P.O. TONNA:

Right.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Right.

P.O. TONNA:

Yeah.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

It would have to be at that juncture, I would imagine.

P.O. TONNA:

Right, okay. Thank you. Roll call.

(Roll Called by Mr. Barton)

LEG. TONNA:
Yes.

LEG. POSTAL:
Yes.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
No.

LEG. GULDI:
Yes.

LEG. TOWLE:
No.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
Yes.

LEG. FISHER:
Yes.

LEG. HALEY:
No.

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LEG. FOLEY:
Yes.

LEG. LINDSAY:
Yes.

LEG. FIELDS:
Yes.

LEG. ALDEN:
Nope.

LEG. CARPENTER:
Yes.

LEG. CRECCA:
Yes.

LEG. D'ANDRE:
Yes.

LEG. BISHOP:
Yes.

LEG. BINDER:
No.

LEG. COOPER:
Yep.

MR. BARTON:
13-5.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay. Thank you very much. Now we move --

LEG. ALDEN:
Motion to reconsider.

P.O. TONNA:
Oh, reconsider Resolution Number --

LEG. ALDEN:
2058.

P.O. TONNA:
2057.

LEG. ALDEN:
Fifty-seven, right.

P.O. TONNA:
Fifty-seven for the purposes of amending the language. I second that.
All in favor? Opposed? Fine, it's in front of us.

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LEG. ALDEN:
Mr. Crecca.

P.O. TONNA:
Mr. Crecca.

LEG. CRECCA:
Yes.

LEG. HALEY:
Is this just amending --

P.O. TONNA:
Scotty, more power.

LEG. HALEY:
Is this just amending the language?

P.O. TONNA:
Yes.

LEG. HALEY:
All right. Could I at the same time --

P.O. TONNA:
You -- then you can vote.

LEG. HALEY:
I could vote.

P.O. TONNA:
Yeah.

LEG. CRECCA:
Yeah.

P.O. TONNA:
Yeah.

LEG. HALEY:
For the entire bill.

LEG. CRECCA:
Well, we didn't vote yet.

LEG. HALEY:
Not just the amendment.

LEG. CRECCA:
We're going to have to vote on this, right.

P.O. TONNA:
Yeah.

LEG. CRECCA:
Yeah.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay.

LEG. CRECCA:
In Section One under Legislative Intent, I would ask the sponsor to direct the Clerk to delete the entire first paragraph, and in the very last paragraph under Section One, to delete all the words that appear after the word "probation."

P.O. TONNA:
Thank you very much. With that said -- with that said --

LEG. CRECCA:
And the word "therefore" in the last paragraph, Henry.

P.O. TONNA:
Right. Okay. With that said, roll call on the vote.

(Roll Called by Mr. Barton)

LEG. TONNA:
Yes.

LEG. POSTAL:
Yes.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
No.

LEG. GULDI:
Yes.

LEG. TOWLE:
Yes.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
Yep.

LEG. FISHER:
Yes.

LEG. HALEY:
No.

LEG. FOLEY:
Yes.

LEG. LINDSAY:
Yes.

LEG. FIELDS:
Yes.

LEG. ALDEN:
Yes.

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LEG. CARPENTER:
Yes.

LEG. CRECCA:
Yes.

LEG. D'ANDRE:
Yes.

LEG. BISHOP:
Yes.

LEG. BINDER:
Yes.

LEG. COOPER:
Yes.

MR. BARTON:
16-2.

P.O. TONNA:
Thank you. And now we move to Number 10 on your item. I.R. 2152
(Resolution levying unpaid water rents). I make a motion, motion
seconded by Legislator Postal. On the --

LEG. FOLEY:
Mr. Chairman, on the motion.

P.O. TONNA:
Just wait. On the motion, Legislator Fields, then Foley.

LEG. FOLEY:
Thank you.

LEG. FIELDS:
In the breakdown here, it has all the towns and it doesn't have Islip.
Is there any reason?

MR. BARTON:
Apparently, the Town of Islip is entirely within the Suffolk County
Water District, and it does not have any independent Town water
districts that require that those water rents be attached to the tax

bills. They did not request anything be put on the tax bills.

P.O. TONNA:

Great. Legislator Foley.

LEG. FIELDS:

Thank you.

LEG. FOLEY:

Next bill.

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P.O. TONNA:

That's it? Okay. All in favor? Opposed?

MR. BARTON:

18.

P.O. TONNA:

Okay. Number 2153 (Resolution implementing budget, staff and taxes for the Year 2002 (Mandated). Motion by myself, seconded by Legislator Postal.

LEG. FOLEY:

Mr. Chairman, on the motion.

P.O. TONNA:

On the motion.

LEG. FOLEY:

Yeah. Mr. Barton, and also to my colleagues, if you look at a letter the Clerk had received from the State Office of Real Property Services, dated November 15, and, Henry, if you take a look at the last sentence in the second paragraph, and then we'll move to the last paragraph, it mentions that Suffolk County -- since Suffolk County did not receive 2001 Assessor's Report that complies with the rules of the State Board, in other words, the Towns of Brookhaven, Huntington and Southampton or not in compliance with State law. It goes on to say, then, that the County must apportion pursuant to Title 1 of Article 8. Can you tell us what that means, Henry?

MR. BARTON:

Yes. As I explained in the -- at the last meeting in the best voice that I could muster at the time --

LEG. FOLEY:

Well, your voice is much better now, so we'll be able to understand it I think a little better, too.

MR. BARTON:

Thank you, sir. Yeah, okay. This happened last year as well. Last year, the Towns of Huntington and Southampton weren't able to comply with the State's request for figures in a timely manner, so we had to establish an equalization rate. This year, once again, the County Legislature at its last meeting had to establish an equalization rate. The figures that we chose are the most recent final data available to apportion taxes for the various districts that overlap town boundaries, and the figure that was selected by the Legislature, as it was last year, was the final numbers for the Year 2000. I expect within the next couple of months, as happened last year, I will get the data from the Towns, and the State will give it a tentative figure, which my experience is is not as good as the final figure, and sometime next summer, I will have a final figure for you guys to consider for the next year.

LEG. FOLEY:

Fine. Mr. Chairman, if I may, I have a question for the Budget Review Office, and in particular Mr. -- first, Mr. Pollert. If you go to the

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-- today's memo, dated November 30th, to the second page, just a few points, if I may, Mr. Chairman. If we look at the total tax warrant by Town, we have all Towns, school districts, County, Town fire district. It mentions here, for instance, that the Town increase is 4.4%. The errors in assessment, there's an increase in errors of assessment by 36%. Now, is it not correct that the errors in assessment are principally erroneous errors made by the Townships within the County?

MR. POLLERT:

Yes, it is correct.

LEG. FOLEY:

Okay. And if you look at, particularly in the western Towns, Mr. Chairman, the errors in assessment collectively goes from 29 million in 2001 to over 40 million in 2002. Has any explanation been given why the Townships have had such an increase in their errors in assessment, do we know?

MR. POLLERT:

To the best of my knowledge, there is no explanation. The Towns are responsible for assessment practices. Unlike Nassau County, Suffolk County has no role in Town assessment practices.

LEG. FOLEY:

So, in other words, when we look at, and for my colleagues and others, when we look at the warrants, particularly for the Townships, it's not just the Town warrant that needs to be looked at, but also the errors in assessments to get a truly -- to get a more informed picture, if you will, of the Town's errors and responsibility for property taxation; is that not correct?

MR. POLLERT:

(Nodded head yes).

LEG. FOLEY:

So it's not a stretch to say, particularly for Townships, to look at not just the 5.1% or the 4.4%, but also 37% in errors in assessment?

LEG. BISHOP:

Where are you, Brian?

MR. POLLERT:

It will both be included as --

LEG. FOLEY:

Well, on today's memo.

MR. POLLERT:

It would both be included as Town charges on the Town side of the tax warrant.

LEG. FOLEY:

Right, okay. All right. Now, Mr. Chairman, if I may for a moment just move to the body of the resolution of 2153. And if we could look at the Township of Brookhaven for a moment, that's on Page 5. The Real

Property Tax Law Article 7 is \$5.4 million. That amount of money, for the record, is for what purpose? Real Property Tax Law Article 7. It's 5.419 million.

MR. SABATINO:

That's the tax certioraries and assessments.

MR. BARTON:

Okay. Okay. That's for Phase I of tax certiorari. But then we also have to look at on the following page, Fred, Number 6, adjustments mandated by law. That, for instance, for the Township of Brookhaven, there's over \$8 million worth of erroneous assessments that have to be added to the tax bill.

MR. POLLERT:
That's correct.

LEG. FOLEY:
All right. Now, the 1.4 million says, "Tax refunds, Police District," but that -- those erroneous assessments are assessments that were made by the County or erroneous assessments made by the Town that's apportioned to the County bill because it's a Police District?

MR. LIPP:
The erroneous assessments are based upon tax grievances and -- tax grievances and certioraries against Town assessments practices. A portion of those overcharges are a result in changes --

LEG. FOLEY:
Correct.

MR. LIPP:
-- or erroneous assessments in Police District general fund --

LEG. FOLEY:
So, in this --

MR. LIPP:
-- and the majority of the Town portion.

LEG. FOLEY:
So, in this case, since the Townships are -- they assess both the County and the Towns, we're looking at a \$9.4 million adjustment for erroneous assessments within the Township of Brookhaven.

MR. LIPP:
Correct.

LEG. FOLEY:
I would just finish by asking, Mr. Lipp, if you could give us a breakdown by -- not right now, but for those who would like to have it afterwards, a breakdown by Town concerning the 37% increase in erroneous assessments.

MR. LIPP:
Sure.

LEG. FOLEY:
Okay? Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Mr. Chairman.

P.O. TONNA:
Yes, wait. Legislator Alden, then Bishop, and then Caracciolo.

LEG. ALDEN:
Just, Legislator Foley --

LEG. FOLEY:
Yes.

LEG. ALDEN:
-- to answer one part of your question --

LEG. FOLEY:
Sure.

LEG. ALDEN:
-- in economic downturns and recessions, people challenge their taxes
in larger numbers than if there was times of -- or good times.

LEG. FOLEY:
Right.

LEG. ALDEN:
And that explains a lot of what -- you had asked what the big jump in,
and I believe it's a pretty hefty percentage jump, in the erroneous
assessments. That's because --

LEG. FOLEY:
Well, I think that the erroneous assessment judgments are agreed to
earlier in the year, though, I don't think it happens in the Fall.

LEG. CARPENTER:
May, May.

LEG. POSTAL:
May.

LEG. FOLEY:
It happens in May, which was long before the first few months of
economic downturn, long before the events of September. So it's -- I
think there's a lot of reasons why there are problems with erroneous
assessments.

LEG. ALDEN:
We've been in recession since last March, according to the federal
identification numbers.

LEG. FOLEY:

Right. But folks were -- just on a point, if I may, they were -- they were challenging the assessments of the prior year, which was before the downturn, so -- but I would just add one other point, if I may, and this is for the record, and I think it's very important for the public to understand it. We said it at the last meeting, if I could, and I'll finish with this. To the Budget Review Office, if we break this down again by General Fund and by the Police District, dollar figure, what is the dollar figure increase on the General Fund when people open up their property tax bill, and what is the dollar figure for the increase on the Police District?

MR. POLLERT:

The --

LEG. FOLEY:

And that would be my final, final.

MR. POLLERT:

With respect to the General Fund on the College, it's approximately \$3.8 million with respect to the --

LEG. FOLEY:

No, no, no, no. The increase per household.

MR. LIPP:

If you want to break it down separately by fund, it's not on the table provided exactly.

LEG. FOLEY:

No. It's on the one that you had submitted to us, I have it right here.

MR. LIPP:

Oh, okay. Yeah, okay.

LEG. FOLEY:

Is it not \$5? Let's put it that way.

MR. LIPP:

It's \$5 combined, General Fund and College, and --

LEG. FOLEY:

Five dollar increase in the General Fund.

MR. LIPP:

And for the Police District and District Court combined, which comprises the five western Towns, a \$99 increase.

LEG. FOLEY:
And 99 is on the Police District.

MR. LIPP:
For the average homeowner.

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LEG. FOLEY:
Okay. Thank you.

D.P.O. POSTAL:
Legislator Alden, did you have any other questions?

LEG. ALDEN:
No, that's all right.

D.P.O. POSTAL:
Okay. Legislator Bishop.

LEG. BISHOP:
I just want to go back to the discussion on erroneous assessments, because it was a few years ago that --

LEG. LINDSAY:
I can't hear you.

D.P.O. POSTAL:
We can't -- it's very hard to hear you.

LEG. BISHOP:
I want to go back to the discussion on erroneous assessments. It was a few years ago that Babylon Legislators voted for a budget with a Melvin that showed "X", and then the erroneous assessment came in and it was "X" plus "Y", and "Y" was greater than "X", and that caused a great deal of discontent. We addressed that problem by having the Towns accurately list on their tax bill that it's on their portion of the bill when the Assessor makes an error. But what Legislator Foley is bringing up is that the amount of Assessor error has gone up dramatically; is that correct, is that what he's indicating?

MR. POLLERT:
Yes. There was an \$11.875 million increase in errors in assessment. That's a 36.4% increase. That's across all Towns.

LEG. BISHOP:
What I don't understand, the recession argument wouldn't hold, because assessment challenges lag behind the economy. You're going to be

challenging -- the commercial, if you're a commercial and you're going to challenge your assessment, and your going to challenge it on the basis that your business has less value, you would do that next year, and this is the year that the recession is hitting your business value. So it portends great problems next year if it jumped up so dramatically this year. That's the first point. And the second point is I don't understand it in light of the fact that property values have not decreased dramatically, if at all, in fact, they've increased. So I'm also troubled by a big jump in the erroneous assessment. Do you have any thoughts on why it's occurring, and should I be so concerned?

MR. LIPP:

Okay. There isn't a direct link between the economy and the erroneous assessments, and the -- first of all, we have no noticed a trend down over the last few years, so there is sort of a trend link. However,

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the problem is it's very lumpy in terms of tax certiorari cases. I'm sure you know better than most tax cases could take years to go through the courts, and depending upon if it's a big case, small case, how many years. When it comes through, it comes through. And we'll prepare a more detailed analysis of that to show where the Towns are to get hit the most.

LEG. BISHOP:

Fine. What about the fact that it's occurring at a 30 -- what did you say, 36% increase?

LEG. CARPENTER:

34.6.

LEG. BISHOP:

34.6?

MR. LIPP:

Yes.

LEG. FOLEY:

Thirty-seven for the western Towns.

LEG. BISHOP:

Is that something to be particularly concerned about? Do you -- I mean, if that's a trend --

LEG. FOLEY:

Max. Max, can we have some order here, please?

MR. LIPP:

The overall level of erroneous assessments is less than it used to be. Off the top of my head, it was in the neighborhood of \$100 on average for each homeowner's tax bill, and now it's maybe 80 at most. So, yeah, it's troubling that you see a pop in any year.

LEG. BISHOP:

It means that the tax base is not stable; correct? I mean, isn't that --

LEG. FOLEY:

Your mike's not on, Dave.

MR. LIPP:

No, no. No, it -- what it means is --

LEG. BISHOP:

My mike is on, it just isn't --

LEG. FISHER:

It's not on.

LEG. FOLEY:

Yours is on, Dave isn't.

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LEG. FISHER:

Dave Bishop's isn't.

MR. LIPP:

It's hard to draw a direct link to the tax base. The tax base is the overall assessment. What it is plain and simple is when you have commercial, more so than residential, but residential also, doing tax grievances, particularly certiorari cases in the courts, they're very lumpy and they could represent large numbers at any time. And some of them coming through in one year, while troubling, doesn't necessarily imply that next year it's going to be more of the same.

LEG. BISHOP:

Okay. Thank you.

D.P.O. POSTAL:

Legislator Caracciolo.

LEG. CARACCILO:

Thank you. Bob, Robert, what was the total, total amount of -- in

millions of dollars?

MR. LIPP:

The total of erroneous assessments was \$44.5 million, which actually the way we have it listed here were not including sewer districts. Well, we are. I take that back. Including sewer districts.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Okay. Well, the clear-cut winner of erroneous assessments is the Town of Babylon once again, \$16,305,000. And I would suggest that as a representative of the Town of Babylon, Legislator Bishop, you may want to talk to the Town Assessor, find out if this was one or two major commercial establishments that won back --

LEG. BISHOP:

I think it's more than their budget. Is that what -- jump in, give us the answer.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

On assessment challenges or otherwise. But, I mean, --

LEG. BISHOP:

I don't know if that's an erroneous assessment. They just got knocked off --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

-- do either of you know, Legislator Postal, who this may be attributable to?

D.P.O. POSTAL:

Yeah. You know, just to interrupt you, you're absolutely right. There are two properties, commercial properties in the Village of Amityville, South Oaks and Brunswick Hospital Center, where I know that there were -- with Brunswick, they did file suit and had their taxes lowered appreciably and they're major taxpayers. So just Brunswick alone is probably like a \$4 million drop.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

All right. The final question, do we have a Melvin to go with this resolution?

LEG. FOLEY:

Yeah.

MR. SABATINO:

These bills don't get Melvins. These are not -- these are not budget

bills, these are the bills that get the budget printed?

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

That's all?

MR. SABATINO:

This is the ultimate -- the next two resolutions are just totally pro forma. Then the last resolution is the warrant, which actually authorizes the Receivers to collect taxes, so --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

All right. So then let me ask this question. If terms of the Melvin, has anything substantially changed since the budget was adopted in terms of by Town County tax increases?

MR. LIPP:

No. The County's taxes were adopted at the levy meeting. I believe that was on the 20th.

MR. SABATINO:

Right, the levy, yeah.

MR. LIPP:

And this, just what it does is it includes the total warrant, which are the numbers from the warrant meeting on the 20th --

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

And the combined tax increase --

MR. LIPP:

-- plus all of the schools, Towns.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

Okay. The combined County-wide tax increase was 13.9%, or something in that vicinity?

MR. LIPP:

14.1%.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:

14.1.

MR. LIPP:

However, when you include the sewers and other charges, it drops down to 12.5% for the County.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Right. Okay. Thank you.

MR. SABATINO:
Just to clarify, though, the memo that was handed out by Budget Review, dated November 30th, that deals with the tax warrant resolutions, so that does provide you with the Melvin you're talking about. But the Melvin is relevant to Item Number 13, because that's the one that actually does the final steps.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
Thank you.

D.P.O. POSTAL:
Legislator Foley.

LEG. FOLEY:
Nope.

D.P.O. POSTAL:
No?

LEG. FOLEY:
No, thank you.

D.P.O. POSTAL:
Do we -- roll call.

(Roll Called by Mr. Barton)

P.O. TONNA:
Yes.

LEG. POSTAL:
Yes.

LEG. CARACCIOLO:
No.

LEG. GULDI:
Yes.

LEG. TOWLE:
Pass.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
Yes, sir.

LEG. FISHER:
Yes.

LEG. HALEY:
No.

LEG. FOLEY:
Yes.

LEG. LINDSAY:
Yes.

LEG. FIELDS:
No.

LEG. ALDEN:
Nope.

LEG. CARPENTER:
Yes.

LEG. CRECCA:
Yes.

LEG. D'ANDRE:
Yes.

LEG. BISHOP:
Yes.

LEG. BINDER:
No.

LEG. COOPER:
Yes.

LEG. TOWLE:
Yes.

P.O. TONNA:
Thank you.

MR. BARTON:
13-5.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay. Can we do same motion, same second, same vote on this one?

LEG. FOLEY:
On what?

P.O. TONNA:
On I.R. 2154 (Resolution implementing budget, staff and taxes for the
Year 2002 (Discretionary). Same motion, same second, same vote.

MR. BARTON:
13-5.

P.O. TONNA:
Thank you. Number 2155 (Resolution authorizing that tax warrants be signed by the Presiding Officer and Clerk of the County Legislature and that they be annexed to the tax rolls for the collection of taxes). Same motion, same second, same vote.

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MR. BARTON:
13-5.

P.O. TONNA:
Okay. Thank you. I have one other item before, and it's -- I guess I'm taking the point of some type of privilege.

LEG. HALEY:
Motion to close debate.

P.O. TONNA:
Yeah right. Hopefully, there'll be no debate.

LEG. TOWLE:
Motion to allow you your privilege.

P.O. TONNA:
My Office -- yeah, right.

LEG. FOLEY:
Motion to revoke your privilege.

LEG. GULDI:
Motion to revoke your privilege.

P.O. TONNA:
I knew that would come from you, George. This past year, my Office has piloted a program with regard to food stamp outreach and enrollment pilot project. And what we were able to do, very quickly, is to identify those people in my district who have potentially -- who were potentially eligible for food stamp programs, that do not, by the way, cost the Suffolk County taxpayer one penny. We, as a result of that, have basically, through 2,300 volunteer hours, and engaging a broad coalition of different people from civic groups to church groups to everything else, have been able to basically get 247 families in my district, 43% of those people who are eligible for the food stamp

programs.

LEG. BINDER:
How many?

P.O. TONNA:
Forty-three percent.

LEG. BISHOP:
How many?

P.O. TONNA:
So -- 43% of the 247 families.

MS. BURKHARDT:
That came in.

P.O. TONNA:
Right, that came in. Okay? Now, those people who were identified who have, obviously, food nutrition problems we were able to get into

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other programs and stuff. They just didn't qualify for the food stamp program.

My point is, is that -- and the third part was to help to alleviate some of the barriers with regard to eligibility. A lot of them were senior citizens who were struggling, had a stigma associated with food stamp programs, you know, all of this. Anyway, my point is this. We have done the program. We are now going to invite every Legislator and their district office to work with our office here to offer that same program. If they're interested -- and, again, it's not one penny cost to the taxpayers of Suffolk County, it's a fully underutilized food nutrition program by the Federal Government, and it's something with 62,000 people who statistically go hungry in Suffolk County a day, I would just say you can call Chris Reimann in our office.

LEG. HALEY:
It will probably go up higher now, right?

P.O. TONNA:
Right, it probably will go up higher.

LEG. HALEY:
Because you just raised their taxes.

P.O. TONNA:
Yeah, sure. Maybe because the economy is in the pits.

LEG. ALDEN:

Paul, could we have a little bit more staff to implement this?

P.O. TONNA:

No. But I'll tell you what, though, I will free them from coming to Legislative meetings, so that they can do more in their office. But the thing that I was going to say is -- including Warren, if you want that. But what I would say is, just generally, Chris Reimann in my office will be the contact. Anybody who's interested, she'll travel out to your district office, she'll help enroll volunteer organizations and do whatever he can. It's a worthwhile program. Thank you very much.

LEG. FISHER:

Thank you.

LEG. CARACAPPA:

Mr. Chairman.

P.O. TONNA:

Yes.

LEG. CARACAPPA:

Just on that note, I don't know if you know this, but the work of your staff on this program has already worked its way into district offices through parishes that were notified through your staff and working with your staff.

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P.O. TONNA:

Oh, great.

LEG. CARACAPPA:

Those parishes in my district contacted my office and asked for my assistance to get the information out to those needy people who weren't aware of the program, and my office did a detailed letter to --

P.O. TONNA:

Oh, that's great.

LEG. CARACAPPA:

-- I'd have to say thousands of people in an effort to get those people in recognition with the programs and the benefits that were availed to them.

P.O. TONNA:
Oh, that's great.

LEG. CARACAPPA:
So it's already reaching out to other districts, and I thank you.

P.O. TONNA:
That's wonderful. That's absolutely wonderful. Okay. Thank you very much, and --

LEG. CRECCA:
I feel the love.

P.O. TONNA:
-- we'll see you on December 18th.

[THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 1:20 P.M.]