

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, PERSONNEL, HOUSING & CONSUMER PROTECTION  
COMMITTEE  
OF THE  
SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE**

**MINUTES**

A special joint meeting of the Economic Development Committee and the Government Operations, Personnel, Housing & Consumer Protection Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York on October 21, 2015 to discuss the Operating Budget.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Leg. Robert Calarco, Chair Government Operations, Personnel, Housing & Consumer Protection Committee

Leg. William J. Lindsay, III, Chair Economic Development Committee/Vice Chair Government Operations, Personnel, Housing and Consumer Protection Committee

Leg. Steven H. Stern, Vice Chair Economic Development Committee

Leg. Jay H. Schneiderman, member Economic Development Committee/member Government Operations, Personnel, Housing and Consumer Protection Committee

Leg. Kara Hahn, member Economic Development Committee

Leg. Thomas Cilmi, member Government Operations, Personnel, Housing & Consumer Protection Committee

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Leg. Sarah Anker, 6th Legislative District

Leg. Thomas Muratore, 4th Legislative District

Leg. Robert Trotta, 13th Legislative District

Leg. Al Krupski, 1st Legislative District

Leg. Leslie Kennedy, 12th Legislative District

Jason Richberg, Clerk/Legislature

Laura Halloran, Budget Review Office

Yuki Endo, LI Bus Riders Union

Alan Schneider, Director/Civil Service

Lance Reinheimer, Vanderbilt Museum

Meryl Cassidy, Response of Suffolk County

Robert Barsky, Response of Suffolk County

Roger Clayman, Long Island Federation of Labor

Kathy Malloy, AME

Mitch Pally, Islip Airport Commission

Robert Schaefer, MacArthur Airport

John Cameron, LI Regional Planning Council

Lora Gellerstein, Chief of Staff/Legislature

Debbie Harris, Aide to Leg. Stern

Christina DeLisi - Aide to Leg. Schneiderman

Michael Pitcher, Aide to Leg. Gregory

Katie Horst, Aide to County Executive

And All other Interested Parties

**MINUTES TAKEN BY:**

Diana Flesher, Court Stenographer

**THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 1:35 PM**

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Good afternoon everyone and welcome to the joint public hearing for the Government Operations, Personnel, Consumer Affairs Committee as well as Economic Development. If we could all please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator Schneiderman.

**SALUTATION**

**PUBLIC PORTION**

Okay. Thank you very much. And I thank you everyone who is here today to speak to us. We have quite a few cards and a few presentations so we will start with our cards. I have a speaker here. And I'm sorry if I don't pronounce your right name right, Yuki Endo. My understanding is Mr. Endo missed the public hearing for Public Works this morning, but we're very happy to have him and he can give us some comments.

**MR. ENDO: (Reading from statement)**

"Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, Suffolk County Legislature, Executive Steve Bellone, New York State Assembly Members, Congress representative, Democratic and Republican parties.

My name is Yuki Endo, resident of Jackson Heights and member of the Long Island Bus Riders Union.

I depends and relies on Suffolk County Transit, HART, NICE Bus and City of Long Beach buses for various meetings and various animal rights protest.

I am calling on New York State to keep funding, \$10 billion, funding for Suffolk County Transit buses because we need buses. If you cut \$10 billion, there will be eliminating of low-ridership buses and expansion of the Sunday service might be eliminated which will also affect SCAT paratransit.

I also like to see more increase in funding because on major holidays like July 4th, only buses were operating were S92 and #10C. This is similar to Westchester County's Bee-Line Bus System, which does not have Thanksgiving and Christmas service.

Also you might be aware of the service cut that happening in Nassau County with NICE Bus, which eliminates low-ridership buses as well.

Also you might be aware of school bus strike by Bauman & Son, Inc. If you mixed the school bus strike, Nassau County NICE Bus and Suffolk low-ridership buses, how will students will get to schools, colleges, universities without NICE Bus, Suffolk County Transit Bus or school bus?

This is reason why we need all low-ridership buses to operate.

I also urge Governor Cuomo to ride Suffolk County Transit and HART Buses to see how he feels about bus service.

I thank you for your cooperation."

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Thank you very much for coming, Mr. Endo. And please leave your comments with the Clerk so we can distribute them.

Okay, my next speaker is Alan Schneider. Alan?

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

Good afternoon. I'm here to speak about the Budget Review narrative regarding the budget for the Department of Civil Service and Human Resources. There was a significant amount of money that was taken out of the Civil Service budget for 2015/2016. I am not here to speak about that. I am okay with that. I can live with that and manage the department with the reductions that were taken out understanding the difficult financial climate that this County is in. And we will get by without the money that was taken out.

However, I was extremely distressed to see that the one position that I put in, and that is the secretary position to myself, was taken out. And the reason I was distressed was because when I had my budget hearing in the County Exec's Office with the Budget Director and the rest of the people that were there, there was a representative -- new representative for my department there from Budget Review. And I went into the details as to why I was putting the secretary position into the budget for 2016.

So if you could just bear with me for about two minutes, and I can give you the background; hopefully you will understand why this position is an absolute necessity for me to be there for 2016. My secretary, who has been in the department for 30 years, is in the assistant to the Personnel Director title, higher title than the secretary title. She had informed me back in the middle of this year that she was eligible to retire and she would like to retire. This would be a very, very significant loss to me, and we had many discussions about her role and her retirement. And without going into a lot of detail, I want to just say that she not only carries out the work of being my secretary, being my assistant, 30 years of experience in the department, but she is also the secretary to the County Deferred Comp Board. She handles all the minutes; she handles all the loan applications; she handles all the hardship applications that come into the Deferred Comp Board, dealing with the Deferred Comp Administrator and all eight of the union representatives to the Deferred Comp Board.

So what we worked out was she agreed to stay on, but on a part-time basis working three days a week. So she is working for me now, and has been since June, three days a week. Two days a week she's not there. And she's trying to get most of her work done in that three-day period. On the other two days I am using two people who are secretaries to other administrators in my department to fill in. I have the phones transferred to them. And so far I am getting by with this arrangement.

However, she has said to me she doesn't know how long she is going to be able to work on a part-time basis, but she will give me six month's notice that she is going to stop working completely. So I put into the budget the secretary position, which is an exempt job, because if she does give me six month's notice, let's say -- she hasn't as yet, and I don't expect her to do so for a while, but let's say on January 1st she gives me six month's notice. I need a position to be able to bring somebody -- and I have no idea who that may be. It will not be somebody from my department. It's going to be somebody from another County department, and I do have maybe four or five people in the County, I know a lot of people, in mind as possible replacements for her, but I need a position to have to entice them to come to the department and learn all the things that she does, including taking over the responsibilities of the County Deferred Comp Program that she does.

So when I had the budget hearing, I went through all this. I explained all this. Her salary has been reduced by \$36,000. The cost of the secretary position for an entire year would be 56,000. So the net cost is \$18,000 right now because we already have a savings of \$36,000 by having her work part-time. So the net cost for the secretary position would be \$18,000. That would be for an entire year. I may not even need this position next year. I am hoping she's going to stay there all year. But in the event she does say to me "I'm going to retire, I'm going to retire in June, I'm going to retire in September, I'm going to retire at the end of the year," I need this position to be put back

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into budget, to be maintained in the budget and not follow the recommendation of Budget Review. Because what the recommendation of Budget Review was when she leaves, just abolish her job and put in a request for the secretarial's -- secretary position. Well, then it will be too late because she will be gone and I will not have her there to train the new person.

So what I'm asking today is to ignore the recommendation of Budget Review to take this secretary position out. Please leave it in. This is the way I manage. I manage this department as responsibly as I can. I watch every dollar in this department. I have no overtime in this department except once -- one day every four years, and that is on the police exam day. I do everything I can to save dollars. The recommendations to remove the money from the budget I am fine with. I need this position in the budget. Thank you very much.

### **CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Thank you, Alan. Legislator Cilmi has a question.

### **LEG. CILMI:**

Alan, thanks for your testimony. Just if you could summarize for us, I noted in the budget as I was looking through it that there was quite a substantial cut in your expenditure budget for next year, almost 20%. How do we find 20% savings in your department?

### **DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

You find 20%, Tom, because we're coming off a year in which we did the police exam. So in the fourth year when we do the police exam, there is a substantial increase in my budget, but there is also a substantial increase in revenue that we bring in from the police exam that makes up more so for the increase in expenditure in that year.

### **LEG. CILMI:**

Right. So I see in the --

### **DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

Every --

### **LEG. CILMI:**

-- in the Budget Review Summary here, 2014 actual was 4.3 million or so; and then we jump up to the adopted 6.9 million, which was in 2015. The estimated is 6.4 or so million in 2015, so you're coming in about half a million dollars below. It looks like you're going to come in about half a million dollars below the adopted budget for this year. Your requested is just about \$400,000 or so greater than your 2014 actual, but of course substantially less than your 2015 estimated. And the recommended is just under what the requested is. And you're -- just to reiterate, you're saying that you have no problem with the aggregate amount in the 2016 recommended budget, but that position in particular is what you're looking for.

### **DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

Yeah.

### **LEG. CILMI:**

Right? Is that yes? Just a simple yes or --

### **DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

Yes.

### **LEG. CILMI:**

So do you have or do you not have a Deputy Commissioner in your department?

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

I do not.

**LEG. CILMI:**

You do not. Have you not had a Deputy Commissioner for some time?

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

I have not had a Deputy Commissioner forever. Thirty-two years that I have been there, I have been the only management person in the department.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right. How many Deputy Commissioners -- any idea how many Deputy Commissioners we have in the County?

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

Well, take all the County departments. And I would say some of the County departments have one; some have two. At one time we had three in one or two departments. I don't think we have that any longer.

**LEG. CILMI:**

And your department is relatively small compared to many of the other departments.

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

It is now. At one time it wasn't.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right. But your department is responsible for managing Civil Service throughout Suffolk County, not only in Suffolk County government but in other levels of government as well; correct?

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

Yeah, if I could just speak to that. We have approximately 80 or so employees. Twenty-eight, forgetting the Human Resources end, the Civil Service end, 28 of those employees are Civil Service personnel technicians. Those 28 people are responsible for 47,000 employees in the County, the towns, the schools, the libraries, the villages, the fire districts; 278 jurisdictions that we deal with encompass over 47,000 employees. And we are responsible for oversight of all of their employment.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right. And so just reiterate for me, again, you said the annual cost of this -- if you had a full-time assistant, would be 18 or so thousand dollars?

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

No, no, no, no. The -- I'm talking about the secretary position.

**LEG. CILMI:**

That's what I meant, the secretary, the person that you're looking for.

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

My assistant's salary -- she's been there 30 years. She started out as my secretary and years ago I moved her into the assistant position and she took over all the Deferred Comp responsibilities and -- so her salary is just under 90,000 right now. So as a result of her working part-time, her salary has now been reduced to approximately 55,000. That's what she's earning now and has been earning since June.

**LEG. CILMI:**

So in order to put the position back in the budget for next year --

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

The secretary's position is 56,000.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay.

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

That's in addition to her position.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay.

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

But when she leaves, her position will go away.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right.

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

And I will replace her with somebody, person unknown at this point, who will come into my department and hopefully if this position is put back, I can bring in -- the person will have permanent Civil Service status in the lower title, maybe as a senior clerk typist or a principal clerk, but I want to be able to entice them to come in, to take on these responsibilities and offer them a raise. So I would like to bring them in the --

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay.

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

-- secretary position, which is 56,000. Six months they will be trained while Marion is still there. Marion leaves, her position goes away, and then the secretary position will stay by itself but the assistant position I will not need any more.

**LEG. CILMI:**

But Marion's position is currently budgeted for next year?

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

Yes, it is. Yes, it is.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay.

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

So that's why I put the additional secretary position in, explained it during my budget hearing, explained it to the Budget Review person, asked him if there were any questions about it; said no. So I thought I explained it adequately enough that I would not have the problem that necessitated me to come here today. But obviously I didn't do a good enough job to do that because the recommendation he made that, well, when Marion leaves, I can just make her position -- delete her position and replace it with the secretary position. Well, that's fine and good normally. But if I do that, I got to wait for Marion to leave to bring the secretary in, and she's going to come in there with

no training at all.

**LEG. CILMI:**

So ultimately, though, there will be no additional cost in your department; we're just talking about an overlap period while Marion is still there.

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

That is exactly right.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay. Thanks.

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

Exactly right. And in addition to that, Legislator Cilmi, I want to say hopefully I'm going to have Marion there all year and I'm going to convince her to stay and this whole discussion is going to be moot and I'm not going to need the position and it will sit there as a funded vacant position all year and I won't need it and --

**LEG. CILMI:**

Right. So the only time that you would ask for the position to be filled for this extra -- the secretary's position to be filled is if Marion tells you that she's going to leave in six months.

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

That is exactly right.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay. Thanks, Alan, I appreciate that.

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

Thank you.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Okay. Any other questions for Mr. Schneider? Seeing none, thank you very much, Alan.

**DIRECTOR SCHNEIDER:**

Thank you.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

My next speaker is Lance Reinheimer.

**MR. REINHEIMER:**

Thank you. Actually I'm going to pass. I really am here just in case there were any questions concerning the museum, but I really have no statement to make so I'll just pass.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Okay. Does anybody have any questions for Lance on the Vanderbilt before he walks away? Because I'm not letting him come back up. None? Okay. Thank you, Lance.

Our next speaker is Meryl Cassidy.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

I brought some gifts for you all. I'm going to veer off into a little bit different topic. My name is Meryl Cassidy. I'm the Executive Director of Response of Suffolk County. We're a small, non-profit

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community-based agency. We are one of your contract agencies. And I'm here to talk to you about the "s" word. And by the "s" word I'm referring to suicide. And in the field sometimes we refer to it as the "s" word because it is really shrouded in stigma and shame and secrecy. But what if we can transform the way we think about suicide? And what if we can think of other "s" words. Well, maybe we can think about support, strength, stories of hope and recovery, survival. That's what we're all about at Response.

Forty-five years ago we started Respond because someone on the Stony Brook campus attempted to take his life and the community responded by creating an immediately accessible way for people to have a human contact any time they're in crisis day or night. And so the 24-hour crisis intervention, suicide prevention services at Response were created in 1971 because our founders recognized that without help, those who are experiencing unendurable emotional pain are in danger of choosing a method to escape that pain that could damage or destroy their lives. And Response remains the only -- only agency in Suffolk County providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

We're nationally accredited. We are part of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, one of 165 centers around the country. We are your area network center for the Lifeline. And suicide, as you probably all now, is a very serious national and global public health problem; about 42,000 suicides a year. And that's just the tip of the iceberg. That's just what's reported. We also know that between 5 and 25% more are unreported. And those could be, you know, overdoses, fatal car crashes, drownings. We also know that there are between 40 and 100 times that number of people who have nonfatal attempts, suicide attempt survivors, and we work with those folks. And then the number of people affected by suicide, that's an unknown. Somebody like Robin Williams who dies by suicide, well thousands and thousands of people are affected by that, right.

And finally, did you know that one in five of us, one in five of us have thoughts of suicide. So these are some of the people who reach out to Response every day. And on our hotline and in the community, we engage in suicide prevention efforts. We try to support people who are in crisis so that they never even have the thought of suicide. That would be prevention. We also engage in intervention work. We prevent people who are having thoughts of suicide from those thoughts turning into suicidal behavior, or we will send rescue help if somebody -- if there's an attempt in progress or there's an imminent threat. And we do postvention work with people who have survived an attempt or who have survived a suicide loss.

There's a lot more I can tell you. I'm very proud of the agency I work for, the 70-plus volunteers and 20 staff are truly the heroes in our communities. And they are brave and they are wonderful people. And my colleague is here, who is one of those wonderful people. I just really wanted to say that last year was the first year in the seven years I've been Executive Director where we did not have a cut, so I did not have to come here and talk to you guys and remind you about the wonderful work we do. But here we are faced with cuts again, and I just want to say that we cannot sustain any more cuts. We are just bare bones. We are doing the best we can. And the need just keeps growing and growing.

So, please don't cut us. That's basically my message today. Please don't cut us. I know that the County is struggling, but really the 30 or \$40,000 that you're going to save by cutting us? Really? I just -- I just don't know what to say. There's got to be another way. There's got to be another place where we -- where we can cut. It's, you know -- one suicide that we prevent can save the County \$1.2 million. You know, it just doesn't make sense to me. And, you know, that's all I really wanted to say. And thank you for letting me go over my time.

### **CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Thank you, Miss Cassidy. Does anybody have any questions? Legislator Cilmi has a question.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Hello.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

Hi.

**LEG. CILMI:**

So one suicide can prevent \$1.2 million, you said?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

Yes.

**LEG. CILMI:**

And how do you ascribe that?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

Loss productivity, cost of sending emergency services, mental health services, and you know, loss productivity at work. Also the people that are affected, you know, may need behavioral health services. That's an estimate.

**LEG. CILMI:**

How many suicides have there been in Suffolk County this year, do you know?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

This year I don't know.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Last year?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

But it's about 140, 150 a year.

**LEG. CILMI:**

One hundred forty --

**MS. CASSIDY:**

And, again, those are just reported. Those are just --

**LEG. CILMI:**

One-hundred and forty to 150 in Suffolk County.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

In Suffolk County.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Last year let's say.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

I have statistics from 2009 to 2014 --

**LEG. CILMI:**

Roughly.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

-- and it's been about that number.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

Yeah.

**LEG. CILMI:**

So now we clearly -- if -- I wonder what the direct cost to Suffolk County government is when you consider investigative costs and Medical Examiner cost, and etcetera.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

Even the cost of a police officer to have to go and transport someone to CPAP and then sit with them at CPAP for hours is a cost.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Oh, sure. But -- so --

**MS. CASSIDY:**

And we try to prevent those things from happening.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I'm trying to -- I'm trying to without -- without minimizing the, you know, the personal aspects of what we're talking about here.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

You're trying to put dollar amounts.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I'm just trying to look at it from a dollars and cents point of view because we are talking about our budget after all.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

Yes.

**LEG. CILMI:**

So -- and certainly you can't put a value on a life and we all know that. And if it were up to us, and, you know, if we had the money to do it, we'd obviously allocate as much money as was necessary to prevent as many lives as we could. But that's not our fiscal reality at the moment. So what I'm trying to do is I'm trying to kind of calculate, you know, the funding that we provide to your organization, we are saving lives and additionally saving expense. And I'm just wondering what the comparison is. So if we -- if we -- if we take the budget as is, which decreased your funding by how much exactly, 30 -- how many thousands?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

Nobody's been telling me an exact figure. I know that the proposed had 2% cuts everywhere, but now the cuts could be much deeper than that, about 10% is --

**LEG. CILMI:**

Bill, did I hear you? Thirty-four thousand in the proposed budget. And then, of course, we don't know what -- what -- you know, the Legislature's going to put together in terms of a budget

resolution --

**MS. CASSIDY:**

Right.

**LEG. CILMI:**

-- to gear -- you know, to amend that in some way. We may, we may not. But \$34,000, how does that -- you know, how does that impact your agency and your ability to deliver services?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

Enormously. We have a very small budget. We have about a \$450,000 budget. Our core service, our hotline is manned mostly by volunteers, but they are -- our online crisis counseling program is only available from 7 to 11 PM at night. Teenagers are coming on, they're talking to us. I mean, they're -- we're bursting at the seams. We just welcomed in a group of 25 new counselors to train. We do trainings twice a year. I don't know what to say other than to say that we --

**LEG. CILMI:**

That's why I'm asking -- that's why I'm asking you the question so that --

**MS. CASSIDY:**

I would probably have to cut two staff positions.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

And, you know, I would probably have to cut hours of program availability. Here's our promise to the community: To be there 24/7, 365 days a year. We don't want to have any gaps in that. We want -- we need those phones manned. We need those volunteers supervised.

**LEG. CILMI:**

And if most of your --

**MS. CASSIDY:**

And I'm afraid we won't be able to deliver on that promise.

**LEG. CILMI:**

I understand. If most of your staff -- your phone bank staff, at least, is -- are volunteers, where does the money go?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

The supervision of those volunteers, the training of those volunteers and then the overnights are paid. The overnight counselors are paid; the online counselors are paid, you know.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

So.

**LEG. CILMI:**

What sort of private fundraising is your agency engaged in?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

We, um -- we do several events a year. We have ongoing fundraising efforts.

**LEG. CILMI:**

What does it amount to?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

We -- I also get a good amount of grant funding. And I also partner with a lot of other community agencies to try to pool resources.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Is it fair to even ask what your fundraising dollars have -- you know, were last year separated out from your grant money and --

**MS. CASSIDY:**

Probably about \$70,000 in fundraising money.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Uh-hum.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

And about 85 to \$100,000 in grant money.

**LEG. CILMI:**

All right. Thank you. Thanks for the work that you do.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

You're welcome.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Good. Don't go anywhere yet. Legislator Trotta.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

I just have a couple of quick questions. I never heard of this, so if I was to thinking about -- I mean, isn't there like one -- this may sound naïve, but isn't there like one suicide hotline or something? Is this it or --

**MS. CASSIDY:**

This is it in Suffolk County.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

There's no other ones?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

No, no other suicide hotline in Suffolk County.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

How would I know to call this?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

That's an excellent question. It makes me very sad to hear that you've never heard of us before. How would you know? Well, we go out and we do community education. We do social media.

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**LEG. TROTTA:**

Do you have an office, like?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

We have an office, yes.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Where?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

In Stony Brook. We have a -- any -- have any of you heard of us? Have any of you not heard of us?

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Not heard of you.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

No, that's -- that's terrible, terrible that you haven't heard of us before.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

I mean --

**MS. CASSIDY:**

The other way people hear about us is because we're part of the National Lifeline Network.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

If I were to Google suicide hotline in Suffolk County, would you come up?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

Would we come up? Yeah, we'll come up. We should come up. I don't know if we'll be the first one that comes up.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

Well, that was my next question. Is there another one in Suffolk County?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

No.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

No one else. Like if they call the Police Department --

**MS. CASSIDY:**

No one else.

**LEG. TROTTA:**

If you call 911 and say "I'm thinking about killing myself", would they transfer them to you or would they --

**MS. CASSIDY:**

No, that's a different --

**LEG. TROTTA:**

-- recommend you?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

That's a different situation. If somebody is -- if there's a suicide attempt in progress and you as a concerned person calls and says -- dispatches the police, the police will go and respond to that. We work with the police. But often people are calling us before it's gotten to that point. Although about 10% of people do call us after they've taken some steps to end their life. Is it coming up? Are you Googling it now? Okay.

The other thing is the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline has a network of 164 crisis centers. When you dial that toll-free number, 1-800-273-TALK and it originates from a 631, you come -- you get to our center.

**LEG. TROTТА:**

All right. That's what -- that's basically what I wanted to know. I mean, because we have people come here all day long and they're duplicating the services.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

Right. We are an unduplicated service. Every --

**LEG. TROTТА:**

How many employees do you have?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

-- (inaudible) has a hotline or they say they have a hotline. We have the only 24/7, you know, suicide prevention crisis intervention hotline.

**LEG. TROTТА:**

So if I call this National Suicide Prevention Hotline, your organization picks up the phone.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

We should be picking that up. If not --

**LEG. TROTТА:**

Could be or you are picking it up?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

If we're busy, it's going to roll over to the next available crisis center. There are 164 around the country. But you will speak to a human being. It should come -- am I making sense? It should come to us first.

**LEG. TROTТА:**

No, I'm not going to hold this up anymore.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

Yeah.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Okay. Legislator Muratore.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

Other questions?

**LEG. MURATORE:**

I do. Do you have training with the Police Department? Are you in -- have any sessions in the

academy where someone from the organization goes in -- I mean --

**MS. CASSIDY:**

Yes.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

As a police officer and I got somebody jumping off the Dennison Building, do I know who to call?

**MS. CASSIDY:**

We are -- we're brought in when the police do their CERT training, their crisis intervention training; we are part of that training. We go in and do a session, you know, and we work with the police closely.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

So if there is a situation --

**MS. CASSIDY:**

But it's a constant need to go out and talk to the police and let them know who we are.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

But there is -- if there is a situation of suicide, the police know how to get ahold of you.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

Yes, they do.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Okay.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

And the 911 operators do, too.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Okay. Any other questions for Miss Cassidy? Okay, thank you very much for coming and speaking to us.

**MS. CASSIDY:**

You're welcome.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

My next speaker is Robert Barsky.

**MR. BARSKY:**

I thank you much for -- for having me here today. I also work at Response. I'm a resident of Smithtown and I volunteer at Response. I'm also member of their board. And I do a couple other things for them there.

And I just want to say that unlike other agencies that specialize in one particular issue, Response provides help to any person in any type of crisis at any time of the day or night. So we talk a lot about suicide, you heard Meryl talk about that, but we talk about any crisis that anybody's in at any time. I mean any crisis. We've had -- we've heard them all.

We do that 365 days a year and it's no cost to the people that call. I have personally spoke to 12-year old schoolchildren and 84-year-old veterans that call our line. I have spoke with people that

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are homeless, they're abused, that are suicidal, that are about to cut themselves so badly that they're going to need hospitalization. I've talked to mothers who are at their wit's end because their nine-year-old child is threatening to kill themselves -- excuse me -- and they have no idea of where to go or how to get help. I've spoken to people who are homeless, hopeless, helpless people; people that are desperately lonely who have no loved ones and nobody to speak with. Their only contact with the outside world is Response. We've had people calling our hotline for 20 years everyday. And we'll call them if they don't call us to make sure that they're okay, because they literally have zero people in their life that they can count on and that they speak to. So without speaking to a volunteer at Response, these people do not speak to any other human being.

I've spoken to people who call Response back after their personal crisis is over and they say things like "thank you for listening" and "thank you for listening to me when no one else -- and I had nowhere else to go. Thank you for saving my life. Thank you for help me put down the gun, the knife, the bottle of pills. And thank you because if I couldn't speak to someone at that moment in time, I probably would have hung myself." And that one -- I've heard that one myself.

So these are the moral imperatives for giving Response's mission money to continue on. The kinds of things that we do as a people in this country and we believe in and the kinds of things that we fight for. But there are also financial advantages and Meryl talked on a lot of those. There's the cost of treating people who self-harm, can't get out of bed to go to work, loss of productivity there, can't attend to their children's basic needs, who make repeated visits to psychiatric and emergency facilities, who kill themselves. And these are orders of magnitude greater than the cost of supporting Response's work.

If Response can't continue to do what they've done for the last 45 years, this avoidable and preventable suffering will increase. The suffering expense may go unheard because it'll be amongst the voiceless and the isolated; and the lonely and despaired who come to Response for help and the simple human contact the rest of us take for granted. Even the financial cost to the County will be greater because the cost -- then the cost to fund Respond, if they can't continue helping these people with their problems, and they will escalate and affect the entire community. So I just ask you to help out.

And I'd just like to mention one other thing. We've gotten -- here's where the calls from: We got a call not too long ago, I got a call from one of the County Legislators, that a woman called his office, they thought she sounded suicidal, they didn't know what to do with her, they asked us to talk with her. We spoke with her for over an hour that night and we actually had to end up calling one of her relatives. She gave us permission to call. We took her to an emergency room because she needed emergency psychiatric care at that point. Nobody would have known about her had that Legislator not known about us and known to call us. And those are the kinds of calls that we get. And we have gotten calls from the 911, police, here and there, when they have a case where they don't think it's worth their going out and they thought it would be better for the person to talk with us. So those things do happen, not as a matter of course, but they do happen.

### **CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Okay. Thank you very much. Does anybody have any questions for Mr. Barsky? Seeing none, thank you very much for being here.

Next up is Roger Clayman. Roger? And then on deck is Mitch Pally.

### **MR. CLAYMAN:**

Thank you. I'm Roger Clayman, Executive Director of Long Island Federation of Labor. I also missed the Public Works hearing. I wanted to say a few things on transit and I'll be brief because I know you've heard some of these things before.

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While we're on transit I want to thank you for the letter that you sent to Bauman Bus. And I think it had a very useful impact. They have a tentative agreement in that and that's good for everyone, the schools, the parents, the kids, the union, the workers. And the company, too, believe it or not. I mean, it really is helpful to them. You pushed that along. And in that industry the union and the company are very much one in the same. They're fighting for the same things. It's a very difficult industry to survive, so thank you for that.

On the transit budget, I know there are cuts proposed, about \$10 million. And, of course, we, along with a lot of other people, think that we'd better for it if it were not the case. We don't want to see those cuts because it affects people who need it very badly, people who provide essential services and have no other way to get to work. These are employers who are also hurt by those kinds of cuts. We do sympathize with the condition the County's in and we, you know, we agree with the County Executive that the current model of transportation funding is not sustainable. The County share of expenses have been going up steadily, while the State aid is not keeping pace. And they have pointed out, here at the County, that while the cost of the system has increased by 38.2 million over the last decade, the State amount has increased by just 4.5 million. We're paying in Suffolk County a far greater share of the transportation budget than neighboring counties and maybe you've heard those numbers. It's in the sheet we're handing out.

This is a very efficient system. This is probably the most efficient system in New York State, Suffolk County transit, on a per-mile cost, and probably if the reimbursements were calculated on that basis, there'd be more money for Suffolk County.

So like everyone else, our conclusion is we will help to try to get money from the State. We'll do everything in our power, lobbying, working with you, working with the County Executive, to try to change formulas, try to get more money, not trying to hurt another County, but we're trying to get Suffolk its fair share. Hopefully if we can get some money in, you'll be able to rearrange a few things and make this work. But I understand your problems and I understand the County's problems, but it's essential. Transit is vital for people getting to work. I even say down at the bottom what most people don't want to say, which is, you know, maybe we should go after more of the MTA payroll tax and bring more of that back for local transit, which is now going to the MTA. Thank you.

### **CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Thank you, Roger. Does anybody have any questions? None? Thank you very much, Roger. We appreciate you coming,

Mitch Pally. And on deck is Kathy Malloy. This is the guy with the MTA dollars.

### **MR. PALLY:**

That's right. I just told him you can't take my money. *(Laughter)*

### **LEG. HAHN:**

So you're not in support of that last recommendation? *(Laughter)*

### **MR. PALLY:**

All the payroll mobility tax goes to the MTA. It goes to no place else other. So it's not like you're missing out on something. None of it goes to Nassau County. Although, I will tell for the last 20 years, Nassau County gets substantially more in bus assistance than Suffolk County has ever gotten. That's been going on for 20 years because of the way the formula is written. So, in that regard Roger is absolutely correct. The formula has to be changed in Albany. That will get Suffolk County's bus systems substantially more money. It has nothing do with anything else. The formula itself is wrong for the County. But that wasn't why I came up here, but I'm more than happy to provide that

information.

I'm here for the economic development request for MacArthur Airport. I'm here in two capacities. Obviously number one, my capacity as the MTA representative from Suffolk County. Number two, in my capacity as the Chair of the Town of Islip Airport Committee. Now is the time for MacArthur Airport. A confluence of events is occurring at the Airport and near the Airport, which will provide the Airport with the regional opportunities it needs to be, again, be a major factor in economic development decisions in Suffolk County. One, of course, is the new emphasis on the Airport and the ability of the airlines to now look again at MacArthur Airport and say "this is the place we want to be."

Two: Is the issue of the new customs house at MacArthur Airport, which, of course, has put in a request for a Regional Economic Development Grant. The ability to build that facility will allow MacArthur Airport for the first time to take international flights, which will be a boom to the Airport and the surrounding community.

Three: Is the Ronkonkoma Hub Project, what's going to happen to revitalize and renew the entire area around the Ronkonkoma Train Station.

And four is the double track project to Ronkonkoma, part one of which was funded in the current MTA Capital Plan; and part two of which will be funded in the next MTA Capital Plan, I can assure you. It will be funded in the next MTA Capital Plan.

The combination of these four things will make the Ronkonkoma area and the MacArthur Airport area a tremendous opportunity for regional economic development. And MacArthur Airport, regardless of who owns it, is a tremendous regional asset; a tremendous regional ability to provide economic development opportunities for this area. Now is the time to market the Airport on behalf of both the Town and the County of Suffolk and the State of New York, which also will provide funds in this endeavor. Now is the time to make MacArthur Airport what it once was and what it can be again; the centerpiece of the regional economic development effort.

So we would urge the County Legislature to ensure that the marketing funds for this airport are kept in the budget. You will see a significant return far beyond the amount of money that has been allocated.

With that, I thank you very much and I'd be more than happy to answer any questions that anyone has.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Thank you, Mitch. Legislator Lindsay has a question.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Hi, Mitch.

**MR. PALLY:**

Hello. How are you?

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Thanks for coming in today. You know, on the surface I'm a firm believer in what you're advocating for. But not being on the inside knowing the details of it, is it a "build it and they will come"? Or is it -- is there active negotiations going on right now?

**MR. PALLY:**

The Airport Manager is here. He will tell you about all the significant Airport negotiations that are going on; some of which require the custom's --

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Sure.

**MR. PALLY:**

-- facility. You can't have -- because of what goes on these days, you have to have the security and all of that that the customs house and the inspections provides. That will provide all of that. So it's not a question of we build it and then we're going to go out and find somebody.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Okay.

**MR. PALLY:**

We have people who want to come, but can't.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Right.

**MR. PALLY:**

Because we can't provide the security and inspections necessary for them for where they're coming from. We have to make all kinds of convoluted decisions on where they can go and where they can't go. So that's why the town made the request. That's why the request has been approved by the Regional Economic Development Council of the State of New York. It's in Albany; it hopefully will be part of the Long Island award, because they understand completely how important that piece is. That is one piece of what's going on at the Airport, marketing the Airport to the airlines involved in making decisions at the moment.

The good thing about the economy at the moment is that the airlines are expanding. The other good thing is hopefully they will look at MacArthur Airport as an expansion opportunity. They will only do that if we sell MacArthur Airport like Indianapolis sells their airport, which is actually smaller than ours; or Westchester does. And Westchester spends a lot more money marketing their airport than we do here on Long Island. We need those funds combined with the town money and the State money to make MacArthur a focal point of our economic development initiatives.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

And I understand and agree. I just don't want to hear used to use the Airport on a monthly basis and can't.

**MR. PALLY:**

Right.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

The flights aren't available any longer. It's hard to fathom how the flights disappeared when I was on them and they were full on a month-to-month basis.

**MR. PALLY:**

As the Airport -- we've gone through all of that at our committee meetings. And unfortunately airlines make economic decisions, which we might consider to be unreasonable. Now we have a vested interest.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Right. I agree. My argument always was it was -- the airport was a one-trick pony. There was one airline and -- significant airline, that was it. There always needed to be more, so.

**MR. PALLY:**

It's a -- the Airport will take anybody who wants to come. We have to go out and sell that to make sure there are people who want to come. Do we believe the answer to that question can be yes? Absolutely, or those of us who are volunteering our time would not do so. Myself, John Cameron from the Regional Planning Council and a variety of other people, who have given up our time to say we want to -- we believe in the Airport, we believe in what the Airport means for Long Island in Suffolk County. And we will do everything we can to ensure that the Airport succeeds even beyond what it originally did.

The infrastructure is there except for the custom's house. We're looking at a variety of other ways to make it even more attractive to airlines. We have to make it attractive to airlines. I mean, they're the ones who make the decision. We can't tell an airline you have to come to MacArthur. They have to decide for themselves it's good for their business. And we have to show them it's good for their business.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Okay. I agree with you. And as part of the mission or study of your commission, have you explored the option of bringing in a private airport management company?

**MR. PALLY:**

We've talked about all kinds of options. And nothing is on the table; nothing is off the table. Obviously the Town owns the Airport, which is a decision that was made a long time ago before most us were here. But I think even the Town is looking at anything possible to make it successful again.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Okay. And as part of the process of your Committee is it to make those recommendations?

**MR. PALLY:**

Yes.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

And will those recommendations be made public then once they --

**MR. PALLY:**

Absolutely.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Okay.

**MR. PALLY:**

Everything we do, all the meetings or, you know, whatever in that regard, absolutely.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Great. Thank you, Mitch.

**MR. PALLY:**

No problem.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Thank you, Mitch. Any other questions? Legislator Schneiderman.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Just, Mitch --

**MR. PALLY:**

Yes, sir.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Just because we started talking about the MTA thing --

**MR. PALLY:**

*(Laughter)*

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

And you're out there, you know, we're struggling --

**MR. PALLY:**

That's okay.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

-- struggling to find a way to keep our buses running, are we still paying that station maintenance fee?

**MR. PALLY:**

Yes.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Even on stations that are now closed?

**MR. PALLY:**

Under State law that fee, or whatever we want to call it, has been imposed upon all the counties in the region for the last 30 years.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

And is it like \$20 million or something?

**MR. PALLY:**

It is a significant number to Suffolk County. I can't remember exactly what the number is.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

And even though we have less train stations than when that was originally imposed. I think there's been several closures.

**MR. PALLY:**

It is a significant number. It is determined by the State Legislature itself. The MTA does not impose the tax.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Is there a formula --

**MR. PALLY:**

It doesn't even collect the tax.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Is there a formula on that?

**MR. PALLY:**

Yes.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Is the formula based on the number of stations?

**MR. PALLY:**

It is a formula based on the number of stations and the number of passengers.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

But shouldn't it at least be corrected for the fact that they've closed two or three stations?

**MR. PALLY:**

The number of passengers have gone from 40 million when the -- in the region -- the Long Island Railroad now takes 78 million people a year.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Right. But if it's proportional-based on ridership, then I would think that Suffolk County would have a smaller piece of the overall --

**MR. PALLY:**

Suffolk pays -- Suffolk pays less than Nassau does and pays less than Westchester does.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Right. But the growth is primarily -- in ridership is probably mostly coming from Nassau.

**MR. PALLY:**

No, no. Growth is coming from Suffolk County. If you look at the numbers, that's where the growth is coming from. It's been an interesting context in that regard, but the growth is coming from Suffolk County. That's why we're up to 78 million people. Not counting the 20% of the people who we take to Citifield and will take again for the next game in that regard. But it's an amazing context as to how many people from Suffolk County now use the train. And we're convinced that those numbers will continue to increase because of all the transit-oriented development that will occur at Wyandanch, at Ronkonkoma, at Deer Park at some point. Kings Park is now talking about it, you know.

So the communities around the train station -- you know, it's an interesting context. For many years on Long Island everybody wanted to live as far from the train station as possible. Now, lots of people want to live as close to the train station as possible. It may be an age issue, but it has had a tremendous impact upon our ridership.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

You know, the MTA, right, they run local buses in certain areas, right?

**MR. PALLY:**

We're not -- the only local buses we run are in New York City.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. So in Nassau --

**MR. PALLY:**

Nassau County now runs their own system. Westchester has run its own system for many years. New York City -- we run the private entities in New York City and New York City provides -- whatever loss there is to the MTA, New York City pays us dollar for dollar.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Have you ever explored expanding that? Well, it used to be in Nassau, too, right?

**MR. PALLY:**

We used to be in Nassau. Nassau decided it didn't want to pay us the subsidy, so they took the system back, which is their right to do so. We were only a contract vendee in Nassau County. They took the system back and they run their own system; or Veolia runs it for them, but the County is the operating agency.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Do we know what the subsidy would be? Has it been calculated?

**MR. PALLY:**

Oh, yeah, they -- you can -- I mean, the subsidy they get from the State of New York is in the --

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Like if it was in Suffolk per se, if you guys were running Suffolk buses.

**MR. PALLY:**

We had looked at -- we had looked at one point when I got on the MTA board about creating a regional bus entity in the suburbs, bringing all the suburban bus systems together, that MTA would take over and then operating that, because there are obviously many people who go from one county to another county on the bus. You know, they don't all stop at the 110 line. But unfortunately at that point Nassau County didn't want to do it. And then, of course, they took it over. And Westchester has run its own system for many years and has run what they consider to be a successful system, so they were not interested. So unless all three counties wanted to do it, we were not going to be able to do it.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

But would that let you tap into MTA tax funds to subsidize it?

**MR. PALLY:**

Well, if the -- yes, the answer to that question would have been yes. But we can't do that now.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I mean, it might be something that needs to get looked at.

**MR. PALLY:**

I would agree. It was something we were looking at very seriously until Nassau and Westchester decided they didn't want to do it. And we won't -- we can't do that without all three of the suburban counties deciding to do it, but if --

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Understood.

**MR. PALLY:**

-- we got back to that point again, we would look at the issue again.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Okay. Thank you, Mitch. And I think if you got us a couple of express trains out to Patchogue I can get you more ridership from our region.

**MR. PALLY:**

We're working on it.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Because we have a lot of people there in downtown that would love to hop on a train and go into the City.

**MR. PALLY:**

We are expanding the signal system, as you know, to Patchogue and the ability to run express trains is totally dependent upon the signal system. So once that is completed, we will be able to run more express trains. Not electrified, but at least the express train.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

At least the express train to get our people in a little bit quicker and they'll get on that train, trust me.

**MR. PALLY:**

I understand.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Legislator Lindsay has another question. And then Legislator Hahn.

**MR. PALLY:**

Yes.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Mitch, in regards to the trains on the East End --

**MR. PALLY:**

Yes.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Have they looked at expanding service, you know, between Hamptons because of the traffic situation?

**MR. PALLY:**

We are looking at that as we speak. A County Legislator has asked me to look at that, a number of the Town Supervisors. We had a conversation about that yesterday with the President of the railroad who is doing an entire analysis of what is possible on the East End. And we should have hopefully something to discuss with everyone after the first of the year.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Did we run trains temporarily while there was some construction going on?

**MR. PALLY:**

We ran -- yes, we ran a shuttle service while there was construction, on 39, I think it was, Jay?

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Yes.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

How was that ridership?

**MR. PALLY:**

It worked out very well. The question is, is now that people can get back in their cars, you know.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

I think it's still the time is always the element.

**MR. PALLY:**

It is something we are looking at again.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Okay. Thank you.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Okay. Legislator Hahn.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Just because my colleagues are doing it --

**MR. PALLY:**

It's quite all right.

**LEG. HAHN:**

-- I'm going to make a pitch for electrification on the Port Jefferson line, which I know the realities of where we're at here. I'm sure it's tough for you as well, but, you know, having Stony Brook University, a premiere institution and job hub --

**MR. PALLY:**

Yes.

**LEG. HAHN:**

-- in Suffolk County, you know, really should have more frequent train service. And also the idea of scoot trains between Port Jefferson and Stony Brook.

**MR. PALLY:**

Yes.

**LEG. HAHN:**

The idea of really utilizing that space. There's building going on in Port Jefferson. Port Jefferson Station has a tremendous hub plan. We have sewer investments there, you know. You know, we really need to complete the package. And, again, I get the chicken and egg thing, but we really -- it's needed now. The electrification and the scoot train to Port Jefferson and Port Jefferson Station is a growing need.

**MR. PALLY:**

Yeah. Well, the electrification itself is not going to happen in the immediate future. Part of that is because we've had to invest \$518 million of our own money in positive train control, which is, you know, is a Federal mandate for which we get no money. So that's \$518 million in the capital plan that could have gone for other things on Long Island; is going to positive train control. That's not minimizing what positive train control does. It just -- the concern, of course, is it's a Federal mandate for which they gave us no dollars. And, in fact, were going to penalize us if we didn't finish it by a certain date, but that now looks like Congress will take care of that issue.

What we need on the Port Jefferson branch, as we've told all the Legislators, is a yard. We can't do anything without a new yard. We don't have the ability to store trains. And because Port Jeff is a one track line, you can't store trains west to get them east to go west, which means we have to have a yard somewhere between Huntington and Port Jefferson. You will see the EIS for that has just been started. We have money in our -- the new capital plan for that. We're hopeful to be able to build it. Once we can build that, we will have the ability to provide additional service up and down the Port Jeff branch. But that is an essential component of we need to do.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Can I ask you --

**MR. PALLY:**

It's much easier just to do it on the Ronkonkoma branch because we have a main yard at Ronkonkoma that we just expanded it. We bought property from the Airport and expanded the yard, or are in the process of expanding the yard, because we want to run more trains because of east side access. Unfortunately on the Port Jeff -- Huntington to Port Jeff that is curtailed because of a lack of a yard. But we hope to remedy that in the next capital plan.

**LEG. HAHN:**

I don't recall, did the train turner-around-er thingy -- it's hard to -- does that eliminate --

**MR. PALLY:**

Does not eliminate the need for the yard, no.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Does not eliminate the need for the yard.

**MR. PALLY:**

No. The yard is an essential aspect of any expansion of service.

**LEG. HAHN:**

And in the EIS do you propose locations?

**MR. PALLY:**

We are looking at a variety of locations. There's not been one that has been specified at all. We haven't gotten to that point. We're at the moment looking at what are the characteristics of what the yard has to be. Then we will work with Suffolk County Planning Commission, the towns and whatever to hopefully find one.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Right.

**MR. PALLY:**

Because not being able to find one will require the answer to your question to be no. And we don't

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want it to be no. We'd much prefer it to be yes.

**LEG. HAHN:**

Okay. Thank you.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Okay. Thank you. Any other questions for Mitch? Mitch, you came here asking for something from us and you're going to walk away with a lot more asked from you.

**MR. PALLY:**

It's all right. It comes with the territory.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Thank you very much for coming. It saved us all a phone call.

**MR. PALLY:**

Not a problem. Take care.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

All right. Our next speaker is Robert Schaefer -- oh, Kathy Malloy. I'm sorry, Kathy. Kathy Malloy was next; and then followed by Robert Schaefer.

**MS. MALLOY:**

That's okay. My name is Kathy Malloy representing Suffolk County AME President Brian Macri.

First of all, thank you very much for allowing me to speak. Based upon both our and your Budget Review Office review, the budget is not adequately balanced, which directly impacts economic development and the operations of County government. This operating budget has not addressed the structural fiscal problem that has existed in the General Fund for well over ten years, the absolute need to raise a recurring revenue. Sending a message to other taxing jurisdictions has only negatively impacted the County's fiscal standings and has resulted in General Fund being less than a mere 1% of the total property taxes in Suffolk.

Suffolk County AME has borne the negative impact of this policy in making a no-pay agreement for no layoffs, a hiring freeze and a deferred payroll. And we have lived through two lag payrolls thus far.

As Suffolk County Legislators, I know that you recognize our greatest asset, our County employees. And AME represents the largest number of County employees. Our members have been described as the backbone of Suffolk County government, which we know they are. And in that regard we need to address some very startling staffing statistics regarding an important Suffolk County department, the Department of Public Works. In the DPW blue collar section, currently there are 14 vacancies. All low paid grade 8 positions, rubber meets the pavement. They're essential services that generate first impressions of how Suffolk County is managed: Lawns, garbage pickup, snow removal; they're frontline troops. And it takes 19 positions to maintain approximately 1500 lane miles of roads. For the first time, DPW has been outsourcing our road safety markings, which has proven to be not -- it's not a cost effective solution.

Now, when you move it over to DPW the sanitation area, 18 of 23 class 4(a) sewer plant operators are within three years of retirement at Bergen Point Treatment Plant. It takes five years for class 4(a) license, so there is already a two-year gap. Certification for class 4(a) license is only offered Upstate or out of state at the cost of our members. With the promise of expansion of service across Suffolk County, and we're discussing William Floyd, Ronkonkoma Hub,

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Hauppauge, and with our Legislators running on platforms of clean water, how are we to implement your campaign promises and our hopes?

How to find remedies for this? Although a quick solution might be to tap into a reserve account to offset the current imbalance, that would only make the fiscal problems more severe in 2017. We need recurring revenue. Since most budgets tend to be incremental, the only realistic short-term solution, which could very well result in becoming a long term solution, is to increase property taxes. The financial impact, although symbolically scary, is actually negligible per household. The average household property tax is \$9,875 per year. Out of that a minimal \$88 goes to the County's General Fund. If we consider incremental tax increases, after the full four years of incremental general tax increases, we could have an average homeowner going from \$88 per year to paying 266 per year into the County's General Fund, which is just \$22 per month more. It's important here not to talk percentages but to talk actual money.

And we have provided this morning a formula where we had suggested to Legislators four years; 2016, you raise the General Fund portion 50%; 2017 less 33%; 2018, 25%; 2019, 18.25%. With the County General Fund receiving an average of 27 million more each year per year, by the end of 2019 a total 106.5 million per year is coming for good, recurring. This is a solution. This formula could close the General Fund and police gaps in four years for good. In the long-term it is necessary to focus on those taxing jurisdictions that have created this problem and AME is willing to work with you in resolving these issues for all Suffolk County residents. There are many people we can blame, many ideas that didn't work. But the bottom line is better targeted toward solutions, not blame. And we are here to work with you for a viable, long-term solution to this recurring deficit. We are here to work alongside the Suffolk County Legislators and we hope we can work together with you.

### **CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Thank you, Kathy. Does anybody have any questions? Okay. Thank you.

### **MS. MALLOY:**

Thank you.

### **CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

We appreciate your time. Next speaker is Robert Schaefer followed by John Cameron.

### **MR. SCHAEFER:**

Good afternoon. I'm Bob Schaefer, the Commissioner of the Long Island MacArthur Airport. I'm here to speak about the economic development of the Airport. There are some funds that are being requested for it. Obviously it's not for the operation of the Airport. This is strictly for air service development and marketing.

I think you all understand how much development of the region is from tourism coming in from other areas. We're at the eastern end of the United States so everything flows west to east. What we want to do is start creating an east to west for international flights and from destinations that would spend money on Long Island. That's great that everybody wants another flight to West Palm Beach, that's fine, but people from West Palm Beach do nothing to enhance the economic development of Suffolk County. And that's where you come in.

You need more tax money. We need to get tourism in here. We have a great product to sell. Nobody's selling it. We make the same money amount of money for a flight landing from West Palm as we do from London; however, it doesn't do anything for you. But a flight from London spends a tremendous amount of money. Each European visitor spends \$4500 per visit. If you use the Airport Council's international numbers, one European flight a year, right, one European flight a day for a year has an economic impact of \$194 million and 1200 jobs. Right? That's one flight. That's it. If

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we can bring more than that, you can imagine. One new flight at JFK or LaGuardia does nothing for their economic development. And when people fly out of there it's great. It's more convenient, but you're just helping to subsidize the PATH passengers out of New Jersey. That's what they use that money for. So this is a tremendous economic engine for the region. It's not for the Town of Islip. It's for the region. Just as many people will go out to the Hamptons or Brookhaven or Smithtown as they do the Town of Islip. So it's really an economic engine. And I think the County Executive realizes that.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Okay. Legislator Lindsay has the first question.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

First I'd like to thank you for coming in today.

**MR. SCHAEFER:**

Thank you.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

My question would be the same as the one to Mitch, you know, with the "build it and they will come." Is there active negotiations now with international airlines?

**MR. SCHAEFER:**

There is. It's not a "build it and you will come."

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Okay.

**MR. SCHAEFER:**

I don't think that really works. But under nondisclosure agreements, I cannot reveal --

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Yeah, I won't ask you to violate those. It's just -- prior to your history, there's been obviously development in the Airport with -- the parking lots are the best example of that where they built it, and --

**MR. SCHAEFER:**

It was a poor deal. I mean, it was a bad deal.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Absolutely. So you could understand, you know, the premise of my question.

**MR. SCHAEFER:**

Right. Yes, we do have -- we do have airlines that are ready to come. I can't disclose that, but I wouldn't be asking for this. And we're under pressure from airlines to build this temporary customs facility obviously.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

What would the timeline look like, then, if you --

**MR. SCHAEFER:**

I hate -- I really can't give you a time -- I really can't say that timeline. I said I wouldn't say that. Privately I could tell you that, but I'm not going to say it in public on the record. *(Laughter)*

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Okay.

**MR. SCHAEFER:**

Okay.

**CO-CHAIR LINDSAY:**

Thanks.

**MR. SCHAEFER:**

Sorry about that.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Any other questions? I guess my one question for you is, I appreciate that you're looking to make it a better hub and bring in the tourism dollars and that's certainly something that's important to our region. We give a lot of money every year to the Long Island Visitors Convention Bureau. Has there been any conversations with those folks about getting them to help do that marketing? Because I really don't know what they know.

**MR. SCHAEFER:**

Sure. Actually, we don't give a lot of money to the Long Island Convention Business Bureau, but --

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

This County does.

**MR. SCHAEFER:**

You can't tell the regions.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

This County gives them a pretty good amount of money.

**MR. SCHAEFER:**

It's about \$3 million and about 800,000 goes for marketing. And I always give the example of Hawaii that spends \$95 million a year on marketing for tourism. Yeah, we have. But they have to -- they have to spend tourism for everywhere. You know, for Connecticut, New Jersey. Mostly Long Island and Suffolk County markets to itself. So most of the marketing is in Suffolk County, Nassau County, the City, New Jersey and Connecticut. I'm really looking to go beyond that and the money they have doesn't satisfy that.

I'm also on the obligations to meet incentives for airlines. So if they spend \$200,000 for marketing, I have to match it, those are FA incentives. So that's where part of the marketing would go for, to enhance Long Island. Not to enhance -- this is not for flights we already have. This is strictly for flights that will enhance tourism. Okay?

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

I can appreciate that, and that's why I think the LICVB should be chipping in there as well, you know, to help make that happen.

**MR. SCHAEFER:**

I've convinced them to give more money towards destinations at the Airport.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

I'm glad to hear that. Very good. Any other questions? Thank you, Bob.

**MR. SCHAEFER:**

Thank you.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

And our last card is John Cameron. John, come on up.

**MR. CAMERON:**

Good afternoon. Thank you. My name John Cameron. I'm Chairman of the Long Island Regional Planning Council, and as Mitch had alluded to earlier, I also serve on Supervisor Carpenter's Business Advisory Task Force for the Airport.

My tact today, or at least the argument I'd like to make to the Legislature in support of the funding that's proposed for the Airport, is on a regional perspective; economic development perspective. We all know, I don't have to tell you, that these are difficult economic times. Candidly, each year you're facing budgets, looking at where we can cut here and there; you're looking at constant increases in costs, whether they be increases in Medicaid, entitlements, operating costs. Every year you're looking at this; where can we cut?

What we're proposing here, what is being proposed to you is a way to grow, make an investment to grow the economy. We all know that the primary sources of revenue for your budget are sales tax revenue and property taxes. What we're talking about here is investing, making an investment in a regional asset.

Long Island MacArthur Airport is not just -- while it's owned and operated by the Town of Islip, it is absolutely not a local airport. It is a regional asset for Suffolk County, for Long Island in particular. And with an investment in the Airport, we can not only grow our tax base through commercial, residential tax -- the tax base itself, as Mitch alluded to, there's a confluence of a number of different factors happening right now, which can facilitate growth, not just in Ronkonkoma but in the surrounding areas as well as a second track, etcetera. But there's also a potential for significant increase in sales tax revenues. We all know the County has a flat sales tax revenue. These are not the great days where sales tax revenues are growing at multiples of where they are today.

So my argument from an economic perspective and a regional planning perspective is that instead of just looking where we can always cut, and you're constantly, again, looking to fund different services, you have a tremendous burden, a major burden here funding the County. What I'm saying is that this investment can help you grow the economy; grow sales tax revenues and grow your commercial and property taxes. That's really where candidly on the Island here, if we don't start growing our tax base, there's no way but for the tax rate to go up.

So that's my argument to you, whether it's Suffolk County or Nassau County, is to find ways for us to grow the economy. And maybe that's a little bit different perspective than typically the Legislature encounters, but that's from our regional planning perspective. That's something we need to do.

So any questions I'm happy to answer.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Thank you, John. Any questions for John? Oh, Legislator Anker.

**LEG. ANKER:**

So if we look at the airport as really an international -- can't we look at it as an international hub?

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### **MR. CAMERON:**

Not yet. It can be once we get the Federal inspection station, which as Mitch had alluded to earlier, is the Regional Economic Development has endorsed \$3 million to support the creation of that FIS. Once that gets incorporated at the facility, then we can take in international airport -- international flights into the airport.

### **LEG. ANKER:**

About how long do you think that will take?

### **MR. CAMERON:**

Well, that's what Bob was reluctant to -- we're talking about it and candidly I think it would depend upon a number of different approvals, etcetera. So the earlier the funding is provided and the County is -- can be helping in that regard as well as REDC, that can expedite the process. But the Town is very much interested as the owner and operator of the airport in expediting that. So we're all moving to try and get that done as quickly as possible.

### **LEG. ANKER:**

Is the Town/Airport, do they have corporate sponsors?

### **MR. CAMERON:**

Bob Schaefer can speak to that better, but I don't believe they do.

### **MR. SCHAEFER:**

No, we don't have private finance --

### **CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Bob, you'd have to come up if we're going to --

### **MR. SCHAEFER:**

Sorry. There's no corporate sponsors. There's -- airlines are involved in it and there is some private funding in the FIS. The earliest we could probably get the FIS open is, a temporary one, it'd be May. So that's what -- that's what we're looking for, for a temporary. And while we're doing the temporary, we would then build a full one. We're building a general aviation one at this time.

### **LEG. ANKER:**

You know, I know a lot of the folks from our area, you know, I'm out in Mt. Sinai, which evidently it's like the sticks for some people on the western side of Suffolk County. But, you know, we all take trips. We go to Florida. We go out west. We go to, you know, the Islands. And unfortunately, I have to go to JFK because it's not available, a lot of those flights. So -- but I would be happy to work with you. I know I have some people that I know are very interested in the Bahamas to strike up a partnership.

### **MR. SCHAEFER:**

Again, this isn't about sending you somewhere. This is about getting people to come here. That's what -- I do work on that also, believe me. I work on getting new flights to Vegas and Bahamas and everywhere else, but that's not what this money would be used for. This is strictly for air service availability to get destinations that are coming here to spend money on Long Island, to create more taxes for you to spend.

### **LEG. ANKER:**

I think, and I absolutely agree with you, but I think the other 50% of that equation is utilizing the airport. And I have been there for, you know, the radio station and it is so underutilized. So I think, again, the 50/50 equation is to try to get people using the airport.

**MR. SCHAEFER:**

Yeah, we're doing that. I mean, that's also being done, too, but that's not going to be done with this air service development. We'll get it done. The air industry has changed drastically, air service industry has changed drastically.

**LEG. ANKER:**

Are you looking into the, you know, UPS and Amazon. They're talking about the --

**MR. SCHAEFER:**

Yes, we are.

**LEG. ANKER:**

Drones.

**MR. SCHAEFER:**

We're talking about using them for -- they are looking at hangars at the airport.

**LEG. ANKER:**

Okay. All right. Thank you.

**MR. CAMERON:**

I'd just like to augment Bob's comments. What Bob was talking about typically, he's responsible for the management of the budget of the airport, and where your questions, I think, were more going is to the convenience for Long Islanders. And candidly, we look and say it's difficult to bring companies to Long Island, but the more convenient you have travel here to Long Island as well as off Long Island, the better potential for growing businesses here on Long Island. While that's separate and apart from the budget of the airport, which can definitely enhance their budget and their profitability, what we need here on the Island is ways to get people on and off the Island. I think there's greater potential for attracting much more significant companies to the Island if they can actually fly their employees around the country for meetings and for marketing.

**LEG. ANKER:**

Okay. Thank you.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Okay. Thank you very much. Any other questions for John? Seeing none, thank you very much for coming down. We appreciate it.

**MR. CAMERON:**

Thank you.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

I have no other cards. Is there any other speakers? I do have a couple of presentations from our Commissioners. No other speakers? Okay. We are going to move on to our presentations. Joanne Minieri is here from Economic Development. I know she's been waiting patiently. Joanne, do you have anything you wanted to add? I think you guys had a presentation from Economic Development. You can have a seat if you like, if that works better, and if anybody else wants to come up with you.

**COMMISSIONER MINIERI:**

Hello, everyone. Good afternoon. I'm here to request an approval of the budget that we submitted for the Economic Development and Planning Department for the 2016 year. We have been working very, very diligently to facilitate and provide resources in the furtherance of our economic

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development initiatives to create jobs, to increase the tax base and to develop a long sustainable economy here for Suffolk County. So I'm here to answer any questions that anyone has today regarding the budget that we are proposing and recommending for approval.

### **CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Okay. Does anybody have any questions for Commissioner Minieri? Legislator Krupski has one.

### **LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Thank you. Is this the appropriate time to ask about transferring positions into 477?

### **COMMISSIONER MINIERI:**

Yes. I believe that came out of the Budget Office. I understand that you have a concern regarding the transfer of one position into the 477 Fund.

### **LEG. KRUPSKI:**

I actually had concern about transferring all those positions, but I wasn't here at that time. So if all the money has been taken up with salaries, there's no money left to do any sort of water quality projects. Is there actually money -- enough money left in there for a position in salary or -- and if so, why would we do that anyway when we really need that money to do brick and mortar projects.

### **COMMISSIONER MINIERI:**

I believe there is money leftover, but I am going to defer and ask that my Director of Planning, Sarah Lansdale, who oversees that fund --

### **CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Perhaps, Legislator Kruski, that's probably more appropriate for the EPA and Parks Committee Public Hearing, which is due to start at 2:30.

### **LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Excellent.

### **CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Okay. So let us get through Labor or Government Ops and Economic Development and then we'll kick it over to you guys to handle.

### **LEG. KRUPSKI:**

How about the position that was coming out of Hotel/Motel?

### **CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

We can certainly talk about that one right now if you'd like.

### **LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Thank you. I've got one now.

### **COMMISSIONER MINIERI:**

I believe the position that was moved into the fund is the position that is basically a full-time working with respect to the Hotel/Motel Tax uses, Film Commissioner, Cultural Affairs and the like.

### **LEG. KRUPSKI:**

How long has that position existed?

### **COMMISSIONER MINIERI:**

Oh, it's been -- I don't know, but it's been around a while. I can get back to you on that.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

But why would it just be suggested that it be funded through the Hotel/Motel Tax now. Why wouldn't it always have been funded through that?

**COMMISSIONER MINIERI:**

I believe we've asked in the past, and I'll check this, but I believe we've consistently asked that the position be put into that fund and I believe it's always been sent back. But I have to defer also the history of that to the Budget Office.

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I think what you're saying is correct. My recollection is pretty much every year they do request that that position be funded by Hotel/Motel, and every year we don't fund it because it would take money away from the available funds for cultural arts, historic.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Are you in favor of putting a position in there and taking money away from cultural arts and programming?

**D.P.O. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Of course not. But you're on the Budget Working Group, so you'll have to figure out how to pay for it.

**LEG. KRUPSKI:**

Thank you.

**COMMISSIONER MINIERI:**

You're welcome.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Okay. Legislature Muratore.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Just one question. These positions, where are they going to be working, in Planning? Exclusively in Planning or are they working anywhere else?

**COMMISSIONER MINIERI:**

Well, we have one consolidated department now called the Economic Development and Planning Department. That includes the Planning Department, includes the Real Estate Department, includes Film and Cultural Arts Department. It's all been consolidated under the County Executive's Economic Development and Planning Department. We all work together in the -- 100 Veterans Boulevard.

**LEG. MURATORE:**

Okay. Thanks.

**COMMISSIONER MINIERI:**

Thank you.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Okay. Legislator Hahn.

**LEG. HAHN:**

There were a number of positions, new positions, in the department. I was hoping you can make

the case for those.

**COMMISSIONER MINIERI:**

Yes, we requested some new positions regarding Community Development Design. We are looking to be able to hire individuals that have a skill in connection and an education with respect to urban design. We believe that that is critical in our efforts to further the economic development initiatives and to provide the resources that we believe at the County level are critical in the regional planning efforts that are underway.

The public/private partnerships that are being developed in the transit orientated development opportunities, along with working with our institutions, including Stony Brook University, Brookhaven National Lab, now with the Long Island MacArthur Airport, we really have had an opportunity to, at the County level, to provide very valuable input. That's important because we need to be a part of the project teams that the towns, the villages, the hamlets, the community groups, the civic groups that are putting together to create economic development and long-term sustainable activity.

I believe that we've seen a lot of interest for the County's involvement because we've been able to bring resources to the table. You know, great planning, great design at the regional level is critical for all of these -- all of the towns and the villages and the hamlets to really effectuate what they're looking to do in their individual locations. It's been, I think, a very important and valuable opportunity that the County could bring, to be a part of and to have a seat at the table with all of the exciting opportunities that really do exist. And the economic development initiatives that are laid out here that we've been -- that I've been working on since I joined the County, Connect Long Island and now the I-Zone, you know the towns and the private sector are really recognizing the County's value. And I believe that those positions and the education behind it and the experience behind the job qualifications that we're requesting are critical. And, honestly, we need more of that because we have been -- we have the opportunity to be involved now and a lot of things are happening at the same time. So we need to have more individuals that can be a part of these different project teams in the different locations and really be able to have the regional impact that is necessary. And I believe that the individual municipalities tend to understand the regional impact that what they're doing will have.

I mean, I can use the example of Brookhaven National Lab. You know, we'll be working with them closely now in connection with the project they're undertaking with respect to Discovery Park. I mean, that's -- Brookhaven National Lab is an incredible asset here in Suffolk County, and the fact that we could be part of a project team with them at the County level is really, really an important movement forward in, you know, in looking at this region and having all of the regional assets, you know, related to one another and really enhancing one another. And I believe at the County level we have an opportunity at this time to do that.

And when you bring value to the table you get invited. And we can't just show up once a year or once every, you know, two years because they need something, somebody needs something. We should be part of the planning process. We should be part of the implementation and the execution process, and that's why we're requesting in this budget those particular additional people with that kind of skill set. It's valuable. We've had a small example occur just over the last six months where, you know, a town was, I mentioned this earlier, where a town was looking to plan something. We came into the meeting to hear what was going on. We went back to our offices, we talked a little bit, we had some new ideas. We presented them, they were embraced, and they're in the process of being executed. And I think bringing value at the County level is critical and we can do it.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Any other questions, Legislator Hahn?

**LEG. HAHN:**

I certainly hope you'll include the local County Legislators as well in those project teams. We often get left out and if the County is participating in that kind of planning level in projects that are in Legislative districts, we need to be kept abreast of that and be part of that team, at least internally if not externally as well.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Any other questions? Legislator Cilmi?

**LEG. CILMI:**

Thanks, Chairman. Hey, Commissioner. How are you? So the extra positions that we're talking about here, do they have the potential to reduce our capital costs as far as contracting out for planning studies and whatnot? Will these new employees be able to do some of the things that we're actually paying and borrowing money to pay for now?

**COMMISSIONER MINIERI:**

You know, I believe that ideally these new positions will be doing different work, more design and planning work that we're not doing today.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Not doing at all, or we're doing outside.

**COMMISSIONER MINIERI:**

We're doing minimally, if any.

**LEG. CILMI:**

Okay. Okay, thank you.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Okay. Any other questions? Okay. Thank you, Commissioner Minieri. We appreciate your time. I see Commissioner Nardelli from Labor Relations and Consumer Affairs. Commissioner, do you have anything you'd like to comment on?

**COMMISSIONER NARDELLI:**

Good afternoon. Hope everyone's well. Haven't been before you in a while. I'd just like to say that I had the opportunity to go over the BRO Report and that the department feels comfortable with some of the cuts that were made. I think we could mitigate the shortfall. We understand that the County is under fiscal stress and we're team players. Fortunately we have a lot of Federal and grant funding that we can utilize to, you know, kind of use as a stopgap and mitigate some of that shortfall. So I'm basically here to maybe answer any question that any Legislator may have.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Does anybody have any questions for Commissioner Nardelli? Okay. There's no questions. You got off easy.

**COMMISSIONER NARDELLI:**

Thank you.

**CO-CHAIR CALARCO:**

Is there anybody else here who would like to address the Government Operations, Economic Development Joint Committee hearing? Going once? Going twice? Okay. See none, we are going to make a motion to adjourn by Legislator Lindsay. I second. We are adjourned.

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**THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 3:07 PM**