

1 **GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, PERSONNEL, HOUSING,**
2
3 **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & DIVERSITY COMMITTEE**
4
5 **OF THE**
6
7 **SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE**
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11 A Meeting of the Government Operations, Personnel, Housing,
12 Information Technology & Diversity Committee of the Suffolk County
13 Legislature was held in the William H. Rogers Legislature Building,
14 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York on January 27,
15 2021, via Hybrid Zoom Video Conferencing.
16

17
18 **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

19 Presiding Officer Robert Calarco - Ex Officio
20 Legislator Samuel Gonzalez, Chairperson
21 Legislator Jason Richberg, Vice Chair
22 Legislator Susan A. Berland
23 Legislator Tom Donnelly
24 Legislator Leslie Kennedy
25 Legislator Kevin J. McCaffrey
26 Legislator William Spencer
27

28 **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

29 Legislator Rudy Sunderman, District No. 3
30 Sarah Simpson, Counsel/Suffolk County Legislature
31 Amy Ellis, Clerk/Suffolk County Legislature
32 Lance Reinheimer, Director/Budget Review Office
33 And all other interested parties
34

35
36 **TAKEN BY:**

37 Alison Mahoney, Court Stenographer
38

39 **TRANSCRIBED BY:**

40 Lucia Braaten, Court Stenographer
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(*The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m.*)

CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:

All right. Welcome to the Government Operations, Personnel, Information Tech & Diversity Committee meeting. If we could all please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Legislator McCaffrey.

(*Salutation*)

Thank you. You can all be seated. Once again, Ladies and Gentlemen, good morning. Thank you for attending the Government Operation, Personnel, Information Tech & Diversity Committee meeting. We will begin. First, I would like to recognize that we have a new member joining us on this committee. Legislator Spencer, welcome.

LEG. SPENCER:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:

Welcome, my dear friend. Glad to have you on board.

LEG. SPENCER:

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:

And we, at this moment, we do not have any correspondence. We -- and due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order, in-person public comments will not be permitted during this meeting. Madam Clerk, I believe there are no cards.

MS. ELLIS:

That is correct.

CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:

Okay. Moving on, then, to our agenda. There are no appointments or presentations for today. We do have **Tabled Resolution: I.R. 1651 - A Charter Law to establish an Independent Office of Inspector General in Suffolk County. (Trotta)** I believe that this needs to be tabled again for public hearing. That is okay. Can I have a -- can I get a motion, please?

LEG. BERLAND:

Motion.

LEG. RICHBERG:

Motion.

CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:

Motion by Legislator Berland. Second?

LEG. RICHBERG:

Second.

1 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**
2 Second by Legislator Richberg. Roll call, please.

3
4 (**Roll Called by Ms. Ellis - Clerk of the Legislature**)

5
6 **LEG. BERLAND:**
7 Yes.

8
9 **LEG. RICHBERG:**
10 Yes.

10:05AM

11
12 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**
13 Yes.

14
15 **LEG. KENNEDY:**
16 Yes.

17
18 **LEG. MC CAFFREY:**
19 Yes.

10:05AM

20
21 **LEG. DONNELLY:**
22 Yes.

23
24 **LEG. SPENCER:**
25 Yes.

26
27 **P.O. CALARCO:**
28 Yes.

29
30 **MS. ELLIS:**
31 *Eight. (Vote: Tabled for Public Hearing 8-0-0-0)*

10:05AM

32
33 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**
34 Okay. So we will move on. I.R. 1651 is tabled.

35
36 Moving on to *Introductory Resolutions: I.R. 2010 - Establishing an*
37 *application fee waiver policy for civil service examinations.*
38 *(Sunderman)* Motion to approve, anyone?

39
40 **LEG. KENNEDY:**
41 Motion.

10:05AM

42
43 **LEG. MC CAFFREY:**
44 I'll make a motion to approve.

45
46 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**
47 I'm sorry?

48
49 **LEG. MC CAFFREY:**
50 McCaffrey, motion to approve.

10:05AM

51
52 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**
53 Okay. Motion to approve by Legislator McCaffrey. Is there a
54 second?

55
56

1 **LEG. KENNEDY:**

2 Second.

3

4 **LEG. DONNELLY:**

5 Second.

6

7 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**

8 Okay. I believe Legislator Kennedy beat you, Tom.

9

10:06AM

10 **LEG. DONNELLY:**

11 No worries.

12

13

(*Laughter*)

14

15 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**

16 Second by Legislator Kennedy. Okay. Roll call.

17

18 **LEG. BERLAND:**

19 Legislator Gonzalez, on the motion.

20

21 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**

22 Yes.

23

24 **LEG. BERLAND:**

25 I believe we have -- the sponsor, Legislator Sunderman, is on the
26 phone.

27

28 **LEG. SUNDERMAN:**

29 Yep, I'm here.

10:06AM

30

31 **LEG. BERLAND:**

32 Okay. Can I just ask a quick question on this? I support it
33 wholeheartedly. I'm just a little confused, because it kind of
34 says you have to be -- you do your two years in the Explorer
35 Program, but you have to be an active Explorer to take a test. But
36 I thought that you don't -- I mean, you don't take Civil Service
37 tests until you're 18. I understand there are some that might be
38 17 1/2. But I just am confused about whether you have to be a
39 member of the -- of the Fire Department, or you have to still be in
40 the Explorer Program, or either one? Because it says 14 to 21
41 Explorer Program. I thought the Explorer Program stop when you
42 turn 18, and then you become like a full-fledged member. So --

10:06AM

43

44 **LEG. SUNDERMAN:**

45 No. Explorer Programs let you be eligible up to 21, like the P.D.
46 one. So some programs allow you to maintain up until the age
47 of 21.

48

49 **LEG. BERLAND:**

10:07AM

50 Oh, okay. All right. Because when my kids did it, they were told,
51 you know, now you have to join the department.

52

53 **LEG. SUNDERMAN:**

54 Some Fire Departments allow that, to say at 18 you must join. Some
55 Fire Departments allow you to stay in the Explorer post through 21.
56 I have a gentleman in my Explorer post that's 19, so he's coming in

1 my next class. Because what if I don't have -- I'm not taking
2 anybody in right at the time the person turns 18? Would I say you
3 can't stay in the Explorer post, or, you know, you're dropped from
4 the roles? So we let them stay in until the next class becomes
5 available to start.

6
7 **LEG. BERLAND:**

8 Oh, okay. All right. All right. Then I have no problem. I
9 just -- I was trying to reconcile the two things with the way it
10 was drafted. So, all right, thank you for that clarification,
11 appreciate it.

12
13 **LEG. SUNDERMAN:**

14 Thank you.

15
16 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**

17 Legislator Sunderman, on the motion as well, can I ask you a
18 question, please?

19
20 **LEG. SUNDERMAN:**

21 Yes, sir.

22
23 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**

24 So what about those houses that -- you were saying that some houses
25 do and some houses don't to continue until you're 21, or up until
26 18. Is there any way that that could be more uniform? Because
27 what about the houses that say no, you know, you've got to be --
28 you got to go into the firehouse? And if there's no provision,
29 they're going to be dropped out? Is there any way that it could be
30 more uniform across the County to the firehouse?

31
32 **LEG. SUNDERMAN:**

33 Well, we don't -- we don't govern their, you know, municipality. I
34 mean, I could bring that back, and so could Legislator Donnelly
35 could bring that information back to the fire service. However, it
36 could be a recommendation. I think this may ask other Fire
37 Departments and EMS agencies to maybe offer an Explorer Program,
38 because this may get you future recruits for the fire service, as
39 well -- and the EMS, as well as it may get us more people that may
40 be interested in Civil Service exams, you know, that may be
41 available. So I think this could help us in a few different
42 angles, like it did for the Police Explorers.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**

45 Okay. That's very good, and possibly be added as a recommendation
46 to the houses, all the houses as well. I think that's --

47
48 **LEG. SUNDERMAN:**

49 Yeah. And I like that it's more youth programs for our kids. You
50 know, I think this is another opportunity.

51
52 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**

53 All right. It sounded at the end like you were a little tired.

54
55 (*Laughter*)
56

1 **LEG. SUNDERMAN:**

2 Sorry, yeah.

3

4 **LEG. MC CAFFREY:**

5 He's still recovering, he's still recovering.

6

7

(*Laughter*)

8

9 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**

10:10AM 10 Okay.

11

12 **LEG. SUNDERMAN:**

13 It's all right.

14

15 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**

16 Roll call, please. Oh, first of all, is there any other questions.

17 I'm sorry.

18

19 **LEG. RICHBERG:**

10:10AM 20 Yes. Mr. Chair, I just have one quick question for the sponsor.

21 Legislator Sunderman, I just want to -- also included is years of
22 service, right? So if you served for two years or three years -- I
23 think it's two years, you're also available for the waiver? So if
24 you served in the Explorer Program for two years.

25

26 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**

27 I think we may have lost Legislator Sunderman.

28

29 **LEG. SUNDERMAN:**

10:10AM 30 Yes, you have to have -- Sammy, you got me?

31

32 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**

33 I hear you now, but you're coming in and out.

34

35 **LEG. SUNDERMAN:**

36 All right, sorry. If you have two years of service and you get it
37 from your advisor, you're eligible for the Civil Service exam.

38

39 **LEG. RICHBERG:**

10:10AM 40 Okay. Thank you very much.

41

42 **LEG. BERLAND:**

43 But you have to still be a member, though, right?

44

45 **LEG. SUNDERMAN:**

46 You have to either be an active member or completed two years of
47 service.

48

49 **LEG. RICHBERG:**

10:11AM 50 This way -- okay, I see. So this way you bridge the gap. So
51 either -- like let's say in your case, in the case of your
52 children, Susan, let's say they're over 18, but they're not in the
53 Explorers, but they did it for three years, they would get the
54 waiver as well?

55

56

1 **LEG. SUNDERMAN:**

2 Right, if they've done two years of service or three years of
3 service to their Explorer Program.

4
5 **LEG. BERLAND:**

6 But is that regardless of whether they're currently in the service?
7 Don't they have to still be in the department, or no?

8
9 **LEG. SUNDERMAN:**

10:11AM 10 No. Because what if your department makes you not stay in? Some
11 departments agree, like what you said, Susan, at 18 don't let you
12 stay in the program. So what would you do? You know, every
13 department holds a different, different program, like --

14
15 **LEG. BERLAND:**

16 Okay. So you could be -- you could be in the Explorers for the two
17 years, get your certificate, and have nothing to do with the Fire
18 Department anymore and still get this waiver?

19
20:11AM 20 **LEG. SUNDERMAN:**

21 Well, what if your department -- what if you turn 18 and you're not
22 allowed to stay? Some departments, like you said, don't let you
23 stay in the program any longer. So like Mastic lets you stay at
24 19. But what if -- we'll use, you know, XYZ agency says at 18 you
25 can't stay in the program. So you're still entitled to your waiver
26 for the Civil Service as you're waiting to join the Fire
27 Department.

28
29 **LEG. RICHBERG:**

10:12AM 30 But you'd also have -- but to the sponsor's point before, you'd
31 have to get some sort of letter from your advisor to say that
32 you're -- that you did your time. So if you have no connection to
33 the Fire Department or the Ambulance Corps, there's a high likely
34 you're not going to get that letter.

35
36 **LEG. SUNDERMAN:**

37 Correct.

38
39 **LEG. BERLAND:**

10:12AM 40 Well, wouldn't they have to give you the letter if you served?

41
42 **LEG. SUNDERMAN:**

43 Yes, they'll give the letter for serving.

44
45 **LEG. RICHBERG:**

46 They have to. I mean, I know --

47
48 **LEG. BERLAND:**

49 Okay.

50
51 **LEG. RICHBERG:**

52 I know the fire guys. They might not just say, "Oh, well, you just
53 showed up just for this letter." You know --

54
55 **LEG. BERLAND:**

56 Yeah, yeah. Okay, I'll gotcha. I'm good. I support the fire

1 service wholeheartedly, so -- and the EMS, so I'm good.

2

3 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**

4 Okay. Are there any other questions? Okay. Roll call, please.

5

6 (**Roll Called by Ms. Ellis - Clerk of the Legislature**)

7

8 **LEG. MC CAFFREY:**

9 Yes.

10:13AM 10

11 **LEG. KENNEDY:**

12 Yes.

13

14 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**

15 Yes.

16

17 **LEG. RICHBERG:**

18 Yes, and cosponsor.

19

10:13AM 20

21 **LEG. BERLAND:**

22 Yes.

23

24 **LEG. DONNELLY:**

25 Yes.

26

27 **LEG. SPENCER:**

28 Yes.

29

30 **P.O. CALARCO:**

31 Yes, and cosponsor.

10:13AM 32

33 **MS. ELLIS:**

34 *Eight. (Vote: Approved 8-0-0-0)*

35

36 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**

37 Yes. Could you please add me to -- as a cosponsor as well?

38 Thanks.

39

40 **MS. ELLIS:**

41 Sure, will do.

10:13AM 42

43 **LEG. SPENCER:**

44 Please, add me as a cosponsor.

45

46 **LEG. MC CAFFREY:**

47 Yes, me as well.

48

49 **LEG. KENNEDY:**

50 Yes.

51

52 **LEG. MC CAFFREY:**

53 And me as well.

54

55 **LEG. KENNEDY:**

56 Add us all.

1 **LEG. BERLAND:**
2 Okay. Yes, me too.

3
4 (**Laughter**)
5

6 **LEG. RICHBERG:**
7 Put a crown on Legislator Gonzalez.

8
9 **LEG. MC CAFFREY:**
10 Yeah. If you don't want to be a cosponsor --

11
12 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**
13 Thank you.

14
15 **LEG. MC CAFFREY:**
16 -- raise your hand.

17
18 (**Laughter**)
19

20 **CHAIRMAN GONZALEZ:**
21 I.R. 2010 is approved. Ladies and Gentlemen, this concludes our
22 meeting for today, this is our agenda. We are adjourned.

23
24 (**The meeting was adjourned at 10:13 a.m.**)
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