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NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE

RICHARD NICOLELLO
PRESIDING OFFICER

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

County Executive and Legislative Building
1550 Franklin Avenue
Mineola, New York

Monday, February 28, 2022
1:14 P.M.

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2 A P P E A R A N C E S:

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4 LEGISLATOR RICHARD J. NICOLELLO

5 Presiding Officer

6 9th Legislative District

7

8 LEGISLATOR HOWARD KOPEL

9 Deputy Presiding Officer

10 7th Legislative District

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12 LEGISLATOR DENISE FORD

13 Alternate Presiding Officer

14 4th Legislative District

15

16 LEGISLATOR KEVAN ABRAHAMS

17 Minority Leader

18 1st Legislative District

19

20 LEGISLATOR SIELA BYNOE

21 2nd Legislative District

22

23 LEGISLATOR CARRIE SOLAGES

24 3rd Legislative District

25

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2 LEGISLATOR DEBRA MULE
3 5th Legislative District
4
5 LEGISLATOR C. WILLIAM GAYLOR III
6 6th Legislative District
7
8 LEGISLATOR JOHN GIUFFRE
9 8th Legislative District
10
11 LEGISLATOR MAZI MELESA PILIP
12 10th Legislative District
13
14 LEGISLATOR DELIA DERIGGI-WHITTON
15 11th Legislative District
16
17 LEGISLATOR JAMES KENNEDY
18 12th Legislative District
19
20 LEGISLATOR THOMAS MCKEVITT
21 13th Legislative District
22
23 LEGISLATOR LAURA SCHAEFER
24 14th Legislative District
25

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2 LEGISLATOR JOHN FERRETTI, JR.

3 15th Legislative District

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5 LEGISLATOR ANDREW DRUCKER

6 16th Legislative District

7

8 LEGISLATOR ROSE WALKER

9 17th Legislative District

10

11 LEGISLATOR JOSHUA LAFAZAN

12 18th Legislative District

13

14 LEGISLATOR STEVEN RHOADS

15 19th Legislative District

16

17 MICHAEL PULITZER

18 Clerk of the Legislature

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2 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: We are
3 going to start the meeting with the Pledge of
4 Allegiance and I would ask all to all remain
5 standing for a moment of silence after. And
6 I'd ask Legislator Bynoe to please lead us in
7 the pledge.

8 Have a moment of silence for all of
9 the Ukrainians who are suffering as a result
10 of the invasion by Russia. To those,
11 especially to the civilians who have already
12 died, and others who are injured. Let's have
13 a moment and give prayers and thoughts for
14 people over in the Ukraine. Thank you.

15 Mike, would you please call the
16 roll.

17 MR. PULITZER: Thank you
18 presiding officer. Deputy Presiding Officer
19 Howard Kopel.

20 LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Here.

21 MR. PULITZER: Alternate Deputy
22 Presiding Officer Denise Ford.

23 LEGISLATOR FORD: Here.

24 MR. PULITZER: Legislator Siela
25 Bynoe.

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2 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Here.

3 MR. PULITZER: Legislator Carrie
4 Solages. He's on his way?

5 MR. PULITZER: Legislator Debra
6 Mule.

7 LEGISLATOR MULE: Here.

8 MR. PULITZER: Legislator C.
9 William Gaylor III.

10 LEGISLATOR GAYLOR: Present.

11 MR. PULITZER: Legislator John
12 Giuffre.

13 LEGISLATOR GIUFFRE: Here.

14 MR. PULITZER: Legislator Mazi
15 Pilip.

16 LEGISLATOR PILIP: Here.

17 MR. PULITZER: Legislator Delia
18 DeRiggi-Whitton.

19 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON:

20 Here.

21 MR. PULITZER: Legislator James
22 Kennedy.

23 LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: Here.

24 MR. PULITZER: Legislator Thomas
25 McKevitt.

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2 LEGISLATOR MCKEVITT: Here.

3 MR. PULITZER: Legislator Laura
4 Schaefer.

5 LEGISLATOR SCHAEFER: Here.

6 MR. PULITZER: Legislator John
7 Ferretti is absent.

8 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: I am here.

9 MR. PULITZER: Legislator Arnold
10 Drucker.

11 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Here.

12 MR. PULITZER: Legislator Rose
13 Marie Walker.

14 LEGISLATOR WALKER: Here.

15 MR. PULITZER: Legislator Joshua
16 Lafazan.

17 LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN: Here.

18 MR. PULITZER: Legislator Steven
19 Rhoads.

20 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Present.

21 MR. PULITZER: Minority Leader
22 Kevan Abrahams.

23 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Here.

24 MR. PULITZER: Presiding Officer
25 Richard Nicoletto.

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2 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Here.

3 MR. PULITZER: We have a quorum
4 sir.

5 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you
6 very much. Just a couple of introductions
7 before we start things off. We are joined by
8 Tom Silme, former minority leader of the
9 Suffolk County Legislature. Tom, it's good to
10 see you.

11 Speaking of Suffolk County, we are
12 honored to have with us today, and he will be
13 honored in a few moments by us in recognition
14 of Black History Month, but the Suffolk County
15 Police Department Commissioner Rodney
16 Harrison.

17 We will be starting things off, as
18 we always do, with the top cops recognitions.
19 We will be doing the recognitions for Black
20 History Month and then going to public
21 comment. If you would like to make a comment
22 please submit a slip. They're on the table
23 right over here to the side. Give it to the
24 people at the clerk's office and you will be
25 able to speak either during public comment or

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2 when we get to our calendar. The business of
3 the legislature will be when the calendar is
4 called. That will be following public
5 comment.

6 I would like to ask PBA president
7 Tom Shevlin to please provide us with a
8 presentation as to this month's top cops.

9 MR. SHEVLIN: Good afternoon.
10 Thank you for having us. This is very
11 important to recognize our police officers.
12 Not just for risking their lives day in and
13 day out out on the streets. There's a lot
14 more that goes to the job and we really,
15 really are honored to come here every month
16 and let you know the good work that the men
17 and women in blue do out on the streets.

18 Police officers Brian Coleman and
19 Michael Passarelli are our top cops.

20 On January 20, 2022, approximately
21 two p.m., Seventh Precinct police officers
22 Brian Coleman and Michael Passarelli responded
23 to Seaford for a suspicious occurrence. The
24 victim told police that she received a phone
25 call from an unknown person stating her

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2 grandson was in jail. The caller told the
3 victim that she needed to call her grandson's
4 lawyer. The caller provided a phone number.
5 The victim spoke with the alleged lawyer and
6 she was told he needed \$8,000 for bail.

7 While the officers were conducting
8 their investigation, the victim received
9 another call. Officers and the victim were
10 able to set up a pickup and the bail money.
11 The victim was told to put the money in an
12 envelope and to wait for another call advising
13 when the bail bondsman would come to pick it
14 up.

15 Officers quickly moved their patrol
16 vehicles and contacted the Seventh Precinct
17 unmarked units to standby. They received a
18 third phone call stating that the driver was
19 in the area and that he would be there shortly
20 to pick up the money. Officers Coleman and
21 Passarelli were waiting inside the home with
22 the victim. The subject then came to the
23 house and took the envelope from the victim.
24 Officers then jumped out and arrested the
25 subject. The subject attempted to flee but

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2 was quickly placed into custody.

3 If not for these officers' quick
4 response and quick thinking, this criminal
5 could have scammed this victim out of
6 thousands of dollars and will think twice next
7 time before stealing money from our senior
8 citizens.

9 The PBA is proud to name police
10 officers Brian Coleman and Michael Passarelli
11 as the legislative top cops for February
12 2022.

13 COMMISSIONER RYDER: First of
14 all, I want to thank all the legislators for
15 giving us the opportunity again. Getting
16 everybody back. It's nice to see everybody.

17 Before we start on this, I want to
18 just thank you all for taking the time to
19 recognize somebody like our Suffolk County
20 Police Commissioner Rodney Harrison. He's a
21 class act. He's a cop's cop. I've known him
22 a long time. I just had a short conversation
23 in the back and I'm very thankful that you're
24 doing that.

25 Officer Coleman, officer Passarelli

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2 did an outstanding job. Our attack on our
3 elderly, the scams that are going on, has gone
4 way above where it's been before and that's
5 because they are very vulnerable. This being
6 on the news and everybody is an education for
7 them. We thank them for that.

8 We also want to thank the New York
9 Jets who have now picked up officer Coleman's
10 contract because of the tackle that he did on
11 the front lawn. He did an outstanding job.
12 So thank you. It takes him off my payroll.

13 MR. COLEMAN: My partner and I
14 would just like to thank the Nassau County
15 legislature for honoring us today. To our
16 commissioner and PBA president and the board
17 for being here and supporting us. My partner
18 and I are proud to serve Nassau County and
19 it's community and thank you again.

20 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
21 Walker.

22 LEGISLATOR WALKER: Thank you
23 presiding officer. And on behalf all of us,
24 we just want to thank you for -- you know, you
25 never know. Might think this might have not

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2 been putting yourself in harm's way and
3 dealing with this specific incident. But you
4 don't know that person who was coming to
5 collect that money. Did they have a firearm
6 on themselves? Did they have a knife? Could
7 it have become more and more of an issue than
8 just this scam? But I thank you so much for
9 reaching out and helping this senior citizen
10 because there are so many scams today that are
11 going by.

12 I know we all put out newsletters
13 to our residents reminding them not to fall
14 for those scams. But I'm a grandma and it's
15 one thing being a mom and you worry about your
16 children but if I think one of my grandkids is
17 in trouble you would really do anything to try
18 to help them.

19 And thank God this woman was smart
20 enough too to reach out I'm sure from
21 information that she received from all of us
22 and it's in the papers and that you, in the
23 police department, advertise to make sure that
24 people don't fall for scams.

25 Again, I thank you. You saved this

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2 woman a lot of heartache. And I'm sure the
3 Jets are going to pay a lot more money than
4 the police department. Thank you again.
5 Although we're big Giant fans in my house.

6 But again, thank you so much for
7 putting yourselves in harm's way every day and
8 for what you do day in and day out I thank you
9 all for that.

10 I really represent a small portion
11 of your precinct area. But Legislator Rhoads
12 and Legislator McKeVitt also represent that
13 area. So I'm going to let them say a few
14 words if they'd like to add something.

15 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank you
16 Legislator Walker. I appreciate it. I
17 couldn't be more proud of both of you.
18 Tremendous. Rose kind of said it all. But
19 thank you for winning one for the good guys.
20 The bottom line is we get so many calls in our
21 office from residents whether it's the IRS
22 giving a call or whether it's you name it.
23 The scams that are out there are a plague to
24 our constituents.

25 Unfortunately, many of our elderly

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2 sometimes fall victim to that. As Rose said,
3 especially when you have this type of scam
4 where you're dealing with grandkids. You want
5 to do anything to protect your kids or your
6 grandkids.

7 Unfortunately, sometimes that means
8 the victims of those crimes are throwing
9 caution to wind. The fact that she had the
10 wherewithal to call and at least have that
11 suspicion in the back of her mind and said
12 maybe I should contact the police department
13 and thank goodness they got officer Coleman
14 and officer Passarelli who knew what to do in
15 that moment.

16 Your work in catching this person
17 has probably saved I'm sure it's not one
18 individual it's multiple and probably saved
19 many victims, many individuals from falling
20 victim to the same type of scam.

21 As Commissioner Ryder had
22 indicated, the fact that it's out there also
23 brings publicity to the scam so that other
24 seniors or other individuals are encouraged to
25 pick up the phone and call the police

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2 department if they have the inkling of
3 something amiss in one of these telephone
4 scams.

5 Great job officer Coleman, officer
6 Passarelli. Thank you and God bless you and
7 the members in blue for being out there and
8 doing what you do every day to keep us all
9 safe.

10 LEGISLATOR MCKEVITT: I just want
11 to thank you for the service you do each and
12 every day. Obviously you're the unsung heroes
13 helping our community in every little way.
14 But the great thing is the doorbell video in
15 this thing was amazing to watch. Let people
16 see the work that you do every day. So, thank
17 you very much.

18 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Actually,
19 we're going to give a presentation but we'd
20 appreciate it if you'd just wait to the side
21 for a moment as we bring the detectives up as
22 well.

23 At that point I would invite
24 president John Wighaus to make a presentation
25 on behalf of the DAI.

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2 MR. WIGHAUS: Good afternoon.
3 Thank you to Presiding Officer Nicoletto,
4 Minority Leader Abrahams and the full
5 legislative body for honoring our detectives
6 today. Today we are honoring detectives Ryan
7 Hayden, Jason Hernandez, Christopher Ingram,
8 Diana Kelly, Eric Mistretta, Kevin O'Brien and
9 Gene Piccirillo of the narcotics vice squad.
10 They can't be with us today because they are
11 undercovers and they can't be in this
12 setting. But with us today we have Detective
13 Lieutenant Landman, the commanding officer of
14 narcotics, and newly chief of detectives Chris
15 Ferrell and of course our commissioner.

16 Narcotics vice squad investigates
17 various types of investigations. The
18 detectives investigative responsibilities
19 include but are not limited to overdoses,
20 arrest debriefings, undercover operations,
21 following up on leads from sources both inside
22 and outside the department, prostitution, sex
23 trafficking, illegal massage parlors and
24 confidential informant management.

25 This team of detectives has a high

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2 level of self-initiated investigations which
3 goes above and beyond the investigations
4 received through various channels. Several of
5 the above-listed members actively assume
6 undercover rolls via social media, voice calls
7 as well as in person. The above-listed
8 detectives all find and create leads to pursue
9 investigations which are conducted by the
10 entire team.

11 The cohesiveness and coordinated
12 effort that these detectives exude with their
13 investigations result in safe and successful
14 conclusions. Undercover and buy/bust
15 operations are dynamic and dangerous. Over
16 the past month these detectives have shown a
17 higher than normal level of success with both
18 detective and community safety being of
19 paramount importance.

20 In addition to numerous arrests for
21 drug sale charges and money seizures, the
22 following cases have resulted in the seizure
23 of nine illegal handguns. These deadly
24 weapons have been loaded, defaced and/or
25 reported stolen. The citizens of Nassau

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2 County are now safer thanks to the hard work
3 of these detectives.

4 Many undercover phone calls are
5 made in addition to the calls they receive
6 from informants both on and off duty. On its
7 face, it may not appear to be so but there's a
8 significant investment of time which goes into
9 these investigations.

10 The cases submitted all had
11 successful conclusions because of the
12 coordinated and collaborative effort of the
13 entire team. In the five cases being
14 referenced today, there were two court-ordered
15 search warrants executed, 11 subjects
16 arrested, nine illegal firearms recovered,
17 quantities of cocaine, heroin and US currency
18 seized.

19 Unfortunately they can't be with us
20 today because of their undercover status. We
21 thank you for acknowledging them today. And
22 detective lieutenant Landman would like to say
23 something.

24 MR. LANDMAN: Thank you very
25 much. Much of what we do is in the shadows

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2 and it's not really for public consumption. I
3 just want to say thank you very much for
4 honoring my detectives. I know without a
5 doubt that the nine handguns seized definitely
6 saved lives. But thank you very much.

7 COMMISSIONER RYDER: So, we all
8 experience life in the public eye and we go
9 out to dinner with our families and we sit
10 down. Most of the time we get recognized.
11 People come up and thank you for all the work
12 that you do because you're usually in those
13 communities.

14 Now reverse that. You're that
15 undercover who just went out and did that drug
16 buy, that gun buy and you're with your family
17 and your kids trying to enjoy your dinner and
18 somebody comes up and confronts you. That's
19 the life that an undercover lives. He's
20 always got to look over his shoulders. He's
21 always got to have his back to the wall. The
22 bravery and the courage that they go out and
23 do it every single day to keep our streets
24 safe is not always recognized because of that
25 undercover status.

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2 So, I thank all of you for taking
3 the time here to recognize them. And I think,
4 as you heard, the amount of cases just
5 touched, they just scratch the amount of work
6 that our undercover and narcotics and vice
7 do. So thank you.

8 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
9 Ford.

10 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you very
11 much. I mean, it's hard to really express the
12 proper gratitude for the work that these
13 detectives do. Being a police officer, as you
14 all know, is stressful enough when you're in
15 your uniform and you're patrolling the
16 streets. Even as detectives when you're able
17 to go out. But I can't imagine what it's like
18 for an officer to be an undercover because
19 they literally work in the belly of the
20 beast.

21 John, when you were talking about
22 the various places that they go into whether
23 it's a drug buys, human trafficking. I mean,
24 guns. Just thinking about all of those
25 situations that they can find themselves in

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2 and it just has to be a lot of stress for
3 them. Their dedication and their
4 professionalism has resulted in making our
5 streets safer by taking guns off the street.

6 Also like getting a lot of these
7 drugs off and just even working with all the
8 different elements. I guess all different
9 people in society, regardless of what they do,
10 and trying to protect whoever they can in
11 whatever job that they do.

12 I have to say that, you know, they
13 really are just unbelievable, and I would like
14 you to extend our deepest, sincerest gratitude
15 for the work that they do. The selfless
16 motivation in being professionals and by
17 giving themselves really unto a job that a lot
18 of us I don't think it's a job that many of us
19 would want to do anyway. Just to please let
20 them know they really mean a lot to all of us
21 and that I hope they always remain safe in the
22 jobs that they do. Thank you.

23 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Come on up
24 guys. I'd invite the PBA to come up and
25 detectives as well.

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2 As we mentioned early on, this is
3 Black History Month and we have a tradition of
4 honoring some of our prominent Nassau County
5 residents of African-American descent.
6 Whoever achieved much in their chosen fields.
7 Today we are very honored to have two people
8 who really deserve to be recognized. I would
9 like to ask Debbie Mule to introduce the
10 first.

11 LEGISLATOR MULE: Thank you
12 presiding officer. It is my great honor and
13 if we could please ask Commissioner Harrison
14 to please come up front. Come to the podium
15 please.

16 So, Commissioner Rodney Harrison
17 is, I'm so proud to say, he resides in my
18 district. A Baldwin resident. And we are so
19 proud to honor you for being the first
20 African-American police commissioner in the
21 history of Suffolk County. We know that you
22 were similarly a historic figure in the
23 New York Police Department.

24 In December 2019 you were promoted
25 to the position of chief of detectives and

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2 became the first Black person to hold the
3 position in more than the 200 year history of
4 the force. I think that's worthy of
5 applause.

6 He's also the only person in the
7 history of the NYPD to rise from the rank of
8 cadet to chief of department. I continually
9 see you in the paper. Since you have become
10 the commissioner, I particularly enjoyed the
11 article today, when you were interviewed by
12 the sixth grader asking you questions about
13 what you wish to do.

14 COMMISSIONER HARRISON: Tough
15 questions by the way.

16 LEGISLATOR MULE: And we know
17 that you're saying you're going to emphasize
18 officer safety, community relations,
19 accountability and transparency as Suffolk's
20 commissioner. With that, you will bring the
21 experience you gained during three decades in
22 NYPD to fighting the opioid crisis, combating
23 gang violence and all that you will be doing
24 as the commissioner.

25 I wish to thank the minority caucus

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2 and to the entire legislature for agreeing
3 that Commissioner Harrison would be such an
4 appropriate person to honor as our honoree for
5 Black History Month. With that, can we bring
6 Commissioner Harrison -- how are we doing
7 this?

8 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
9 Ford would like to say something.

10 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you
11 Legislator Mule for a very great candidate for
12 Black History Month. I know I met at one of
13 the Leo weekends. I know from having family
14 that are currently serving in the NYPD, I know
15 that as you rose through the ranks and
16 becoming chief of department that many, many
17 thousands of members of the police force held
18 you in high esteem. I know it was more than
19 one or two or 10,000 tears shed when you
20 decided to leave and go to Suffolk County.

21 You earned a great amount of
22 respect for the job you did and I'm sure that
23 Suffolk will do well with you as leading as
24 police commissioner and you are very well
25 deserving of this honor. Thank you very much

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2 for your service to all of our communities.

3 COMMISSIONER HARRISON: Thank you
4 for those kind words.

5 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: I would
6 just add that you are indeed a role model and
7 a trailblazer. We are very, very proud. We
8 know you're the Suffolk County police
9 commissioner but we in Nassau County are proud
10 of your service and your accomplishments.
11 Congratulations. I'll give you an opportunity
12 to say a few words as well.

13 COMMISSIONER HARRISON: Thank you
14 legislative board for acknowledging me for
15 Black History Month. But I want to make sure
16 I share some sentiments regarding what I see.

17 I have to thank Pat Ryder for the
18 work that he does and the men and women that
19 serve this county. It's such a difficult and
20 dangerous job. Officers that came up that
21 were honored today it's pretty great and
22 special because we need that.

23 In 1995 I was undercover. My
24 partner was shot and it's something that still
25 chokes me up now knowing how dangerous a job

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2 it is and Madam Legislator I think you hit
3 right on the nail. No doubt about it, the
4 most difficult job in law enforcement is being
5 undercover and addressing some of the violence
6 that comes up unfortunately in some of our
7 areas where we reside.

8 So, just it's great to see that you
9 are recognizing police officers. You're
10 recognizing cops that have such a dangerous
11 job, such a noble profession. And legislator
12 thank you for honoring me today.

13 You know, being out in Suffolk
14 County is a different dynamic than New York
15 City Police Department but has a lot of the
16 same concerns, a lot of the same issues. One
17 of them is sex trafficking. Which is
18 something that we need to all be a lot more
19 aware of and work harder together to engage in
20 and to get rid of it. Just great that the
21 conversation's there. It's open now. But a
22 lot of work needs to be done and the men and
23 women that do this job will definitely take
24 care of it.

25 Thank you so much. God bless

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2 everybody and please stay safe. Thank you.

3 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO:

4 Commissioner, if you could join us up at the
5 podium. Is Commissioner Ryder still here?

6 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank you so
7 much Mr. Presiding Officer. I got to tell
8 you, our honoree for Black History Month, the
9 presiding officer used the term trailblazer
10 before. Though she's our honoree for Black
11 History Month, she could have been easily our
12 trailblazer award winner. There's a host of
13 other categories for which she would have been
14 an appropriate nominee.

15 But our nominee for Black History
16 Month today is Diedra Helberg. Diedra, if you
17 would please come up to the podium. I also
18 got to thank Lionel Chitty, Office of Minority
19 Affairs, our executive director, introduced me
20 to Diedra as a constituent trying to help her
21 in her small business. I got to tell you, I'm
22 so grateful that I did. Because every time I
23 have the opportunity to talk to Diedra I am
24 more and more impressed with her resilience,
25 her fortitude and really being an

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2 inspirational figure for so many.

3 In getting to learn about Diedra, I
4 actually pulled up a story and it sort of
5 summarizes exactly what I'm talking about.

6 Diedra was in the garage of her
7 home one afternoon -- and Diedra obviously you
8 know what I'm about to talk about -- talking
9 with a friend about her next steps in life.
10 She had recently shut down her business as a
11 successful New York Times featured childcare
12 provider and was looking forward to a new
13 chapter in her life. She knew full well that
14 after being a business owner for so many years
15 there was no way she could return to working
16 for someone else.

17 Ingenuity is ingrained in her
18 spirit as she hails from three generations of
19 entrepreneurship. While in the garage she
20 came across her husband's electrical supplies
21 from his day as an union electrician. After
22 organizing scattered equipment and at her
23 friend's encouragement, it dawned on her that
24 this new chapter she was searching for laid
25 right before her eyes. To open an electrical

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2 supply company. That conversation served as a
3 catalyst for Diedra's new business venture.

4 After a year of research and
5 planning, Diedra dove head first into of all
6 things the electrical supply industry.
7 Establishing Helberg Electrical Supply in
8 2003. She quickly found however that this
9 exclusive White and male-dominated industry
10 was not welcoming to an inexperienced Black
11 female that was not already seasoned.

12 In 2004 she opened a storefront in
13 Hempstead. By 2005 the store closed its doors
14 because several manufacturers were unwilling
15 to sell to her. Regrettably, the few
16 manufacturers who did want to work with here
17 were unable to do so because it would upset
18 their larger customer base and others in the
19 industry. Still, other manufacturers advised
20 her to join an alliance with a larger supplier
21 in an effort to better her position in the
22 industry, which she did. However, being the
23 third party creating pricing that was too high
24 for Helberg Electrical Supply to effectively
25 compete.

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2 But in spite of it all, Diedra
3 remained focused. Instead of quitting, she
4 created an office in her basement and got to
5 work. And Helberg Electrical Supply became
6 MWBE certified and Diedra was introduced to
7 the diversity network. The business was able
8 to grow and gain large contracts with
9 companies such as CBS and Goldman Sachs. She
10 shifted gears and added a green and
11 sustainable focus to a product line after
12 forecasting the trend the industry would take
13 in the coming years.

14 She survived challenges. The
15 economic slow down in 2009. And like so many
16 business owners, what happened in 2020 as a
17 result of the pandemic.

18 But what I love most about Diedra
19 is the fact that she continues to give back.
20 And that's something that's ingrained in her
21 soul. And she is on the advisory board for
22 Strive International. As a member of the
23 African-American Chamber of Commerce of Long
24 Island. And is the president of the US
25 Coalition of Black Women-owned businesses.

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2 I know that whatever Diedra puts
3 her hands to I know that she is going to give
4 it her all and she is going to pull and lift
5 everyone else up with her.

6 So, when I had the opportunity to
7 make a nomination for Black History Month it
8 was one name that popped into my head. That
9 was Diedra Helberg because you are truly an
10 inspirational figure for all of us. Not
11 because of the color of your skin, even though
12 you are being honored for Black History Month,
13 but because of the type of person that you
14 are. I am proud that you are our nominee as
15 Nassau County Legislature for Black History
16 Month. It is so well deserved. This honor is
17 yours. I would present flowers to you but I
18 know that the commissioner didn't get
19 flowers. I'll get those to you.

20 But congratulations and thank you
21 for serving as an inspiration to all of us.
22 Not only business owners, not only
23 African-Americans but to all of us for your
24 resourcefulness, your ingenuity and being the
25 type of person that you are Diedra.

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2 Congratulations. Please, the floor is yours
3 to say a couple of words.

4 MS. HELBERG: Thank you. This is
5 truly an honor. I was quite surprised by it.
6 Very excited. I have been in Long Island for
7 quite some time and it's very important that
8 we keep our youth here. And so that's why I
9 remain to stay in Long Island, in Freeport,
10 New York in the industrial park that we have
11 here. It's about humanity. We had some years
12 with Sandy and everything else with the
13 pandemic and I can't thank you legislators, I
14 can't thank you enough. I'm a little choked
15 up. Thank you so much.

16 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
17 Pilip.

18 LEGISLATOR PILIP: Wow. What
19 accomplishment. I was so proud to hear this.
20 Just amazing. You are really inspiring. I'm
21 just amazed by you. Woman to woman I'm so
22 proud of you. Thank you.

23 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: We would
24 be honored if you would join us at the
25 podium.

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2 I would like to invite our Nassau
3 County fire marshal chief Uttaro to come up
4 and make a presentation.

5 CHIEF UTTARO: Good afternoon. I
6 also want to thank you for honoring our fire
7 marshals on their everyday work. And in
8 particular some of the extraordinary efforts
9 they make out there in the field. I have with
10 me today fire marshal Dominic Buffolino. He's
11 been with the fire marshal's office now for
12 five years. He's also a Westbury volunteer
13 fire fighter and ex-captain over there. To
14 describe the events that unfolded.

15 On Thursday, January 27th, in the
16 early afternoon while finishing up an
17 inspection in the Westbury area he heard a
18 call for a house fire come over. And since
19 being in the area and he could see the column
20 of smoke, he made his way over to the house
21 located on Sharon Drive.

22 Upon arriving, he arrived at the
23 same time the Nassau County police officers
24 arrived and the Westbury fire department was
25 on the road. He did a quick size-up of the

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2 house. Walked around the house to notice the
3 rear of the house was completely in flames.
4 Checked to see if anybody may be in the house
5 by kicking in the front door. Unable to get
6 in there due to the intense heat and smoke, he
7 once again went to the rear of the house
8 noticing propane tanks, a can of gasoline,
9 books of matches laying on the ground and what
10 appeared to be a spill trail from some type of
11 fire that was lit on the grass.

12 Upon that, he advised the first
13 chief that arrived on scene, Lashon Carr, from
14 the Westbury fire department -- who also
15 happens to be an off-duty Nassau County police
16 officer -- of the conditions. He notified the
17 hazardous materials team to respond for the
18 propane tanks that were burning.

19 And then went to the rear of the
20 house and one of his fellow fire fighters on
21 the Westbury fire department, ex-chief Ken
22 Gass, who was an off-duty Old Westbury police
23 officer, was in the house and found a small
24 dog in the rear of the house. He then came to
25 the back of the house and passed it to

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2 Dominick who was standing on the back lawn.
3 The dog was limp and not moving. Dominick
4 then grabbed the dog and immediately started
5 doing some compressions on the dog, which
6 brought the dog back to a level of
7 consciousness. Brought the dog to the front
8 of the house to emergency ambulance supervisor
9 Delpino, who then administers oxygen to the
10 dog and then they worked together to get the
11 dog taken to a vet as soon as possible.

12 Sadly, a few hours later,
13 unfortunately the dog did pass away. But I
14 understand from Legislator Bynoe's
15 communication to me that the residents were
16 very happy at least. While losing their house
17 to the fire they were happy they had some
18 moments with their beloved pet prior to the
19 pet's passing. So Dominick did a great job
20 that day.

21 In addition to the job he did with
22 doing his best to save this dog's life for
23 these poor homeowners that lost their home as
24 well, he also secured what became a crime
25 scene. He was alert enough to notice the can

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2 of gas and matches laying on the back lawn
3 along with a burn trail to the house. He
4 secured that area. Actually took a few
5 photographs on his county-issued cell phone,
6 which followed good procedure. And through
7 those efforts and through the investigation of
8 the fire marshal investigators, the detectives
9 from the Nassau County Police Arson Bomb Squad
10 and very alert Third Precinct officers, the
11 person that is alleged to have lit this house
12 on fire in the midst of a dispute was
13 apprehended quickly and is now awaiting
14 trial.

15 Again, I'm very proud to say
16 Dominick's a great asset to the fire marshal's
17 office. Our small group who does a lot. He's
18 also one of our drone pilots for our drone
19 team. And when he's not doing his best to try
20 to help save people's lives and save dogs'
21 lives he's out there doing inspections in our
22 assisted livings and does a great job out in
23 the field.

24 Thank you very much for the honor
25 for Dominick and we appreciate it very much.

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2 Thank you.

3 MR. BUFFOLINO: I'd just like to
4 take a moment and thank everybody for the
5 recognition. I'm very honored to have it.
6 Thank you.

7 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
8 Schaefer.

9 LEGISLATOR SCHAEFER: Good
10 afternoon. So, Dominick, I had the
11 opportunity to congratulate you in the back.
12 But as some of you may or may not know, I know
13 Dominick's family for a long time. I actually
14 rented an apartment from them for many years
15 and they were very, very good to me. That's
16 my personal story with you.

17 But now I've been able to see you
18 grow and flourish. This is not your first
19 time here for an honor. We just honored your
20 brother not too long ago as well, who is also
21 a fire fighter.

22 I just want to say thank you.
23 While your family was good to me, you and your
24 family have been good to everyone in the
25 community, everyone in Nassau County with the

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2 service that you have provided.

3 When I saw that it was a dog that
4 was saved or at least for a little while that
5 was even more special because we know you're
6 out there fighting fires and rescuing people
7 but you don't always hear about the pets. It
8 was just a nice added touch to it.

9 So, I just want to say
10 congratulations. Thank you so much all of the
11 gifts you have contributed to Nassau County,
12 certainly the Village of Westbury, where I'm
13 from as well and thank you for being here.

14 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Good
15 afternoon. Dominick, extraordinary work,
16 extraordinary work. You made sure that that
17 crime scene was protected and that goes along
18 with your training. I know that. But your
19 heart led you into that house despite the fact
20 that it was really a very smoked consumed
21 space. I've heard from all the neighbors that
22 lived in the area how terrible the scene was.

23 I thank you for going in that house
24 and bringing out the dog. Bilba is the dog's
25 name and I've known Bilba for years. Bilba

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2 was the pet of Pleasant. She was an intern in
3 my office for many, many years. So, she was
4 heartbroken about Bilba. But thankful that
5 her father Fred was able to spend the last
6 moments of Bilba's life with him. For that I
7 say thank you. The family wanted to be here
8 today, they intended to be here today, but an
9 unforeseen circumstance came up and they
10 couldn't be here. So they ask that I would
11 convey their thanks, their gratitude for all
12 that you did on that day. You gave them just
13 a little bit of peace and solace in a very
14 tumultuous, devastating day for them. So,
15 again, thank you.

16 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Gentlemen
17 you want to join us on the dais.

18 We have one more presentation. I
19 want to thank all the people that are here for
20 public comment for your patience. We have
21 more than the usual number of presentations
22 today because there is a lot going on.

23 For our next presentation I would
24 like to ask Legislators Mule and Gaylor to say
25 a few words and Legislator Kopel if you would

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2 like to join in as well and Legislator Bynoe.

3 LEGISLATOR MULE: Thank you
4 presiding officer. If I could at this time
5 call up the members of the Rockville Centre
6 fire department, police department and we have
7 the mayor here. Please come forward. We have
8 fire chief Avondet, fire chief Rugolo and
9 police inspector Romance. And of course mayor
10 Murray. Good afternoon.

11 So, on the morning of just a little
12 over two weeks ago I awoke to an explosion of
13 comments on social media about this horrific
14 fire that happened in Rockville Centre. It
15 was the story of the day. And we are so
16 fortunate to hear that it was actually, well,
17 it was a bad story but it was a good story.
18 It was a good story in that as horrific as it
19 was no one died. There were a couple of
20 injuries. But I guess everyone was pretty
21 lucky that this accident happened at 1:10
22 a.m.. A 13,000 gallon tanker crashed into the
23 former Lazy Boy showroom. So it crashed into
24 an empty store on Sunrise Highway.

25 The fire cut off power to more than

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2 500 surrounding businesses and homes. As I
3 said, three fire fighters were injured and two
4 went to the hospital. 150 fire fighters
5 responded from more than 25 jurisdictions.
6 Rockville Centre police, Nassau County PD and
7 the state police also assisted at the scene.
8 From all the pictures that I saw it was really
9 horrific. There were also some environmental
10 impacts too as I understand it with Mill River
11 being close by.

12 But what I want to say, and I'm
13 sure the entire legislature will agree, we
14 want to thank everybody for working so closely
15 together, for working with such
16 professionalism and we know that that's what
17 you're trained to do, but to see it happen and
18 happen in such a way under these truly
19 terrible circumstances we are so proud of you
20 and it's an honor to represent your district.
21 Thank you.

22 MR. MURRAY: Thank you Legislator
23 Mule and thank you to all of you, my friends
24 in government, for inviting and recognizing
25 our fire department and our Rockville Centre

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2 police department in a job well done.

3 I've been a first responder. I'm
4 in my 50th year and I've never seen the
5 camaraderie and the effort put together by so
6 many agencies in such a short time. As you
7 probably know, sometimes they don't work
8 together so well. But I've never seen it as
9 well done as this. Our police department was
10 on scene immediately. The man flipped the
11 tanker on its side. 10,000 gallons of fuel
12 was going eastbound in a downward position on
13 fire 25 feet in the air for about 200 yards.

14 As you said, legislator, the Lazy
15 Boy went on fire. Not just that, Lazy Boy was
16 on the southwest corner. The southeast corner
17 was a liquor store and that went on fire. So
18 our fire department got there immediately and
19 fought that fire.

20 Chief Avondet, who is behind me,
21 say hello, was in charge of the scene. As I
22 said, I've been around a long time. I was
23 with the village administrator, Nancy Howard,
24 who is in the back, and we watched them work.
25 We went to mutual aid immediately. Then the

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2 second and the third and, as you said, over 25
3 Nassau County fire fighters, brave fire
4 fighters were on that scene.

5 I watched this chief run that call,
6 and I've never seen a chief do it as well as
7 chief James Avondet did with his deputies.
8 Amazing job by him.

9 I must also say Nassau County OEM
10 and especially Nassau County fire marshals
11 they were there at his side and the
12 collaboration between those three agencies at
13 the beginning was second to none in this
14 county. And, as you know, that's why they
15 train. This is why we prepare. It was
16 fantastic job by all for such a catastrophe.

17 Before I leave, I'll just mention
18 some other agencies that were there. There
19 were so many. All the way up to the federal
20 level. The Rockville Centre Police
21 Department, Nassau County Police Department,
22 New York State Police, New York State
23 Department of Environmental Conservation.
24 Obviously the Rockville Centre Fire
25 Department. Our own DPW. Rockville Centre

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2 has its own electric, so they were there and
3 they got the power on in less than six hours.

4 Rockville Centre building

5 Department because the building had to be torn
6 down. We have water department. So, the
7 chief had six tower ladders pouring water onto
8 this fire. It wouldn't go out because the gas
9 was still on. While that was on they had six
10 water trucks pouring water, six fire trucks
11 pouring water onto this fire. They had to be
12 rotated it went on for so many hours and it
13 was so cold everything turned to ice.

14 New York State Office of Emergency
15 Management was there. New York State DOT.
16 Nassau County Office of Emergency Management.
17 The United States Coast Guard had to be called
18 in. They brought a helicopter all the way
19 from Cape Cod to assess the damage into Mill
20 River. And thank God it was gasoline instead
21 of diesel. The damage wasn't too bad.

22 Again, Nassau County fire marshal
23 was there. New York State Office of Fire
24 Prevention was there. Nassau County DPW.
25 National Grid. Homeland Security was also

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2 there. We had meeting after meeting with them
3 as this day went on. I can't say enough of
4 all the agencies that worked so hard in that
5 freezing cold night and went into the day and
6 it's actually still going on because they're
7 remediating the oil that is still in the pit
8 there. But again, thank you for recognizing
9 our police and our fire. Thank you.

10 LEGISLATOR GAYLOR: If I could
11 just say a few comments. Chief, remarkable
12 job. Well done under your leadership and
13 command. You took charge of the situation on
14 scene about 12 or 13 seconds I'm told after
15 the fire com dispatched notice. A
16 multidepartment, county, state, federal
17 government operation unfolded right at your
18 hands. You led it very well. You did a great
19 job. You protected all of the residents of
20 Nassau County because this could have been a
21 real bad situation as the mayor alluded to.

22 I just want to say congratulations
23 to you, the entire department. Mayor,
24 congratulations to you and your leadership,
25 your team. Deputy mayor is here I understand

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2 as well and she should stand up and be
3 recognized and be up here with us as well
4 because it's truly a team effort from all of
5 the leaders, trustees, mayor, the well-trained
6 fire department, police department that was so
7 successful in bringing this to a head very
8 quickly and we recognize that fact.

9 That's why you're here today. So
10 that the rest of Nassau County can know how
11 well you did in this adverse and what was
12 really a disaster of immense magnitude or
13 could have been.

14 Again, I just want to wish my
15 congratulations. Thank you all for all that
16 you do to keep us safe each day. We can go to
17 sleep at night knowing that we're well
18 protected and that's because the efforts of
19 you, your department and your village. Thank
20 you all.

21 LEGISLATOR FORD: Howard.

22 LEGISLATOR KOPEL: I just want to
23 join my colleagues. I really feel badly that
24 I'm not there personally. It's the first
25 meeting I've missed in who knows how long.

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2 I'm delighted to join my colleagues, as I
3 said, in recognizing the extraordinary work of
4 the volunteers who go out there, give up their
5 time, the families who give up their time, and
6 help protect all of us from these catastrophic
7 and dangerous events.

8 Coincidentally, as it happens, we
9 have on the agenda today an approval for
10 additional fire fighting equipment for the
11 Rockville Centre Fire Department which I
12 sponsored. Took a while but I'm glad it's on
13 today. There's probably no better use of CRP
14 money than helping out our first responders
15 and I'm very proud to sponsor that.

16 I also want to say thank you to the
17 chief and all your members and to mayor Murray
18 as well because the mayor gets involved in
19 each and every aspect of his village and he
20 keeps a very tight control over it. When the
21 fire department needs something it's not only
22 the fire department lobbying for it, the
23 mayor's right there. He knows what everyone
24 needs and he knows what everyone wants. And
25 he's always after me, as well as I'm sure Bill

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2 Gaylor and Debra Mule. It just goes to show
3 you you're doing the right thing. Thank you
4 all.

5 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Good
6 afternoon. Thank you for all that you do day
7 in and day out. I really won't belabor the
8 point but I will echo the sentiments of my
9 colleagues who really have put all these
10 accolades before me and I'll tell you well
11 deserved.

12 I've heard that it looked like a
13 scene from Die Hard and it really looked like
14 a movie scene. But what was real was your
15 bravery and your ability to coordinate and
16 work together to make sure that everybody was
17 safe. So I thank you for all you do day in
18 and day out and may God keep you and bless
19 you.

20 LEGISLATOR WALKER: Although this
21 is not my district, I just want to thank you
22 too for your dedication, your hard work. I'm
23 in ladies auxiliary in Hicksville fire
24 department. And of course the text came
25 through on my phone. So from that minute on

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2 that was my constant -- I was up pretty much
3 the rest of the night. Then you saw videos
4 and pictures that were already on the websites
5 and just what you all had to face that night.
6 And thank God, except for some minor injuries,
7 everyone came away from there safe and in
8 fairly good shape. I know there was property
9 destroyed and the other work that continues
10 today.

11 But again, thank you so much for
12 your dedication. Certainly mayor and deputy
13 mayor and certainly our fire department, fire
14 marshal's office and all the other departments
15 that responded. I know Hicksville's haz mat
16 was there.

17 And I always like to remind people
18 that our fire departments are volunteer. You
19 jump out of bed in the middle of night and get
20 to a scene that, in this case, was a
21 disaster. A real disaster. It could have
22 gone to become something far worst than it did
23 but because you all worked together under your
24 leadership it was a situation that became
25 under control as quickly as you possibly could

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2 and no lives were lost. Thank you again for
3 all you do day in and day out.

4 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Would you
5 please join us on the dais for a
6 presentation. Chief Uttaro would you join us
7 as well.

8 Again, thank you for those of you
9 who are here for public comment for your
10 patience and we will jump right into that
11 right now. First speaker is Alexander
12 Lapidus.

13 MR. LAPIDUS: Good afternoon.
14 Thank you to the members of the board for
15 taking the time to listen to my concerns. My
16 name is Alexander Lapidus residing at 16
17 Merritts Road, Farmingdale, New York 11735,
18 adjoining to Toretta Estates subdivision. At
19 the last public meeting I couldn't be here
20 because my father passed away and Joan Whelan,
21 my attorney, was representing on my behalf.

22 After the last public meeting we
23 had a field inspection February 14, 2022 with
24 the town and county personnel, legislators and
25 developers who concluded that the land is

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2 stable but settling in some areas. I would
3 appreciate it if you could -- I'm sorry.
4 There's a brochure left on your table for each
5 one.

6 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: We all
7 have them.

8 MR. LAPIDUS: On February 14,
9 2022 with the town and county personnel,
10 legislator and developer who concluded that
11 the land is stable but settling in some
12 areas. I would appreciate it if you could
13 provide me with a written report of the
14 outcome of that inspection.

15 I have two other concerns. My
16 first concern is who is responsible for
17 maintaining the retaining wall that was
18 installed to stabilize the land? Do the new
19 property owners know that they must maintain
20 their retaining wall?

21 My second concern is, my concern is
22 with the excavation that Toretta Estates
23 performed to regrading lots one and two where
24 there's a sharp slope now between my property
25 and Toretta. I'm concerned that Toretta

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2 Estates has redirected the flow from my
3 property. Previously, before the excavation,
4 I had no runoff issues. Thank you for your
5 time.

6 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you
7 Mr. Lapidus. First of all, we want to extend
8 our condolences on the loss of your father.
9 Your attorney was here at the last meeting.
10 She did a very good job of representing you
11 and providing us with all of the details. As
12 you said, she went out, the Department of
13 Public Works, planning, as well as
14 representatives of the legislature were there
15 for an inspection. There will be follow-up in
16 terms of that. I guess communications will
17 then flow to your attorney. I know you had
18 some specific questions which we will attempt
19 to get you answers on.

20 MR. LAPIDUS: Thank you again.

21 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Pat Boyle,
22 Coalition of Youth Service Agencies.

23 MR. BOYLE: Hi everybody. My
24 name is a Pat Boyle. I work with Gateway
25 Youth Outreach in Elmont, and I'm here today

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2 representing the Coalition of Youth Service
3 agencies.

4 I'm here today to ask you for a
5 favor. We've been going around -- I think
6 everybody is well aware that there are some
7 more funds in Albany than what there have been
8 in the past. We'll just leave it at that. I
9 don't know what the exact numbers are.
10 Nobody's crying for money up there right now.

11 But at the same time, we've been
12 meeting with state senators and state assembly
13 people and their first question to us is,
14 well, has the county officially asked for
15 additional funding for youth service programs
16 in this year's state budget?

17 Now, we're kind of coming down to
18 the nitty-gritty of that because April 1st is
19 the time when they usually pass the budget.
20 As I'm sure Legislator McKeivitt can remember
21 from his days in Albany, it's very helpful if
22 we could have people from the Long Island
23 delegation, senators and assembly people, be
24 asked, even personally by you, to be able to
25 say to them listen, these guys have been

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2 crying for money for years. Now you're
3 finally might have a little bit up there,
4 could you boost the amounts that you're giving
5 to youth services?

6 I can tell you in Governor Hochul's
7 budget she has made absolutely no increases to
8 any youth service programs whatsoever.
9 Existing programs. They're always trying to
10 add on another program here and there with
11 federal money and things of that nature.
12 Right now there's been no increases in funding
13 that would come down to the county. Some of
14 that money is money that comes directly from
15 the county and into -- I'm sorry -- directly
16 from the state and into the county coffers to
17 then give to youth service agencies around
18 Nassau County.

19 So, the bottom line is we need your
20 help. I have to admit, not admit, but I'm
21 glad to say that our new, well, hopefully
22 after today, executive director of the youth
23 services, Ladonna Taylor, has been on top of
24 this stuff and she's been talking with the
25 state association of youth bureaus as well as

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2 talking almost directly with some of the
3 people who are -- such as Andrew McKeivitt,
4 who's the head of the Children and Families
5 Committee up there. People of that nature.

6 So, there has been some moment here
7 from the county. So they're doing what
8 they're supposed to do on that level. But
9 it's almost a personal touch that comes from
10 the Long Island delegation that would help us
11 to be able to get some more money into those
12 budgets. I'm just asking you to talk to your
13 friends and let them know that we could use
14 the money down here. It would be good for
15 Nassau County and it would be good for youth
16 service agencies. Thanks very much.

17 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you
18 Pat. Mark Curatolo.

19 MR. CURATOLO: Good afternoon
20 Presiding Officer Nicolello, Minority Leader
21 Abrahams and the entire legislature body. My
22 name is Mark Curatolo. I'm here with concerns
23 that not only affect me as a resident but as
24 an employee of Nassau County as well.

25 I work as a sergeant in the

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2 correctional center. I'm here out of concern
3 for the officers under my charge. I know the
4 COBA president has been here year after year
5 asking for staff and those requests have gone
6 unheeded.

7 For years the officers have worked
8 doubles and triples, missing out on important
9 times and important life times with their
10 families. The amount of stress placed on the
11 officers, myself and my colleagues is
12 immeasurable and has only been exacerbated
13 with the anti-law enforcement sentiment and
14 COVID which affected the correctional officers
15 in ridiculous numbers. The officers have
16 become increasingly more exhausted,
17 disgruntled, neglected and stressed. We deal
18 with dangerous criminals, contraband and
19 dangerous jail inmates on a daily basis. No
20 wonder our life expectancy is 58 and a half.

21 As you're aware, our work has been
22 made extremely more difficult through the
23 policies that are coming out of the state
24 level soft on crime. Also emboldening the
25 inmate population like the criminals on the

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2 street.

3 I have officers that I refer to the
4 employee assistance program over the past two
5 years is tenfold to the years prior. The
6 officers do their job, accept the increased
7 work load and have been out of a contract for
8 nearly five years. I do understand that most
9 of the contract issues are with NIFA but the
10 hiring staff requires your approval solely.

11 In the past year you've hired
12 nearly 400 police officers and promoted
13 numerous others in the police department. I
14 do commend the PBA for fighting for their
15 officers and I'm glad the cops can go home to
16 their families and not be completely exhausted
17 when they play with their children.

18 However, those locked behind the
19 walls are forgotten and belittled. Unlike the
20 gorgeous new police precincts, we work in the
21 leaking, dingy and deteriorating jail.
22 They're unseen and uncared for.

23 In the past five years the county
24 hasn't hired enough correction officers to
25 make up for attrition. Due to this neglect in

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2 the past, it has been portrayed that the
3 officers are overpaid when in fact they're
4 overworked. I fear that this overly tired and
5 overworked staff and those surroundings can
6 only lead to negative outcomes.

7 In closing, I came here today not
8 only on behalf of my union but you can put a
9 face to your affected workforce. So I plead
10 with this legislature to immediately start
11 hiring a fair amount of officers to alleviate
12 some of the unnecessary stress and workload.
13 Thank you for your time.

14 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you
15 sergeant. And as you correctly pointed out,
16 your leadership in COBA, president Sullivan,
17 has been here month after month after month
18 for years advocating those same issues. And
19 we on the legislature are keenly aware of the
20 lack of staffing, the overtime hours that are
21 being forced upon the members, the conditions
22 there and we are doing everything on our part
23 to resolve those issues. In particular, they
24 need to put some classes through there as soon
25 as possible.

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2 MR. CURATOLO: Thank you sir.

3 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
4 DeRiggi-Whitton.

5 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: We
6 just want you to know it's a complete
7 bipartisan effort that we support. We have
8 verified that there is funding in that line.
9 And anyone I speak to, young people that are
10 looking to start a career, I really try to
11 recommend it. And I think we all have to get
12 as many people as possible to not only take
13 the test but then follow through.

14 MR. CURATOLO: I appreciate it.
15 When we have to order the officers on a daily
16 basis I got to see their face when they can't
17 go home. It's been going on for years.

18 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: I've
19 been there a number of times as well as many
20 of my colleagues. I know some of your
21 colleagues. I know you guys have a tough job
22 and you're in an atmosphere that's so
23 difficult. Especially during COVID. Just
24 know that we are fully aware of it. We fully
25 respect you. Your leadership does a great job

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2 in representing you. If there is anything we
3 can do to help supplement it we will. Just
4 know that.

5 MR. CURATOLO: Appreciate it.
6 Thank you.

7 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you
8 again for coming. Now I have a couple of
9 slips from individuals who'd like to speak on
10 behalf of some of the nominees for positions
11 in the county. So, you can either speak now
12 if you'd like or you can wait until we call
13 the item in a little bit. The first
14 individual will be Christopher Hale, Manhasset
15 schools.

16 MR. HALE: Good afternoon. My
17 name is Christopher Hale. I would like to
18 first and foremost thank the legislature for
19 the opportunity to address the body on the
20 occasion of the swearing in of Mr. David
21 Chiang as county treasurer.

22 I have worked with Mr. Chiang for
23 several years in my capacity as an
24 administrator in the Manhasset school
25 district, where David has been an involved

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2 parent and a liaison to many groups. But most
3 notably the Chinese-American Association of
4 North Hempstead. Which is a wonderful
5 organization that is very supportive of all
6 our students in our schools.

7 In education the greatest
8 relationship that we can have with a parent
9 and the community is that of a partnership.
10 Partners in the education of children and the
11 betterment of the overall school community.
12 Mr. Chiang has been much more than a partner
13 for us. Mr. Chiang, over many years, has been
14 a staunch advocate. And not simply for his
15 own children, he has consistently and
16 passionately been an advocate for the
17 education of all students in our schools.
18 Particularly in making sure that students of
19 all backgrounds feel valued, safe and
20 empowered to do their best in our schools.

21 Although I'm sure that David's new
22 appointment as county treasurer will place
23 many demands on his time, I hope to continue
24 to see him in our schools in Manhasset where
25 he always inspires people around him to do

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2 their best.

3 On behalf of all my colleagues in
4 the Manhasset schools, I would like to wish
5 Mr. Chiang the very best of luck and
6 congratulations on his new role as county
7 treasurer. Thank you.

8 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you
9 Mr. Hale. Christine Liu.

10 MS. LIU: Good afternoon
11 presiding officer and Nassau County
12 legislators. My name is Christine Liu, and
13 I'm a resident in the New Hyde Park
14 community. Actually of the Herricks school
15 district. Thank you Dr. Hale for the
16 wonderful introduction for our organization.

17 I've known David Chiang as a good
18 friend of mine but we served together on the
19 same board, the Chinese-American Association
20 of North Hempstead. Known him for several
21 years now and he's also been our president. I
22 can attest, along with many of our board
23 members here, that David Chiang is a leader
24 who is smart, fair and reasonable. All of
25 which I think is very valuable to being a

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2 treasurer for Nassau County.

3 David was our president for two
4 years and we have about 20 board members. The
5 majority of which are women and women who are
6 strong willed and very opinionated, including
7 myself. Him being our president and being
8 able to handle and see the big picture and
9 things and navigating us to much success was
10 very much appreciated. We highly recommend
11 him in being our Nassau County treasurer.

12 The other thing that I will say,
13 that while he was president, our account
14 balance for our organization increased
15 exponentially. That's another asset that we
16 do like to thank him for. So I hope that
17 everybody here would feel at peace in their
18 confirmation with David Chiang. Thank you so
19 much.

20 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you
21 Christine. I know that the presidents of SOA
22 and DAI have submitted slips. Do you want to
23 wait until the item is actually called or
24 speak now? Come on up.

25 MR. WIGHAUS: Thank you for

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2 allowing us to speak again today. I'd just
3 like to say a few words about John Rick
4 Capece. Chief Capece spent over 37 years in
5 public service serving the citizens of Nassau
6 County. He was chief of detectives from 2012
7 to 2013. During that time period I had the
8 pleasure of working with him on a regular
9 basis as it applied to the membership. As an
10 administrator, he certainly set himself apart
11 as he was always prepared and was innovative
12 in his ideas as to how to make the detective
13 division better.

14 In his tenure as chief of
15 detectives I always had access to Rick, as he
16 was very attentive to the health and welfare
17 of my members. I cannot recall a conversation
18 that I had with chief Capece wherein he did
19 not ask me how the detectives were doing and
20 where he could assist in making their
21 difficult job a little easier.

22 On a personal level, I've known
23 Rick for approximately 25 years. He was the
24 commanding officer of the narcotics vice
25 bureau where I was assigned for 15 years.

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2 Rick was there from 2003 to 2006 and I had the
3 pleasure of working for him there. As a
4 supervisor he was second to none. Rick
5 implemented new ideas and concepts as the
6 commanding officer of narcotics which were
7 successful as they still are in place today.

8 As if the first 37 years of public
9 service were not enough for Rick, he has
10 decided to continue serving the residents in
11 Nassau County in his new role. I would highly
12 recommend Rick for this position as his past
13 experience and expertise he honed in the
14 Nassau County Police Department will serve the
15 county well. Thank you.

16 MR. FRASSETTI: Good afternoon
17 legislators. Thank you for taking the time.
18 I'm Rick Frassetto, president of the Superior
19 Officers Association. I'm also here to speak
20 on John Capece, otherwise known as Rick. Rick
21 is up for the commissioner of consumer
22 affairs. He's a married man of 40 years with
23 two children. He's a longtime SOA member in
24 good standing with 37 years of service to the
25 Nassau County Police Department.

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2 Rick had the privilege and honor
3 not only of being chief but being chief of all
4 three divisions. He was our chief of support,
5 he was our chief of patrol and he was chief of
6 detectives. Not many members of this
7 department can say that. He was also the
8 commanding officer in narcotics. He was
9 commanding officer of the First Precinct. He
10 was commanding officer of the Fourth
11 Precinct. He was also the leader and CO of
12 the gang unit in the First Precinct during a
13 time when our rival gangs were unfortunately
14 hurting and killing each other.

15 Rick has the exceptional
16 administrative capacity -- capability, excuse
17 me, and he was outstanding leader of this
18 police department. I firmly believe, due to
19 his lengthy service serving the people of
20 Nassau County for 37 years, Rick Capece should
21 be unanimously confirmed. Thank you for your
22 time.

23 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you
24 Rick. Michelle Lamberti, Port Washington.

25 MS. LAMBERTI: Thank you

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2 legislator. My name is Michelle Lamberti and
3 I serve as vice president of the League of
4 Women Voters of Nassau County. The League of
5 Women Voters is nonpartisan political
6 organization. We encourage informed and
7 active citizen participation in government.
8 Work to increase understanding of major public
9 policy issues and influence public policy
10 through education advocacy. We do not support
11 or oppose any political party or candidate.

12 As the Nassau County legislature
13 begins the redistricting process for
14 legislative districts, the league is here to
15 advocate on behalf of a fair and transparent
16 redistricting process.

17 Under the Nassau County charter,
18 the legislature must begin the process of
19 vetting and naming commissioners of the
20 temporary districting advisory commission over
21 the next few months. At a minimum, it is
22 absolutely essential that the commissioners of
23 the commission reflect the face of the
24 county. And our county is incredible
25 diverse. The 2020 census revealed that 44.2

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2 percent of Nassau County residents identify as
3 Black, Asian, Latino or multiracial. We would
4 expect that a similar proportion of the
5 districting commissioners named identify as
6 members of these communities. Nassau County
7 residents must see themselves in this
8 commission.

9 Along similar lines, the named
10 commissioner should reflect the geographic and
11 socioeconomic diversity of our county as
12 well. With commissioners from across the
13 towns and cities in our county and
14 representative of the economic struggles that
15 our residents face.

16 At the onset of the redistricting
17 process we also note the special protections
18 afforded to racial and language minority
19 groups under the US and New York State
20 constitutions, the Voting Rights Act and New
21 York State statutes. We expect that the new
22 legislative districts fairly and equitably
23 represent Nassau County communities of color.
24 The new Nassau County legislative districts
25 should fairly reflect the voting strengths of

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2 these communities and ensure their ability to
3 elect candidates of their choice.

4 We also continue to urge the
5 adoption of a fair, equitable and nonpartisan
6 processing for redistricting in our county.

7 The Nassau County legislature has
8 appropriated approximately \$900,000 in the
9 budget for the county's redistricting work.
10 We request that the hiring of staff and
11 consultants to assist with the county
12 redistricting work be similarly diverse. As
13 we've all seen the problems encountered by the
14 New York State independent redistricting
15 commission, it would be best practice and the
16 best use of our taxpayer money if there's one
17 set of staff that worked with all
18 commissioners as opposed to separate
19 Republican and Democrat sets of staff counsel
20 and members.

21 Per the recently amended municipal
22 home rule law, the partisan distribution of
23 resources as enacted has not lead to a fair
24 and transparent process. Especially where New
25 York State statute requires that districts

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2 shall not shall be drawn to discourage
3 competition for the purpose of favoring or
4 disfavoring incumbents or other particular
5 candidates or political parties.

6 With respect to the process. It's
7 essential that Nassau County residents be able
8 to freely observe the work of the districting
9 commission and actively participate in the
10 redistricting process.

11 Redistricting is foundational to
12 the right to vote. And as such, the public
13 must have confidence in the fairness of the
14 process.

15 We request that all redistricting
16 mapping undertaken by the redistricting
17 commission, as well as the legislature or any
18 of its committees, be conducted in meetings
19 that are open to the public.

20 For voters to have confidence in
21 new legislative districts they must be able to
22 observe how those districts were constructed.
23 The redistricting commission must hold public
24 hearings and provide a portal for public
25 comment as well as a website with a calendar,

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2 maps and commentary for timely updates.

3 Public hearings should be scheduled
4 across each of the county's towns and cities
5 and be in locations and at times that are
6 accessible to county residents and must occur
7 after the districting commission or
8 legislature has proposed new legislative
9 districts but before the legislators voted on
10 the adoption of its maps.

11 Thank you for the opportunity to
12 provide comment and look forward to working
13 with you during the redistricting process.

14 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank
15 you. Meta Mereday.

16 MS. MEREDAY: Good afternoon. I
17 stand here I'm hoping that I kind of get the
18 extra time because that clock was kind of
19 stuck on three minutes for a couple of the
20 other speakers. But I digress though.

21 I stand here on February 28th. As
22 most people know, this is Black History
23 Month. I was proud to see my neighbor,
24 Suffolk County Police Commissioner Rodney
25 Harrison, being recognized and my friend and

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2 colleague, Diedra Helberg, being recognized.

3 As a person of color, tomorrow is
4 March 1st. For me Black History continues
5 because it's 365 for people of color. Despite
6 the designation that is more than appropriate
7 for the most part, it just again signifies the
8 work that needs to be done with regard to the
9 inclusion and the racial disparity that
10 continues to permeate through this country.

11 I wear this oversized jacket
12 actually because it was worn by my God son who
13 used to play for the Vina Odessa basketball
14 team in Odessa, Ukraine. He left there in
15 September of 2021. He's now in Lisbon. But
16 he reached out to his teammates in Odessa and
17 he said that for the most part they're safe
18 but they're standing strong. And that, again,
19 I pray for the athletes and their families in
20 that country and those individuals who are
21 stepping up and representing their right for
22 their independence and their freedom of
23 speech. And for those in our country who are
24 stepping up and stepping forth and who have
25 relations and connections there.

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2 I'm not a proponent of war but I am
3 a proponent of veterans that return here. And
4 to know again the focus for me particularly
5 has to be on business development. I'll read
6 just briefly about Title 82 of the
7 miscellaneous laws of Nassau County created to
8 promote more meaningful participation in
9 public procurement by service disabled
10 veteran-owned businesses. Thereby, further
11 integrating such businesses into Nassau
12 County's economy and enabling them to realize
13 the American dream they fought to protect.

14 This law is almost five years old.
15 I've yet to see any report or any significant
16 activity that relates to creating businesses
17 that create jobs. Over 70 percent of veteran
18 businesses create the jobs for veterans and we
19 continue to just disallow the importance of
20 same in this county.

21 As Pat Boyle mentioned earlier with
22 regard to seeking funding, there's funding on
23 the federal and state level that could do a
24 lot for this county. If we don't ask for we
25 it we won't get it.

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2 We have a facility in Nassau
3 Medical Center, where our veteran services,
4 our hard working veteran services agency is
5 housed. But unfortunately we continue to
6 basically give them piecemeal funding for the
7 work that they could be doing on a broader
8 scale that could create jobs, that creates
9 businesses that could keep our veterans in
10 their homes and in their facilities so that
11 they can continue to be productive partners in
12 the United States.

13 Last year \$1.9 trillion was
14 submitted from Congress with the COVID relief
15 package of which last month the White House
16 requested \$10 billion for small business
17 investment. Unfortunately, those funds, along
18 with funding for health care, education and
19 climate change, has been stalled. Again, we
20 still have a responsibility on the local level
21 if there's an opportunity to seek funding from
22 the state we should be able to do that.

23 I just realized today that the
24 White House has asked for \$6.4 billion for the
25 Ukrainian crisis aid. I'm just wondering how

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2 quickly those funds will be allocated when we
3 continue to suffer right here at home. Our
4 veterans more so than anyone else.

5 I ask you to step up your efforts,
6 as Pat mentioned as well, to talk to your
7 friends and colleague on the state and federal
8 level to get the funding that we need here for
9 our veterans for their families and for the
10 support agencies to do what they need to do.

11 Lastly, because I'm leaving, I know
12 all of you will be happy to hear that, because
13 the work that I do is not here it's out
14 there. But I do want to support the
15 confirmations for those who are going to be on
16 the water district committee. Being a member
17 of the Long Island Clean Air, Water and Sewer
18 team and having fought to get that resolution
19 passed and that bill passed from the state, I
20 am looking forward to working with your
21 appointees and those that came from the Town
22 of Hempstead to address the rising rates and
23 the unseemingly high rates for water bills for
24 residents in Nassau County. Thank you.

25 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you

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2 Meta. Richard Clolery.

3 MR. CLOLERY: To the members of
4 the legislature, once again I come before you
5 with a plea to help restore bus funds so that
6 I as a citizen of this county can better
7 participate in the welfare of this benevolent
8 county. I have a feeling that you will
9 probably ignore me because I don't have a car
10 and in this county people with cars are more
11 often than not listened to over people who use
12 public transportation.

13 But while you ignore me, I want you
14 to think about this. You know what currently
15 fuels cars that you all respect? That's
16 right, gas. But right now because of a
17 Russian tyrant making war in the Ukraine that
18 precious fuel is about to become more
19 expensive. What does this mean for those of
20 us who are still recovering from the COVID-19
21 pandemic and are dealing with the rising
22 prices and unavailable items because of supply
23 issues and missing truck drivers.

24 That's right. It means even less
25 spending money for people here on the island

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2 if there's any money left for them.

3 It will also make people wonder why
4 they are living here in the first place when
5 their main mode of transportation becomes too
6 expensive to use any more and they can't get
7 to places they need to be.

8 This could eventually be the end to
9 Nassau County. Or an opportunity to increase
10 funding for the buses which will restore all
11 the bus lines that were cut and allow people
12 to better serve this county. Please think
13 about it for a moment. Thanks.

14 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank
15 you. Dorothy Hill.

16 MS. HILL: Hello and thank you.
17 Good afternoon. I'll be short. Just use the
18 three minutes allotted to me.

19 My name is Dorothy Price Hill. I
20 recently lived in Manhasset for 14 years. I
21 moved here from the upper east side to marry
22 someone that I thought was a nice person. A
23 banker. Unbeknownst to me was highly
24 connected to Thomas Spota. Thomas Spota, as
25 most of you know, is the former Suffolk County

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2 district attorney who is now living in a
3 federal detention center in Danbury,
4 Connecticut.

5 The reason I'm here today is two
6 reasons actually. The first one is I'm going
7 to be sending you a confidential memo
8 regarding John Capece. It is not a memo that
9 I will write with any happiness. It pertains
10 to events going back to 2012 when I was
11 falsely arrested at my home in Manhasset. I
12 had to go to district attorney Kathleen Rice
13 who helped me a tumultuous time. Those orders
14 were given to two detectives in Nassau
15 County. Detective Santoro and detective John
16 Azzata. The marching orders to arrest me were
17 given to them by none other than Jimmy Burke.
18 Jimmy Burke is out on probation. He's living
19 in his home in Saint James.

20 The reason I'm standing here before
21 you is that I am the one who wrote the 80-page
22 memo to the FBI in November 2012 regarding the
23 massive cover-up of the Gilgo serial killings
24 and parties that continue to this day,
25 including locations in Oceanside, run by a sex

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2 trafficking site called Utopia Guide dot com.,
3 which was started in Manhasset.

4 I was trained at Goldman Sachs. I
5 spent seven years, and thanks to Diedra for
6 keeping our lights on because I had many long
7 nights working there.

8 Fast forward. I was targeted in
9 this case, and I have taken all of the
10 evidence to the Suffolk County Police
11 Department in 2013. I was turned away because
12 of Jimmy Burke. Finally we have a major
13 break. It's like the waters parting. We have
14 Nassau County Police Commissioner Patrick
15 Ryder, who cares deeply. We have a new
16 Suffolk County Police Commissioner Rodney
17 Harrison, who also cares deeply. We have two
18 new district attorneys. What I'm asking you
19 to do please is to start an inspector
20 general. Excuse me. Support an inspector
21 general for Suffolk County where I now reside.

22 I actually moved to the vortex. I
23 moved to Babylon. Because I knew that the
24 only way to work on the Gilgo case and all of
25 the people involved in these illegal parties,

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2 sex trafficking, drug traffickings
3 unfortunately involving law enforcement
4 officials who also attended those parties is
5 to go. Richie Schaefer has been a great
6 supporter and I thank him as well.

7 The bottom line is that my family
8 was targeted. My son Alexander, in Manhasset,
9 started to get involved with teenage boys
10 involved in trafficking cocaine and heroin in
11 Manhasset and the only way that we can shut
12 this down is I called the DEA. We had DEA
13 agents in Manhasset who shut it down. That
14 was the class of 2019. I didn't want my son
15 to become a statistic.

16 So the bottom line is, I'm asking
17 if you could please work with the Department
18 of Social Services, with the family court.
19 Specifically Ellen Greenberg. Magistrate Lisa
20 Williams. Support an inspector general for
21 Suffolk County so that we can tie together the
22 sex trafficking across both Suffolk and Nassau
23 counties, the money laundering that's going on
24 through the banks. The girls in foster care
25 who are being trafficked out of foster care

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2 homes into these parties. Again, that is just
3 the tip of the iceberg. I thank you for all
4 of your support.

5 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank
6 you. That concludes the public comment
7 portion. We will have a quick consent
8 calendar. Then we will get to the
9 appointments. The consent calendar are items
10 that went through committees. It's been
11 agreed by the majority and minority that no
12 further debate or discussion is required on
13 these items at this time.

14 Item 1, Ordinance 2. Item 2,
15 Ordinance 3. Item 3, Ordinance 4. Item 4,
16 Ordinance 5. Item 5, Ordinance 6. Item 6,
17 Ordinance 7. Item 7, Ordinance 8. Item 8,
18 Ordinance 9. Item 9, Ordinance 10. Item 10,
19 Ordinance 11. Item 11, Ordinance 12. Item 12
20 is not going to be called. 13, Resolution 3.
21 14, Resolution 4. 15, Resolution 5. 16,
22 Resolution 6. 17, Resolution 7. 18,
23 Resolution 8. 19, Resolution 9. 20,
24 Resolution 10. And 39, Resolution 29. 40,
25 Resolution 30. 41, Resolution 31. 42,

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2 Resolution 32. 43, Resolution number 33.

3 Legislator Ford makes a motion.

4 Seconded by Minority Leader Abrahams. Any
5 debate or discussion? No. All in favor
6 signify by saying aye. Those opposed? Those
7 items carry unanimously.

8 We're going to go to the
9 appointments. We're going to do them a little
10 out of order. We're doing the appointees to
11 the nonpaid boards first. Actually, what
12 we're going to do first is there is an item
13 21, Resolution number 11 is a resolution
14 appointing a democratic commissioner of
15 elections for the county of Nassau.

16 Moved by Minority Leader Abrahams.
17 Seconded by Legislator Mule. Any debate or
18 discussion on that one? Hearing none, all in
19 favor signify by saying aye. Those opposed?
20 Carries unanimously.

21 First two appointments are to the
22 board of ethics. These are resolutions.
23 These are 32 and 33. They're resolutions to
24 confirm the Nassau County executive's
25 appointment of the Honorable Angelo Delligatti

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2 and John Bach to the Nassau County Board of
3 Ethics.

4 Moved by Legislator Walker.
5 Seconded by Legislator Pilip. Judge
6 Delligatti, Mr. Bach are you here? If you
7 want to step up. Hello judge.

8 MR. DELLIGATTI: Hello Mr.
9 Presiding Officer and members of the
10 legislature. It's nice to stand before a
11 board where I see a lot of familiar faces and
12 mostly friendly faces as well.

13 I'm a recently retired justice of
14 the supreme court here in Nassau County. I've
15 been an attorney for 50 years. I started my
16 career in the district attorney's office.
17 I'll be very brief. I served there for seven
18 years. I served thereafter in private
19 practice or I went into private practice. But
20 during that period of time I also served as
21 the supervisor of the Town of Oyster Bay and I
22 sat on the board of supervisors. Which is, as
23 you know, the predecessor to this
24 legislature.

25 I am proud to be here today. I

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2 think I can make a meaningful and important
3 contribution to the board of ethics. I want
4 to thank the county executive for recommending
5 me and appointing me and I would like this
6 legislature to support me.

7 I was an attorney -- I'm sorry -- I
8 was a judge for the past 13 years. As I said,
9 I am retired now and have plenty of time to
10 devote to this position. Thank you very
11 much.

12 MR. BACH: Good afternoon. I
13 find it an honor to be before you to seek the
14 appointment on the board of ethics. I had
15 submitted a resume and didn't realize there
16 were a few items that were left off. Don't
17 realize what you've done over a -- I won't
18 repeat my age or state my age but over a
19 significant amount of time.

20 Besides what I listed on the
21 resume, I feel I'm qualified for a number of
22 other reasons. First, I've been practicing
23 law for over 45 years and in that, of course,
24 we study and we apply the code of ethics for
25 attorneys. And in the practice you also

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2 practice, in private and corporate, many
3 ethical issues come up and they have to be
4 recognized and analyzed. I've had over the
5 years numerous issues regarding ethics that I
6 have advised other clients.

7 I also have been in the past an
8 adjunct professor of business law at Saint
9 John's University as well as Nassau Community
10 College. As an undergraduate, I was appointed
11 to the student judicial board in 1968-69 where
12 we had to review violations of code conduct at
13 St. John's involving student occupation of
14 buildings and protests.

15 As far as that experience and
16 whatever obviously posted on my resume, I
17 understand the significance of the
18 confidentiality of the position and the
19 impartiality of it. I've never held public
20 office nor have I sought any party office, and
21 I feel that I can be extremely objective and
22 nonpolitical in this position and apply my
23 experience over the years in this area.

24 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you
25 very much.

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2 MR. BACH: Thank you very much
3 for the consideration.

4 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Any
5 questions? No. Thank you to both of you.
6 All in favor signify by saying aye. Those
7 opposed? They carry unanimously.

8 The next two are the appointments
9 to the Nassau County Bridge Authority. Those
10 are 34 and 35. Resolution 24 and Resolution
11 25. Resolutions to confirm the Nassau County
12 executive's appointment of Samuel Nahmias and
13 Vincent Pasqua to the Nassau County Bridge
14 Authority.

15 Motion by Deputy Presiding Officer
16 Kopel. Seconded by Legislator Ford. That's
17 now before us. Gentlemen.

18 MR. NAHMIAS: Good afternoon
19 esteemed legislators. I'm very honored here
20 today for this appointment. I've been a
21 resident of Nassau County for 20 years and
22 I've given back to the community. I ran a
23 research firm here for almost 20 years. My
24 background includes working for some of the
25 most prominent companies in helping to develop

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2 their research infrastructure.

3 I want to give back to the
4 community. I'm very, again, honored to be
5 here for this appointment. Living in Lawrence
6 you're able to see what goes on with the
7 bridge and I'm very confident that I can make
8 a meaningful contribution to my role. With
9 that said, I don't want to waste more of your
10 time and I'm very thankful for being here
11 today. Thank you.

12 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank
13 you.

14 MR. PASQUA: Good afternoon. My
15 name is Vincent Pasqua. I've been a resident
16 of Nassau County for most of my life. I
17 worked in financial services for the last 25
18 years at firms including JP Morgan, Cantor
19 Fitzgerald, Credit Suisse among others. I'm
20 looking forward to having the opportunity to
21 give back to my community and to my county and
22 use my skills to help lead the operations and
23 the fiscal health of the Nassau County Bridge
24 Authority.

25 I live in Atlantic Beach within

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2 view of the bridge. I know a lot about the
3 bridge. Actually, this year is the 70th
4 anniversary of the bridge. It means a lot to
5 me to have the opportunity and I'd like to
6 thank the legislature and the county executive
7 for the chance to appear before you today.
8 Thank you.

9 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you
10 also. Any questions? Legislator Ford then
11 Legislator Solages.

12 LEGISLATOR FORD: Good afternoon
13 gentlemen. Thank you very much for both of
14 you agreeing to be on the board. I live in
15 Long Beach, so I know all about the bridge and
16 I like the fact that we have both sides
17 represented whether or not it's north or south
18 and I look forward to meeting with you in the
19 not too distant future so that we can discuss
20 the Atlantic Beach bridge and how we can move
21 forward with it. Thank you.

22 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Thank you
23 very much. I also reside in Lawrence and
24 often times I took a jog on the beach. Can't
25 ride my bike on the beach. Excuse me. I took

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2 a jog on the bridge. You can't ride your bike
3 on the bridge. What is your position on EZ
4 Pass? Because this is the only bridge here in
5 New York State to my understanding that does
6 not accept EZ Pass. And to my fellow neighbor
7 in Lawrence, what is your collective position
8 or individual position on the use of EZ Pass
9 with the bridge? Thank you.

10 MR. PASQUA: Thank you for the
11 question. Obviously I've traveled over that
12 bridge thousands of times. While EZ Pass is
13 efficient, there are a lot of drawbacks to EZ
14 Pass. I've done research on it. Actually the
15 company that manufactures EZ Pass is a client
16 of my former firm. I know that many of these
17 cashless toll companies can charge anywhere
18 from 30 to 40 percent of the actual toll. The
19 Atlantic Beach bridge toll I believe has not
20 increased for about 15 years. To their credit
21 they have been able to manage the bridge
22 extremely effectively. I watched the entire
23 rehabilitation of the bridge.

24 While I think that as we enter an
25 age of cashless society, people reaching for

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2 \$2 and not having it and trying to back out of
3 the tolls is always an issue. But I think
4 there are potential solutions with card
5 readers for debit and credit which would have
6 a fee of six cents as opposed to say 40
7 percent of the toll over the bridge.

8 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Understood.
9 So are you contemplating implementing such a
10 system?

11 MR. PASQUA: I haven't met with
12 the board, the authority yet, but I would like
13 to discuss this as a possible change that we
14 would implement. Among other improvements.
15 Overall I think the bridge is well managed.
16 But, like anything, there are things that can
17 always have a fresh set of eyes applied to it.

18 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Last
19 question. Will the use of EZ Pass provide
20 more transparency? I mean, with all that cash
21 coming into the bridge, I mean, if you could
22 please talk about the checks and balances that
23 we have with that accounting system please.

24 MR. PASQUA: Absolutely. So, the
25 way that -- and I know this through my own

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2 experience -- the bridge, first of all,
3 there's cameras all over the toll booths of
4 the bridge and they record every transaction
5 that goes over the bridge. The way I know
6 that is that I ended up having a sticker that
7 was taken off the car and I temporarily held
8 it until I got my new sticker and my account
9 was flagged because they were literally
10 tracking every transaction. So they are very
11 effective at least from my lay person kind of
12 observation.

13 Obviously cash is still something
14 that's not as easily tracked as any electronic
15 payment. But I think overall they do a good
16 job in terms of managing the cash that comes
17 into the bridge. So, we still need to offer
18 the ability to pay with cash. But I think
19 other options other than EZ Pass would
20 probably be beneficial to the county.

21 MR. NAHMIAS: If I could just add
22 to what Vincent just said. We actually just
23 got to know each other today. We both are
24 like minded thinkers. Our intention is to go
25 inside and make things better. Obviously with

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2 transparency. We're not necessarily looking
3 to reinvent the wheel but we want to learn as
4 to what's been going on look with a fresh set
5 of eyes and how we can basically improve it
6 and make it better for the residents that use
7 it. So, thank you.

8 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
9 Kopel.

10 LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Thank you
11 presiding officer. I too would like to speak
12 to the question of how the tolls are
13 collected. One of the issues right now that I
14 perceive is that when you go across the
15 bridge, let's say towards December here, and
16 the current system, the card is running out.
17 You got to get a new card and you got to get a
18 new card I think it's for ten, I don't recall
19 exactly, ten trips. That's not right because
20 the card expires January 1 and many residents
21 of the area, surrounding areas, might need to
22 take one or two trips then. It's almost a
23 theft of money. I really look forward to
24 seeing how you can resolve it. I think that
25 the electronic collection system of one sort

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2 or another is important. I'd like to know how
3 you're going to implement that. I mean, EZ
4 Pass of course is -- I understand you don't
5 want to give away 40 percent but on the other
6 hand we've got to do something about the
7 current collection system.

8 I'd be very happy to meet with both
9 of you. I wonder if you would do me the favor
10 of just contacting my office and set up an
11 appointment. But I do look forward to working
12 with you. Thanks.

13 MR. NAHMIAS: Thank you. We look
14 forward to working with you and meeting with
15 you as well.

16 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you
17 both. Anyone have anything else? Legislator
18 DeRiggi-Whitton.

19 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: I'm
20 not sure if you handle any type of personnel
21 issues or if it's just financial. But we have
22 bridges on the north shore also and I speak
23 occasionally to the bridge operators with the
24 drawbridge in Bayville and they have brought
25 up the problem of staffing as a major concern

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2 saying that they're unable to get days off.
3 They're mandated to have that bridge
4 operational by the board of transportation and
5 everything else. So just if you could
6 remember there's a few bridges up north also
7 and if you could just look at the staffing all
8 around. I know that's a major issue.

9 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Anyone
10 else? All in favor signify by saying aye.
11 Those opposed? Carries unanimously.

12 Next two are items 36 and 37.
13 Resolutions 26 and 27. These are resolutions
14 to appoint Robert Gizzi and Mark Plumer to the
15 South Nassau Water Authority.

16 Motion by Legislator Rhoads.
17 Seconded by Legislator McKeivitt.

18 MR. GIZZI: Good afternoon.
19 Thank you for this opportunity. My name is
20 Robert Gizzi. I grew up my entire life in
21 Nassau County. I grew up in North Bellmore.
22 Currently a resident in Wantagh for the past
23 34 years. I'm a vice president of engineering
24 services at Lockwood Kessler and Barlett
25 located in Syosset. My background is I'm an

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2 engineer. I do bridge design, roadway, all
3 types of infrastructure. And I thank you
4 again for giving me this opportunity to give
5 back to the community.

6 MR. PLUMER: Good afternoon. My
7 name is Mark Plumer. I am a lifetime resident
8 of Nassau County too. I live in Hewlett
9 Harbor at the present time. I'd like to thank
10 the legislature and County Executive Blakeman
11 for this appointment to the South Nassau Water
12 Authority. It is an honor and a privilege and
13 I will work very hard for the residents in
14 Nassau County.

15 Briefly, my background is
16 business. I run a large legal support service
17 called United Lawyer Service, which has
18 offices in lower Manhattan and at 170 Old
19 Country Road in Mineola. My clients are all
20 law firms throughout the country, throughout
21 New York State. I've also been a board member
22 and vice president of the Five Towns Community
23 Chest, which is a charitable organization
24 affiliated with the United Way. And I was
25 also on the We Care advisory board for the

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2 Nassau Bar Association. I look forward to
3 serving my community. Thank you.

4 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Any
5 legislators? Sure.

6 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Obviously
7 this has been a very heightened issue. I'm
8 sure you're aware that there were several
9 residents that have come to the legislature
10 several times in the last couple of weeks
11 asking for the legislature to act on these
12 appointments. I'm sure you've seen how the
13 New York American Water and how that
14 participated in the communities.

15 I mean, I can tell you as a
16 legislator that covers the areas that were
17 covered by New York American Water many of the
18 concerns in terms of cost and service fees was
19 very, very high level in the communities. I
20 just want to hear your ideas. Obviously
21 you're joining a much larger board. But I
22 just want to hear your ideas in regard to some
23 of the concerns that are certainly around
24 rates as well as services.

25 Where I am in Roosevelt there is, I

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2 represent Roosevelt, there was a new pump
3 station that was put in. I'm not too sure if
4 you're aware of it. It costs millions and
5 millions of dollars. Residents are still
6 trying to figure out in terms of how that's
7 going to be paid for. Obviously it's being
8 paid for by them. I just want to hear your
9 thoughts. It's a very, very important
10 appointment. All the appointments today by
11 the way are very important but this one
12 obviously has a very connected -- has a very
13 tight connection to people's pockets and
14 ratepayers.

15 MR. PLUMER: Our thoughts is to
16 try to get the rates down. The legislature,
17 New York State legislature made this authority
18 and they really haven't budgeted us yet.
19 We've read over the information and we're
20 going to do the best we can for the residents
21 of Nassau County to get these outrageous bills
22 down.

23 People that I speak to in my
24 experience, I live in Hewlett, my mother lives
25 in Valley Stream, they're outraged by their

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2 water bills. My mother is 89 years old and
3 she gets these crazy water bills. She's on a
4 Social Security fixed income. The main goal I
5 guess of this whole thing is to try to reduce
6 the bills. That's what we'll try to do. But
7 why we're pretty new and we haven't really
8 gotten started yet.

9 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: I
10 understand that with the creation of the
11 board. Obviously I'm not going to put you on
12 the spot and ask you to vote against all rate
13 increases without even having an opportunity
14 to sit at a board meeting. I just wanted to
15 make sure you're cognizant of some of the
16 concerns that we all have probably heard from
17 all of our residents across the south Nassau
18 area.

19 So, from that standpoint it seems
20 to be very tied to rates. It seems to be very
21 tied to transparency. And I just hope you
22 bring in that breath of fresh air that
23 basically will try to relieve people of the
24 high rates but at the same time add a level of
25 transparency. Thank you again.

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2 MR. GIZZI: Like I said, I was
3 from North Bellmore now I'm in Wantagh so I
4 know the difference in the rates and stuff.
5 This is something new to us. So the first
6 thing we'd like to do is meet with the board,
7 collect information and then be able to
8 present it to you all, which is the best ideas
9 and philosophies to look at to go forward.

10 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Can I ask
11 you to please come back to us and let us know
12 what the board thinks.

13 MR. GIZZI: We sure will.

14 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: I
15 appreciate that. Thank you.

16 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Anyone
17 else like to add anything or ask any
18 questions? We're good.

19 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: First off, I
20 just want to thank both of you for agreeing to
21 take on this challenge. It is quite a
22 challenge. My summertime water bill, my wife
23 and I we do have a sprinkler system. We
24 operate it every other day like we're supposed
25 to. My summertime water bills in Bellmore are

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2 250, \$275 a month for water. I'm living the
3 outrage that we hear from so many New York
4 American now Liberty Water customers and
5 ratepayers. It's a big undertaking.

6 I know the challenges that you're
7 going to face. Particularly since while the
8 state created this authority they didn't
9 provide, unlike what they did with the North
10 Shore Water Authority that they created where
11 they provided a million dollars in funding to
12 actually help that authority get started, the
13 state in its infinite wisdom dropped the ball
14 and declined to provide you with any funding
15 to be able to operate.

16 That's something that over the next
17 couple of weeks I am certain that we are going
18 to be, particularly as the state is going
19 through its budget process, that is something
20 that I hope both sides of the aisle are going
21 to be turning up the heat on our state
22 legislators to have them step up to the plate
23 to provide you the funding.

24 Because right now, to be perfectly
25 honest, you've been set up to fail. Because

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2 right now you have no mechanism to be able to
3 actually do what you're supposed to do. It's
4 a big job. You're going to need to get
5 engineers. You're going to need to get
6 attorneys. You're going to have to interact
7 with Liberty to try and reach some sort of
8 negotiated settlement if there is in fact
9 going to be a takeover.

10 You got to investigate what the
11 impact is going to be on taxes, on property
12 taxes. Because obviously if there is a public
13 takeover those facilities will no longer be
14 paying local taxes and what's the impact going
15 to be on residents. Even though the water
16 rates may come down their property taxes may
17 go up.

18 You're going to have to evaluate
19 obviously what the condition is of the system
20 that we would theoretically be taking over.
21 And ultimately you're going to wind up having
22 to present to the public for a public
23 referendum all of these possible alternatives
24 so that the public has the opportunity to make
25 a decisions and Liberty ratepayers have the

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2 opportunity to make a decision as to what fits
3 best for them.

4 It's a huge undertaking and I want
5 to thank both of you for stepping up to the
6 plate. I would just encourage the state to
7 step up to the plate as well and actually
8 provide you with the ability to get the
9 resources that you need to be able to do the
10 job. But in anticipation of the vote, thank
11 you so much for being willing to help us out
12 here. We appreciate it.

13 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you
14 very much. All in favor of the two
15 appointments signify by saying aye. Those
16 opposed? Those appointments carry
17 unanimously.

18 We are going on to the next
19 appointment which is 22, Resolution 12, is a
20 resolution to confirm the Nassau County
21 executive's appointment of the Honorable
22 Thomas Adams to the position of county
23 attorney.

24 Moved by Legislator Gaylor.
25 Seconded by Legislator Ferretti.

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2 MR. ADAMS: Good evening. Thank
3 you very much. I'm Thomas Adams. A retired
4 supreme court justice. Grew up in this
5 county. Hempstead. Uniondale High School.
6 Elizabethtown College. New England School of
7 Law. My first job was the Nassau DA's
8 office. I was there for seven years. I
9 became law secretary to Judge Marvin Goodman
10 another seven years. I was elected to the
11 district court in 1987. The supreme court in
12 1992. I was appointed by Governor Pataki to
13 the appellate division second department in
14 2001. I was appointed by Governor Pataki
15 again to the New York State Court of Claims.
16 I was reelected in 2011. Probably ran with
17 most of you up here somewhere along the line.
18 Especially your father.

19 In 2013 the chief justice appointed
20 me the administrative judge of Nassau County.
21 And then when I hit 70 they made me the chief
22 judge of the appellate term for the Ninth and
23 Tenth District. My whole career has been here
24 in Nassau.

25 The county attorney has asked me

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2 to -- the county executive has asked me to
3 become the county attorney. It's an honor and
4 it's a challenge. Ready to do it with your
5 blessing.

6 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you
7 Judge. Any questions or comments?

8 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: How are you
9 Judge?

10 MR. ADAMS: Yes.

11 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Good to see
12 you again. I just have a quick question. I
13 remember some time ago, four years ago, when
14 one of your predecessors, Mr. Jared Kasschau,
15 he went through a very rigorous debate back
16 and forth which is absent today. Which I
17 can't figure out why. But he went through a
18 very rigorous back and forth debate in regards
19 to at the time when he was taking the helm how
20 he was going to determine staffing changes and
21 how he was going to determine who was going to
22 stay versus who was going to go. Can you shed
23 some light a little bit on that in terms of
24 how you plan to keep certain attorney
25 personnel versus how many do you plan to

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2 dismiss and so on and so forth?

3 MR. ADAMS: I have a staff of
4 about 57. I intend to keep all these people.
5 I had one lady resign, Joanne Curran. She's
6 going to become law secretary to one of our
7 family court judges. Look, these people have
8 institutional knowledge that you can't
9 replace. Sooner or later they're going to
10 leave for greener pastures. This lady I spoke
11 to here and told her that she had the
12 opportunity of a lifetime to become a law
13 secretary to a judge. Because the salary,
14 number one, is lot more and we have to address
15 that sometime during the year. But I plan to
16 keep the people that are there because of
17 their knowledge.

18 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Has anyone
19 Judge left since the end of the previous
20 administration?

21 MR. ADAMS: Some people have
22 left, yes. I didn't have anything to do with
23 that because I wasn't appointed until January
24 1st. I was there January 1st and the people
25 that are there are there.

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2 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: No one that
3 was here from the previous administration has
4 been dismissed since you've been here in
5 January?

6 MR. ADAMS: Not by me. Anybody
7 want a job? There's some lawyers up here. I
8 need lawyers. I ask for resumes all the time.

9 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: I've already
10 been there.

11 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Thank you
12 Judge.

13 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
14 DeRiggi-Whitton.

15 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: How
16 are you.

17 MR. ADAMS: Tell your father I
18 said hello.

19 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: I'm
20 trying to get him back but he enjoys
21 retirement.

22 MR. ADAMS: Her family and my
23 family go back over 100 years.

24 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON:
25 That's absolutely probably true because my

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2 grandfather had the law practice in
3 Hempstead. Just piggybacking on what Minority
4 Leader Abrahams was saying. I don't know if
5 it's true or not but we were told that
6 everyone had to resign.

7 MR. ADAMS: That's standard
8 procedure what they do. I didn't do that.

9 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: But
10 there were a number of them that resigned and
11 were not asked back. And I know a couple in
12 family court especially I know since I was
13 young. I don't know, would you reconsider if
14 they want to reapply?

15 MR. ADAMS: Sure.

16 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: I
17 will convey that message.

18 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Thank you
19 presiding officer. Hello Judge. How are
20 you? One of my pet peeves has always been
21 with the county attorney's office, in any
22 administration, has been the willingness to
23 outsource and go to outside counsel for a lot
24 of cases that I always feel that with good
25 quality attorneys you can handle in-house.

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2 When we have to pass on some settlements that
3 have come our way they always include large
4 legal fees to some of these outside firms.

5 I'd like to know your position and
6 your willingness to refer cases to outside
7 counsel. Where do you draw the line? Are you
8 going to employ committees or groups of people
9 in your office to evaluate whether a case is
10 worthy of being handled in-house or going to
11 outside counsel? I'm a firm believer that you
12 do have qualified, talented people that you
13 should try to hold on to and that they're more
14 than capable of handling some of these cases
15 no matter how complex they are.

16 MR. ADAMS: I agree with you.
17 I've been in this profession now 48 years and
18 I know most of the lawyers around. And I have
19 a very talented group of people across the
20 street. One of the problem is, when I started
21 out the county attorney's office was about
22 twice the size it is now and the legs were cut
23 off about 1991 when they ran into the budget
24 crisis back then and it's never recovered
25 through several administrations.

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2 We need to try to attract more
3 quality attorneys in the office. It's very
4 difficult to do so with the salaries being
5 what they are. Look, I understand it's
6 government and not private practice. But I
7 would like to bring a lot of things back
8 in-house. I think we have the people to do
9 it. Sometimes you just can't. And I think I
10 have the expertise and knowledge to know when
11 we can and when we can't do that. Sometimes
12 it's impossible.

13 But I would like to see an increase
14 in the number of qualified attorneys come in.
15 I would have liked to have hired Judge
16 Delligatti who was just before you and several
17 other people to do that. That's one of my
18 goals is to try to bring more things
19 in-house.

20 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Thank you
21 for that. I hope it proves true. If there's
22 anything we can do on a bipartisan level here
23 to increase the salaries of your county
24 attorneys I think we would all entertain
25 that.

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2 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank
3 you. Judge, I just want to thank you for your
4 willingness to serve in this position. Your
5 incredible length of service, your incredible
6 background and I think your experience and
7 knowledge and just general savvy will benefit
8 this county tremendously.

9 MR. ADAMS: Thank you.

10 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Anyone
11 else? All in favor signify by saying aye.
12 Those opposed? Passes unanimously.
13 Congratulations.

14 Item 23, Resolution 13, a
15 resolution to confirm the county executive's
16 appointment of Ladonna Taylor to the position
17 of executive director of the Nassau County
18 Youth Board.

19 Moved by Legislator Walker.

20 Seconded by Legislator Giuffre.

21 MS. TAYLOR: Good afternoon to
22 the legislative board. Thanks for having me.
23 I'm Ladonna Taylor. A lifelong Nassau
24 resident. November of this year will be 27
25 years that I have been employed by the

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2 county. I've been in the Department of Social
3 Services, Child Protection Services, for the
4 past 21 years. Prior to Child Protection
5 Services I worked in social services as a
6 welfare examiner. For the past 21 years I
7 have been an investigator in child protection
8 services working in specialized units. Sex
9 abuse, serious physical abuse and the FAR
10 unit.

11 In those units we worked closely
12 and intensely with THE special victims unit in
13 Bethpage. And I've also worked very closely
14 with community services, community liaisons
15 and I'm looking forward, I'm honored actually,
16 to this position as executive director of the
17 Nassau County Youth Board.

18 Since stepping in in January I have
19 implemented a few programs. There was no time
20 to waste. There were funds that were allotted
21 by the state. With those state funds they are
22 expiring in March, so I had to jump right in
23 and implement some programs.

24 One of the programs that I
25 implemented was an OSHA 30 program. I worked

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2 with ABBA in Hempstead. Those funds were to
3 be for gang and gun prevention. So, with ABBA
4 we did an OSHA 30 class that started on
5 Monday. It finished on Friday. And 28 young
6 men and some women were able to get their OSHA
7 30 cards and will be offered construction
8 positions. Thank you.

9 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank
10 you. Let me just say that we were very
11 pleased to hear from Mr. Boyle board from the
12 youth services agency that you've already been
13 working with his group in advocating for
14 increased funding from the state. I would
15 offer our support in every way possible for
16 your efforts. Whatever you need from the
17 legislature in your advocacy efforts to obtain
18 that funding please let us know.

19 MS. TAYLOR: Thank you. I look
20 forward to working with the 46 agencies and
21 Mr. Boyle's program is one of them. I've been
22 on the phone with the state back and forth
23 pushing for more funding.

24 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank
25 you.

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2 MS. TAYLOR: Thank you guys.

3 Have a great day.

4 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Any
5 questions or comments? Legislator Walker.

6 LEGISLATOR WALKER: Ms. Taylor, I
7 look forward to us working with you. Long
8 before I was a legislator I've been very, very
9 involved with many youth activities in my
10 community and throughout my district. Still
11 very involved with our sports groups and our
12 different school groups and work with the
13 scouts and worked with so many.

14 But our youth are our future and
15 everything that we can possibly do to help
16 them, benefit them and to do that it takes
17 money. And as we heard before, and I work
18 with the Hicksville Boys and Girls Club and
19 many of the other groups that work with our
20 youth in our district, but we need to get more
21 and do more for our children.

22 I think especially after this whole
23 COVID pandemic many have been shutting doors
24 and not doing other activities. More so than
25 ever we need to help them as much as

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2 possible. We need to help our youth groups as
3 much as possible. I look forward to all of us
4 working together with you.

5 MS. TAYLOR: Thank you.

6 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Anyone
7 else? Thank you again. All in favor of the
8 appointment signify by saying aye. Those
9 opposed? Carries unanimously.

10 MS. TAYLOR: Thank you. It's an
11 honor.

12 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you.

13 Item 24, Resolution 14 is a
14 resolution to confirm the county executive's
15 appointment of David Chiang to the position of
16 county treasurer.

17 Moved by Legislator Pilip.

18 Seconded by Legislator Schaefer.

19 MR. CHIANG: I'm honored to be
20 here and thank you to Mr. Blakeman for
21 selecting me. The first Chinese-American to
22 be appointed treasurer of Nassau County. It's
23 really a pleasure.

24 I came to America with very humble
25 beginnings. My family emigrated here in

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2 1979. I was the youngest of six kids. Had
3 four older sisters. That's why I knew how to
4 deal with women from an early age.

5 Anyway, we emigrated to the United
6 States and we didn't have anything. We
7 started from nothing. When I was ten years
8 old I used to take the train from Brooklyn to
9 Chinatown to work in the factories when I was
10 very young. I learned very young to work hard
11 and to save my money.

12 When I was in high school I was
13 already basically saving a lot of money and
14 would help with my father's first house when
15 we purchased. When I was in college, I went
16 to NYU, studied business. I worked three jobs
17 to put myself through the school. My parents
18 didn't have the money to pay for that school.

19 Then when I graduated I worked on
20 Wall Street. You all have my resume. I
21 worked on Wall Street for 20 years. I left
22 Wall Street because my family needed me.

23 My son was born premature. He
24 spent seven weeks in incubator. My mom had
25 Parkinsons and Alzheimers. So I decided to

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2 leave Wall Street to focus on my family. As I
3 was focusing on my family, I also got involved
4 in the local community. I've been a resident
5 of Manhasset for nine years. I've been
6 involved with all the community groups. I've
7 been involved with the schools.

8 So, it's really an honor to serve
9 the county. This is basically the next
10 chapter in my career. You can see from my
11 resume that I have lots of experience. I was
12 a research analyst. I basically told hedge
13 funds and mutual funds what stocks to buy and
14 what stocks to sell. I was also an investment
15 banker basically taking companies that were
16 private to public. So I know how to
17 negotiate. So, all the banks that work with
18 the treasurer's office better be careful
19 because I'm going to be a tough negotiator.

20 My parents, we started with nothing
21 and we've been very successful. So I'm living
22 the American dream and I hope that working for
23 the county I will be able to help give back to
24 the community.

25 So I thank you for this opportunity

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2 and thank you Mr. Blakeman for appointing me
3 to treasurer's office.

4 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you
5 David and thank you for your willingness to
6 serve also. The county will benefit
7 tremendously from that.

8 Any comments or questions? We're
9 good. Thank you again David. All in favor of
10 the appointment signify by saying aye. Those
11 opposed? Carries unanimously.

12 Item 25, Resolution 15, a
13 resolution to confirm the county executive's
14 appointment of Arooj Islam to the position of
15 executive director of the Office of
16 Asian-American Affairs.

17 Moved by Legislator Rhoads.

18 Seconded by Legislator Ford.

19 MS. ISLAM: Good afternoon.
20 Thank you Presiding Officer Rich Nicolello,
21 Minority Leader Kevan Abrahams and to the
22 entire legislature for allowing me to come her
23 and speak and get to know me a little better.
24 I'm grateful that County Executive Bruce
25 Blakeman has selected me for this position,

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2 and I hope you all confirm my appointment as I
3 look forward to working with many of you to
4 engage with and enhance the quality of life
5 for our constituents.

6 I'm a Valley Stream resident. A
7 mother to a beautiful four-year old boy and
8 soon to be graduate of industrial
9 organizational psychology masters program from
10 Brooklyn College.

11 I have worked as an educator and a
12 human resources professional focusing on areas
13 of personal, professional development,
14 diversity and inclusion. I have worked with
15 people from all walks of life and many of the
16 interfaith and humanitarian initiatives
17 nationwide and abroad.

18 At this time, however, I wish to
19 cater to the needs and concerns of my local
20 community. And I'm honored to serve my
21 diverse Nassau County and use this platform to
22 amplify the voices of our growing Asian
23 population that has contributed so much in
24 enriching our society.

25 My first step has been to meet with

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2 the heads of different offices to form a
3 strategic plan. And I expect to collaborate
4 with the other outreach offices and many of
5 the long-standing Asian community
6 organizations to disseminate information
7 effectively.

8 I'm passionate about serving the 12
9 percent and increasing population of the Asian
10 population. Made up of teachers, nurses,
11 small business owners, police officers,
12 maintenance workers and so much more who make
13 up the fabric of Nassau County. And I hope
14 you can support the county executive's
15 decision in appointing me as the executive
16 director for the Office of Asian-American
17 Affairs. Thank you so much.

18 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you
19 Arooj. Any questions? The office was created
20 by the legislature and we're very proud of the
21 office and look forward to you. It's done a
22 lot of great things and we think you'll lift
23 it up to even greater heights.

24 MS. ISLAM: Thank you so much.

25 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Any debate

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2 or discussion? Hearing none, all in favor
3 signify by saying aye. Those opposed?
4 Carries unanimously.

5 Number 26, Resolution 16, a
6 resolution to confirm the county executive's
7 appointment of Darcy Belyea to the position of
8 commissioner of the Department of Parks,
9 Recreation and Museums.

10 That's moved by Legislator
11 Kennedy. Seconded Legislator Ferretti.

12 MS. BELYEA: Good afternoon
13 everyone. My pleasure to be here with all of
14 you today. I'm Darcy Macral Belyea. I'm a
15 lifelong resident of Nassau County. Third
16 generation resident of Nassau County. My
17 family has owned a business in Nassau County
18 for over 70 years. Now in it's third
19 generation as well. I've resided in Glen Cove
20 for most of my life with our Legislator
21 DeRiggi-Whitton and I lived away for just a
22 short period of time.

23 I attended Glen Cove High School.
24 University of Hartford. Business management
25 major with a BS degree. I have had a love and

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2 passion for sports my entire life. Went on to
3 receive a masters degree at Springfield
4 College in sports management, and I began my
5 career in the private sector working for
6 Madison Square Garden and then for a company
7 called Main Events doing sports promotion.

8 Wanted to start a family. Took a
9 civil service exam and began a 25-year tenure
10 as parks and recreation director with the city
11 of Glen Cove. Unfortunately, my title was
12 abolished at the end of 2020 for the 2021
13 budget. It is not on my resume. I apologize
14 for that. I did work last year for four
15 months as a teaching assistant in one of our
16 elementary schools in Glen Cove. A first
17 grade class.

18 And I'm very pleased to have been
19 offered this position. I'm in my fifth week
20 and I'm loving every minute of it. And I hope
21 to really work together with all of you to
22 make our parks and facilities as robust as
23 they can. This is one of the largest park
24 systems in the country and I'm pleased to be
25 at the helm. I hope that you will all work

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2 together with me and affirm my appointment.

3 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank
4 you. Anyone have any comments or questions?
5 Legislator DeRiggi-Whitton.

6 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: Hi
7 Darcy. I just have to put on the record that
8 the two of us have some things in common. Not
9 only in our family and friends but probably I
10 would say over 50 years. But Darcy was the
11 first all-county person in Glen Cove, female
12 in Glen Cove, and I followed in her footsteps
13 as the second. I remember seeing your picture
14 on the wall and I thought wow, that's
15 amazing. I never thought I ever be able to.
16 We've always had that tie-in together. And
17 I've always enjoyed your friendship and I know
18 that the kids have always really been drawn
19 and attracted to you and you've made a lot of
20 differences in many kids' lives.

21 There are many parks, as you know,
22 in the county. There's so many things going
23 on and I hope that with fresh eyes we can --
24 there's a number of things. I have a lot in
25 my district as well that I'd love to talk to

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2 you about and I look forward to working with
3 you. Good luck.

4 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
5 Schaefer then Legislator Mule.

6 LEGISLATOR SCHAEFER: Good
7 afternoon. How are you? So, I just really
8 kind a comment. Very nice to meet you and to
9 get to know a little bit more about you. I'm
10 just looking forward to an open dialogue about
11 parks. Particularly in my district and
12 Legislator Walker's district we have Cantiague
13 Park. I know that we've got quite a few
14 complaints over the last couple of years of
15 deterioration, benches just falling apart.
16 Things like that. Which I hadn't experienced
17 before. I've been here a little over eight
18 years. So we're just really looking forward
19 to making sure that the parks get back up to
20 the level that they were before. Because
21 they're really well utilized by our residents
22 and we want to just keep it that way. Thank
23 you.

24 LEGISLATOR MULE: Good
25 afternoon. Hi. Congratulations. I'm sure

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2 all the legislators have worked very, very
3 closely with the parks department because that
4 is something that is very, very important to
5 our constituents. Honestly, I can say my four
6 years as a legislator that parks was probably
7 the thing I heard most about. So, I worked
8 directly with the previous commissioner very,
9 very closely.

10 Will we have -- I can call you,
11 have direct access with you and your team and
12 be able to do?

13 MS. BALYEA: Absolutely. I'm
14 surprised I haven't heard from you already.

15 LEGISLATOR MULE: I haven't
16 gotten any complaints in the last month. So
17 that's great. You will though.

18 MS. BELYEA: Open door policy. I
19 try to be as receptive as I can. Either
20 immediately or within 24 hours. So please
21 reach out.

22 LEGISLATOR MULE: Thank you so
23 much.

24 LEGISLATOR WALKER: Hello Darcy.
25 I look forward to working with you too. My

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2 late husband was over in the parks department
3 here in the county for a very, very long time
4 and then over in the Town of Oyster Bay before
5 he became commissioner of general services
6 over there and then sadly passed away almost
7 23 years ago. Very, very young.

8 But parks and recreation and sports
9 are a tremendous part of my life. I still do
10 sports with our school district. The official
11 clock and book for basketball and lacrosse and
12 many other sports.

13 Our parks are really so important
14 to us. Like Legislator Schaefer said, we
15 hadn't gotten complaints. Our parks were
16 pretty pristine. They've been brought back to
17 our community and over the last number of
18 years when I have residents calling and saying
19 if I bring hammers and nails and wood myself
20 can I fix the benches?

21 And when I would reach out and I
22 was told well, you know, we really don't have
23 the manpower. And it's sad. It's sad to
24 think that something that's so important to so
25 many of us and just to be able to enjoy it.

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2 To go down to our parks and enjoy summer
3 nights there. Activities there. Watch
4 softball games. Go to the pools or whatever
5 are just so important to everybody.

6 I certainly look forward to working
7 forward with you. Many of the events that the
8 parks department has are tremendous events for
9 all of our residents from our very young to
10 our seniors and veterans and things that we do
11 in our parks it's great. You sound very
12 excited about your position and I really look
13 forward to working with you as much as I
14 possibly can to make sure they become even
15 bigger and better.

16 MS. BALYEA: I will sign you up
17 to be a volunteer as needed. If I could just
18 add to your comment. One thing I'm hearing
19 from the existing staff is that our staffing
20 numbers are really low. So one of the things
21 I've been trying to do over the first five
22 weeks is to recruit at least seasonal
23 employees. I would like to build up our
24 workforce again. I know that we rely heavily
25 on public works. I know that their workforce

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2 also could use more help. That's one of the
3 things I'm going to focus on so that we can
4 get to those benches and problem areas in a
5 quicker time.

6 LEGISLATOR WALKER: You are
7 absolutely right because that's the thing we
8 kept hearing about. Well, we really don't
9 have the staff. Or about the mini golf in
10 Cantiague and they said well, we asked
11 somebody -- and I said who's in charge of
12 that? Well.

13 Like I said, we have something in
14 it it should be wonderful and our residents
15 can utilize it. I said we shouldn't charge \$7
16 for people to play there. We should be paying
17 them \$7 to even want to go there because it
18 was atrocious. We have work to do things to
19 get it better.

20 You're right, you can't do it
21 without the staff that you need. We have a
22 lot of seasonal employees that are begging to
23 get back to work but they can only work a
24 certain amount of time and then they were told
25 they were off for these many months or

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2 whatever.

3 I'm sure you'll have a lot of young
4 people reaching out to you for those seasonal
5 jobs and willing to work hard and make our
6 parks enjoyable for everyone.

7 MS. BALYEA: I welcome all of
8 you. If you have anybody in your districts
9 that you think could use seasonal employment
10 please have them reach out.

11 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
12 Giuffre.

13 LEGISLATOR GIUFFRE: Good
14 afternoon. Part of my district is in West
15 Hempstead. Many of the residents use a
16 passive park there, Halls Pond. I believe it
17 comes under your jurisdiction. I would just
18 ask that the passive parks not be neglected.

19 MS. BALYEA: Absolutely not. The
20 portfolio is over 70 parks passive and active
21 and it's my goal to get to each one of them in
22 the first six months. I've been hammering
23 away slowly in the first five weeks. I have
24 what's called a home maintenance OCD. So I
25 think that you will all see a fresh look at

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2 all the parks with even the smallest being
3 taken care of. We won't forget. Don't
4 worry. Again, if you see something going on
5 please feel free to reach out.

6 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
7 Ford, Solages and then Gaylor.

8 LEGISLATOR FORD: Welcome and
9 thank you very much for wanting to do this.
10 I'm afraid we're going to scare you away with
11 all of us and our comments. But yes, you do
12 have partners with all of us. As you can
13 tell, we're all passionate about the parks.
14 It's so important to our constituents. So
15 many people go there. Whether or not it's
16 there with their children, seniors walking,
17 people with their dogs. So you know we will
18 be reaching out to you in regard to some of
19 the dog parks. And also, yes, to try to get
20 the parks back up to the condition that they
21 used to be in. And also with public safety
22 and I hope that we can all work together.

23 I represent an area that has
24 Nickerson Beach as well as Bay Park over in
25 East Rockaway. And I have a few other little

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2 pocket parks all around. I look forward to
3 working with you because I really think that
4 you can achieve a lot and I thank you very
5 much. Despite all of what we're throwing at
6 you now that you still want to do this and I
7 wish you a lot of luck.

8 MS. BALYEA: I've been in public
9 service for 25 years. This is just major
10 leagues.

11 LEGISLATOR FORD: After working
12 with first graders you definitely will be able
13 to know what children would like to have in
14 the parks. But thank you very much.

15 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
16 Solages.

17 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Thank you
18 very much. Good afternoon. Look forward to
19 supporting you. I represent the Third
20 District which consists of Inwood and other
21 communities and we have the Inwood county park
22 and Western Park. It's a very beautiful park.

23 MS. BALYEA: Very populated
24 though. A lot of people use that park.

25 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: There's

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2 actually a view of the Verranzano Bridge.
3 Unfortunately, at many times there isn't
4 sufficient staff to check the identification
5 of individuals using the park. As a result,
6 many people who don't live in Nassau County
7 are using the park and unfortunately is an
8 opportunity of lost revenue. We could have
9 gained revenue from these individuals using
10 our parks.

11 So, I'm asking specifically for
12 that park there's an opportunity that I have
13 been working on with the police department to
14 build a booth in the front. And also in the
15 other county park in my district in North
16 Woodmere that booth is not manned or womaned
17 and as a result people use the park without
18 checking identification.

19 And lastly, on the last day of
20 Black History Month, I would like to mention
21 that the largest number of county employees
22 who happen to be African-American or of
23 African descent are in the parks department.
24 I have an issue with that in terms of
25 perception and in terms of the history of our

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2 nation. So, I'm asking if you could please
3 have a conversation with the county
4 executive. And this probably has existed in
5 other administrations. But I'm asking that
6 you please speak to County Executive Bruce
7 Blakeman and discuss if there are other
8 opportunities to diversify county employees in
9 other departments besides the parks department
10 in light of just perception. I would
11 appreciate that. Thank you very much.

12 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
13 Gaylor and then Legislator Drucker.

14 LEGISLATOR GAYLOR: Thank you
15 presiding officer. Congratulation on your
16 appointment. You mentioned small things need
17 to be taken care of. I remember one of the
18 last time we appointed someone in charge of
19 the parks department the topic of discussion
20 was the museums and the tremendous amount of
21 art and memorabilia that we have warehoused,
22 not on display, or the houses on the north
23 shore that the county owns, which are
24 beautiful, Gold Coast kind of homes and
25 facilities that are in a state of disrepair.

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2 So, just on your list of things to
3 do hopefully you will look at preserving the
4 art that's in storage. Maybe getting more of
5 it displayed and keeping our facilities in top
6 notch condition as you could. Thank you.

7 MS. BALYEA: If I could ask you
8 to please, if you have any knowledge on what
9 you are referring to, if you can shoot me an
10 email I'd appreciate that.

11 LEGISLATOR GAYLOR: Sure. I
12 absolutely will.

13 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
14 Drucker.

15 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Thank you
16 presiding officer. I really wasn't prepared
17 to speak but since everyone else is speaking I
18 might as well give my two cents. I'm glad I'm
19 going first now.

20 How are you? So, my district has
21 the Old Bethpage Village Restoration. Large,
22 fantastic facility. Every year we have the
23 Long Island Fair there. Attracts thousands
24 and thousands of people for a week. It's
25 great. But invariably my office gets a lot of

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2 complaints from the neighbors in surrounding
3 community about things that happened while
4 this fair is going on. Like you to make sure
5 you pay attention to that.

6 We also have that, what's that
7 thing called? The Jack O'Lantern thing that
8 they have.

9 MS. BELYEA: Blaze.

10 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: That's a
11 beautiful thing too and that goes on a couple
12 of weeks. And they're even filming the Gilded
13 Age now which is a show that my wife loves. I
14 haven't watched it yet. My wife loves it.
15 She says how can you not watch it? It's
16 filmed right in your backyard.

17 This facility, this park is
18 attracting major, major things as far as the
19 residents of Nassau County go. Not just
20 culturally but economically. So it's really
21 important for the Parks department to pay
22 attention to it and to be sensitive to the
23 needs of the community.

24 MS. BALYEA: Thank you. Will
25 do.

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2 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Anyone
3 else? Legislator Rhoads.

4 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: I'm going to
5 throw in my list as well then. First of all,
6 as Legislator Drucker I'm sure knows, I play
7 1864 rules baseball over at Old Bethpage
8 Village Restoration. I want to invite
9 Legislator Drucker to come down and join us in
10 a game one day.

11 My little laundry list item is
12 Wantagh Park and Cedar Creek. Wantagh Park we
13 have \$2 million that was budgeted I believe
14 out of Sandy money that was designated to do
15 several repairs. But also to overhaul the
16 marine playground in Wantagh park. That
17 project has been stalled, and I would love to
18 see that moving because it really is a
19 disaster back there. In addition to some
20 security issues about kids hanging out at
21 night. I'd like to see if we can also work
22 with the police department to perhaps put in
23 some cameras.

24 MS. BELYEA: This is Wantagh.

25 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: This is

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2 Wantagh park. There are several entrances to
3 that park directly from the neighborhoods. So
4 that becomes an issue.

5 Cedar Creek is probably one of our
6 most used parks but is in terrible condition.
7 So, I would love to work with you on a capital
8 plan on how we can actually improve that park.

9 MS. BALYEA: I'd appreciate that.

10 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
11 Bynoe.

12 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Thank you
13 presiding officer. Hi. How are you? I have
14 no parks in my district. Build me a park,
15 please. But in all fairness, a lot of the
16 kids utilize the Cantiague Park. So
17 everything that legislators Walker and
18 Schaefer mentioned I echo.

19 One of the things -- I was going to
20 talk to you offline but I saw you taking
21 notes. I figured I'd add to your list.

22 You were at the museum the other
23 day. We didn't get a chance to speak. The
24 African-American museum. The museums are in
25 my district and the African-American museum is

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2 one of many. But I know that they're having a
3 problem with a leaking roof there. And just,
4 probably, I don't know, maybe back in 2017 or
5 2018 we were able to get unanimously this body
6 passed \$500,000 for capital improvements for
7 that museum. One of the things they fixed was
8 the roof. And with a background in housing I
9 know sometimes you fix a roof because it was
10 leaking in one area but unfortunately it can
11 start leaking in another area.

12 Nonetheless, I'd ask that you look
13 into that. I did ask public works about it.
14 But if you could just look into that.

15 And then, unanimously again through
16 this body, we've been able to earmark \$250,000
17 for this capital year and into the outer years
18 as well. I'd love to start working towards
19 looking at the design, what we can do there.
20 The objective is to create a space where they
21 can actually curate exhibits so that they can
22 become a little more self-sufficient there at
23 the museum. If we could start working on that
24 and get it off the ground I think that would
25 be phenomenal.

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2 MS. BALYEA: Keep in touch with
3 me on that.

4 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Minority
5 Leader Abrahams.

6 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Thank you
7 presiding officer. I guess I'm going to be
8 quick with my three park projects. How are
9 you? Looking forward to working with you.

10 Real quick. One, I see the
11 commissioner here from DPW, Commissioner
12 Arnold. I have a very exciting project that's
13 going on with Centennial Park. I would love
14 to talk to you more about it. The
15 commissioner and his department did a great
16 with the design. We're really redoing the
17 park and I would love to hear your ideas and
18 continue to try to make it safe. It resides
19 on the corner of Nassau Road, Centennial and
20 Babylon Turnpike. But it's a very exciting
21 project. I don't know if you're familiar with
22 Centennial Park but I feel it has so much
23 potential and I think the commissioner did a
24 good job with the design with that.

25 Obviously making sure our park

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2 workers continue to have the support they
3 need. The resources they need. Reverend
4 Arthur Mackey park, which also resides in
5 Roosevelt, is a hidden gem. Many of you
6 probably see it as you're driving down the
7 Meadowbrook. There's a big pond that exists.
8 I would love to see it get utilized a little
9 bit more. Your ideas about that.

10 Then it's a very small park.
11 Probably the size of this well. Not big at
12 all. It's a passive park but it's a Martin
13 Luther King park. It sits on the corner of
14 Nassau Road and Uniondale Avenue. I've
15 noticed from not just -- from the time it was
16 created going back some years under the Suozzi
17 administration and then obviously several
18 administrations afterwards it gets overlooked
19 and neglected. The trash cans overflow. The
20 Town of Hempstead always says it's the
21 county's responsibility. The county says it's
22 their responsibility. But the park
23 continually has paper wrappers, McDonald's
24 wrappers all through out it.

25 I would just like to see a little

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2 bit more -- I know it's a small park and most
3 people probably don't think it's a park. It's
4 more of like a walk through to get from one
5 side of the block to the other. But I would
6 love to see some attention there. Maybe in
7 the springtime possible planting of shrubs and
8 bushes. As then obviously the cleanliness of
9 the park I would like to see as well.

10 But if you want, as you dedicate
11 staff towards this kind of stuff, my office
12 would be happy to meet with them or talk to
13 them about any of these issues as well. Thank
14 you.

15 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Anyone
16 else? You have that list? Thank you. Any
17 debate or discussion? All in favor signify by
18 saying aye. Those opposed? Carries
19 unanimously.

20 Item 28, Resolution 18 is a
21 resolution to confirm the county executive's
22 appointment of the Honorable Paul L. Meli to
23 the position of executive director of the
24 Nassau County Traffic and Parking Violations
25 Agency.

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2 Moved by Legislator Walker.

3 Seconded by Legislator Gaylor.

4 MR. MELI: Good afternoon
5 legislators. My name is Paul Meli. I am a
6 resident of Glen Cove. I have been for some
7 47 years where I live with my wife and have
8 raised four children. I'm particularly
9 honored to have been asked by the county
10 executive to accept the appointment of
11 executive director of Nassau County Traffic
12 and Parking Violations Agency. Known by many
13 as TPVA. Known by many more, especially at
14 the district court, as Cooper Street.

15 I'm particularly honored because,
16 as you may know, TPVA is an arm of the
17 district court where I served as a judge until
18 the end of 2020 when I was required to retire
19 by Article 6 of the state constitution given
20 my age. I presided while there over thousands
21 of cases. Many involving the vehicle and
22 traffic law, the transportation law, the tax
23 laws of the state. I oversaw three criminal
24 parts simultaneously that were combined under
25 my supervision. We took a combined caseload

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2 of thousands of cases. Reduced the inventory
3 by some 60 percent while I was there.

4 We virtually reduced cases that
5 were more than a year old. Some of them were
6 seven to ten years old when I got there. I
7 was always among the court leaders in
8 dispositions and trials.

9 Before I took the bench I was a
10 Nassau County deputy comptroller where I
11 oversaw the audit unit and counseled the
12 comptroller on a number of issues.

13 I was also the county attorney's
14 chief of litigation bureau where I oversaw a
15 legal and paralegal staff of approximately 50
16 people, who handled thousands of cases. I
17 also directed deputy county attorneys and
18 outside counsel in litigation on all types of
19 issues.

20 Prior to public service I was
21 involved as a trial attorney for some 30
22 years. At two of those firms I was the
23 managing attorney. Those were some of the
24 busiest and largest law firms in the New York
25 metropolitan area.

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2 This is a particularly challenging
3 time to take over TPVA or to become its
4 director. We have challenges and changes. We
5 have an unprecedented backlog in cases given
6 the pandemic. We have a backlog of about
7 50,000 dockets at the present time and many
8 more tickets. A docket represents many more
9 tickets.

10 We've had amendments to the vehicle
11 and traffic law that's lifted or required the
12 lifting of license suspensions. We've had
13 just last week the transfer of thousands of
14 transportation law cases from the district
15 court pursuant to the order of Judge Saint
16 George last October. And all such future
17 tickets, thousands of them, are going to be
18 written to our court going forward.

19 We have the upcoming introduction
20 of the School Stop Arm program and we have an
21 upcoming move to Axon Avenue in Garden City
22 that we're all looking forward to.

23 I would like to let you in on what
24 I've done since I've been there to deal with
25 these changes and to face these challenges.

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2 I'd be more than happy to talk any of you
3 either now or subsequently about what we've
4 done.

5 We've lifted restrictions on
6 entering the building. No more must you have
7 a ticket returnable that day or an appointment
8 to come into the building. We're open for
9 business. We resumed the scheduling of
10 conferences for the first time in two years.
11 We just sent out a notice of 2,000 conferences
12 on 4,000 tickets.

13 We're exploring our ability to
14 conduct virtual conferences. Something that I
15 did with great while in the district court.

16 We developed or developing a portal
17 by which defendants and their attorneys can
18 access discovery prior to trial. Much like
19 defense attorneys do at the district
20 attorney's office. So they can see all the
21 discovery online before they come to trial.

22 We've started an early assessment
23 of cases to make sure we dismiss those matters
24 that can't be successfully prosecuted enabling
25 us to focus on those that can.

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2 We're planning a return to night
3 sessions once we get to our new location.
4 Given improved parking and lighting. We've
5 established a system to publicize, calculate
6 light and offer and track payment plans as now
7 required by state law.

8 We've met with the staff over at
9 the district court to have as seamless a
10 transfer as we can of all those trucking cases
11 and we've been communicating with TPVA's
12 stakeholders by communicating with the bar
13 groups and the committees whose members come
14 to our building.

15 I'm excited about the prospect of
16 being the director of TPVA. We have a great
17 and dedicated staff there that I enjoy working
18 with immensely working with. And I'm
19 available to answer any questions you might
20 have.

21 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you
22 Judge. That was a very impressive
23 presentation as to what you've already done
24 and what you're already planning to do in just
25 two short months. Very impressed. Legislator

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2 McKevitt.

3 LEGISLATOR MCKEVITT: Good
4 afternoon Judge. How are you doing? I'm just
5 curious, when do you think you'll be moving in
6 to Axon Avenue?

7 MR. MELI: Our tentative date is
8 April 25th.

9 LEGISLATOR MCKEVITT: Do you
10 anticipate during that transition you may have
11 to shut down the agency for a couple of days?
12 You're trying to go from say closed on Friday
13 open Monday? What are you looking to do?

14 MR. MELI: That's a Monday. I
15 say April 25th and I was very encouraged by my
16 meeting with DPW until their last question is
17 what's your drop dead date? In other words,
18 when can we tell you that the move is off?
19 But as of right now we plan on closing in the
20 afternoon of the preceding Friday and closing
21 the full day that Monday because all our
22 communications systems will be set up when we
23 get there and we need to just make sure they
24 work while we sit at our desks.

25 LEGISLATOR MCKEVITT: Thank you.

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2 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you
3 very much. Any debate or discussion? All in
4 favor signify by saying aye. Opposed? That
5 carries unanimously.

6 Item 29, Resolution 19 is a
7 resolution to confirm the county executive's
8 appointment of the Honorable Steven Bucaria as
9 commissioner and chair of the Assessment
10 Review Commission.

11 Moved by Legislator Pilip.
12 Seconded by Legislator Rhoads. Hello Judge.

13 MR. BUCARIA: Good afternoon. My
14 name is Steven Bucaria. I know you have my
15 resume so I'm not going to go too much into
16 that. Judicially I was elected in '93 to sit
17 in '94 district court. There two years and
18 fortunate enough to be elected to supreme
19 court 2000. Did a lot of medical
20 malpractice. Around 2003 I was asked to join
21 the commercial division, which is a division
22 set up to do obviously commercial cases and
23 generally have longer types of trials. While
24 there I was assigned almost solely as the
25 judge handling tax matters. That's when I

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2 really became interested in and actually
3 fought through what I thought might be a very
4 boring and dry subject matter. It turned out
5 to be fascinating to me and I enjoyed learning
6 about it.

7 Then when I had a chance to retire,
8 as considered a chance, I did and then was
9 asked by Mr. Blakeman if I would sit in this
10 chairman, slash, commissioner's seat to see
11 what I could do to revitalize, not revitalize,
12 but to see what I could do with ARC,
13 Assessment Review Commission, to make it more
14 responsive to the citizenry and the
15 electorate.

16 While I was doing that, I was also
17 with the state guard and that's how I got to
18 know Colonel Gaylor over there who was over at
19 Hofstra, as I recollect, commanding officer.
20 Quite an accomplishment. Two of my guys were
21 helping you with the swimming program that you
22 had. It's very interesting to talk to an
23 adult who's in full uniform and a rifle and
24 say well, just jump in and see how you do.
25 And we had a couple of people that helped you

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2 out. It was a pleasure to work with you sir.

3 It really was.

4 Again, it's sort of a service to,
5 in that case, residents of the state, who we
6 also on Hurricane Sandy we had a lot of people
7 down at the beach area. I myself went down
8 every day with the idea of being that you can
9 or you shouldn't ask a soldier to do something
10 that you're not willing to do yourself. So
11 every day I went down and did various things.

12 The one that was most difficult,
13 which I was here when the fire marshal was
14 recommended for saving a dog, and there's a
15 certain amount of human in that. You can
16 imagine operating with Sandy how many people
17 were devastated. Homes wiped out.

18 The hardest duty I had was the
19 afternoon I said what do we do with the pets?
20 I found out that there was a building in
21 Nassau Community College that was given to
22 them that was the hardest thing I had to do.
23 When you walked down the aisle and they're in
24 cages and their paws come out because they're
25 domesticated animals, they're not wild

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2 animals.

3 Anyway, that was another
4 opportunity I had to serve and that's what I
5 look at with this. I have an opportunity to
6 serve the residents at the direction of the
7 county executive and the legislature because,
8 like it or not, we're all in this together.
9 I'm open to any questions you have or
10 statements you'd like to make.

11 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank you
12 Judge. Any questions or statements?
13 Certainly with the years you've spent dealing
14 with assessment litigation you certainly have
15 the experience to come into this position.
16 You're uniquely qualifies. Legislator Rhoads.

17 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: I'll just add
18 the fact that you used the term fascinating in
19 connection with assessment. You're the man
20 for the job.

21 MR. MELI: Thank you. I think.

22 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
23 Gaylor.

24 LEGISLATOR GAYLOR: Thank you sir
25 for not only stepping up to the challenge

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2 that's before you working with the ARC but
3 just for your lifetime of service to this
4 county. You are truly a leader and you lead
5 by example. So we need that leadership at
6 this time and you are definitely the best man
7 qualified.

8 MR. BUCARIA: Thank you for
9 saying that.

10 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
11 DeRiggi-Whitton.

12 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: I
13 don't know if I should reveal this but I have
14 the dubious distinction of having Eric
15 Berliner in my district.

16 I just want to say we had to do
17 something with the assessment. It hadn't been
18 touched. The assessment process needed to be
19 addressed. We all up here agree that it had
20 to be worked on. I just hope going forward
21 that we can reach the goal that we all had up
22 here just to have a fair system that I think
23 is better than it was but still has a long way
24 to go. I hope we can work in a bipartisan way
25 to achieve that goal.

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2 MR. BUCARIA: Not only bipartisan
3 but intercameral. The legislature has a very
4 vital role to play. There should be a good
5 interaction between your legislative branch
6 and what I do and I look forward to that.

7 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: I
8 know you're going to heaven for dealing with
9 Eric Berliner as long as you did.

10 MR. BUCARIA: Did the best I
11 could with that.

12 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank
13 you. Thank you Judge. Any debate or
14 discussion? Hearing none, all in favor
15 signify by saying aye. Those opposed?
16 Carries unanimously.

17 Item 30, Resolution 20, a
18 resolution to confirm the Nassau County
19 executive's appointment of Jill Nevin to the
20 position of commissioner of human services.

21 Moved by Legislator Schaefer.

22 Seconded by Legislator Walker.

23 MS. NEVIN: I want to thank the
24 legislature for giving me the opportunity to
25 appear before you today. I'd also like to

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thank County Executive Blakeman for this opportunity in recommending me for this position. I'm honored to have his confidence. I would also like to thank the members of the legislature for taking the time to consider me for this position. I'm humbled to be given this opportunity and I look forward to working with all executive staff, agency staff, legislators and county residents in my new role.

I've been a county employee for over ten years with management and problem solving experience. For over the past eight years I have worked in the Department of Human Services as a community liaison specialist coordinating and managing various programs within the Office for the Aging.

Prior to that I was managing constituent concerns and issues while working with county agencies and external organizations for resolutions.

In this new role I will have oversight of the following areas under the umbrella of human services. Office for the

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2 Aging, Office of Youth Services, Office for
3 the Physically Challenged and Office of Mental
4 Health, Chemical Dependency and Developmental
5 Disabilities. I understand the critical
6 nature of the services these agencies provide
7 and take the role of commissioner very
8 seriously.

9 My vision for the department is to
10 ensure that a full continuum of services
11 continues while offering the highest levels of
12 care and communication. We will explore new
13 opportunities and look to expand current
14 services to meet the growing needs of Nassau
15 County residents.

16 Some program improvement and
17 expansion ideas I have include addressing the
18 opioid treatment clinic facility conditions
19 and staffing levels. I also already restarted
20 in person Narcan training and assembled a new
21 Narcan training team. I would like to expand
22 school-based chemical dependency preventive
23 programing to include an additional focus on
24 opioids. Most of the current preventative
25 programing focuses mostly on alcohol and

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2 marijuana use.

3 I would like to expand the summer
4 youth employment program to include more
5 employers. I'm also exploring the opportunity
6 for a pilot lunch program opportunity at the
7 Bethpage senior center and we are in the
8 process of opening a new senior lunch program
9 in Hempstead.

10 I am looking forward to my
11 continued work within Nassau County and the
12 Department of Human Services. It would be my
13 honor if you would also instill your trust in
14 me by confirming my appointment. Thank you
15 again for your time today.

16 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank
17 you. Any questions? Legislator Mule.

18 LEGISLATOR MULE: Good
19 afternoon. I'm a social worker by profession
20 and training. It's not a question it's just a
21 comment. That your department oversees the
22 most vulnerable populations that are in this
23 county and it is certainly my hope that you
24 will take that responsibility very, very
25 seriously because they have the fewest people

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2 advocating for them and of course are the most
3 vulnerable in so many ways. That's something
4 that I will be looking at very closely. Thank
5 you.

6 MS. NEVIN: Absolutely.

7 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
8 Walker.

9 LEGISLATOR WALKER: Now that we
10 hopefully are coming to some kind of closure
11 with the whole COVID issue and masks and maybe
12 schools being much more open to having
13 events. I know some of the schools in my
14 district I have been at events and others have
15 been basically on complete lockdown. I mean,
16 when I have to turn in my supervision sheet I
17 have to like put it through the doorway.

18 So, now that that will be happening
19 I would hope that so many of the programs,
20 even programs that you spoke about, especially
21 the drug, alcohol issues that we have, that
22 are brought back to our schools, working with
23 our police department because I know they're
24 very anxious to get those back and going and
25 through your department be able to do that and

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2 all the other different services that your
3 department provides.

4 I've seen you in action over at our
5 community centers and how well you work with
6 our seniors and the residents there and I know
7 that will continue throughout. Again, I look
8 forward to working with you and helping you
9 out in any way I can.

10 MS. NEVIN: Thank you.

11 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: I just
12 wanted to add that obviously you have a lot of
13 energy and focus on the task at hand. I
14 particularly I'm happy to see that they are
15 hiring somebody from within the department who
16 has an understanding as opposed to bringing
17 someone from the outside. I think you're set
18 up to do very well. Anyone else? Thank you.

19 MS. NEVIN: I thank you all for
20 the opportunity.

21 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Any debate
22 or discussion? All in favor signify by saying
23 aye. Those opposed? Carries unanimously.

24 Item 31, Resolution 21 is a
25 resolution to confirm Nassau County

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2 executive's appointment of Dennis Monette to
3 the position of commissioner of the Office of
4 Emergency Management.

5 Moved by Legislator Ford. Seconded
6 by Legislator Rhoads.

7 MR. MONETTE: Good afternoon.
8 Thank you for this opportunity. My name is
9 Dennis Monette. I'll give you a real quick
10 bio.

11 Thirty three years with Nassau PD.
12 Retired as assistant commissioner. Was
13 promoted to sergeant at age 26. My realm has
14 been in the counterterrorism world. I was
15 appointed by President Bush right after the
16 Trade Center went down to be a founding member
17 of the department of ETHS. Still considered
18 the best practice today. Looking forward to
19 working with some great men and women that we
20 have in OEM over in Nassau County here.

21 Some of the other things I do. I'm
22 a professor at Long Island University. Excuse
23 me for my froggy throat. Been with LIU for 18
24 years and I served on the board of directors
25 at the Terrorism Center with the Israelis in

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2 the Middle East.

3 My plans for OEM right out of the
4 box we want to get everybody that works in OEM
5 basically trained how to do CPR. Not all know
6 the people that work there know how to do
7 basic CPR. That's one of the things we're
8 going to be doing.

9 Getting AEDs all over the county.
10 So far we have about seven locations that do
11 not have them. Including in the exec building
12 downstairs where the labor department is they
13 don't have an AED. We found a box in a
14 warehouse when we took over OEM that had 29
15 brand new AEDs that have ten year lives on all
16 the batteries that are on a storage shelf and
17 not being used.

18 I want to encourage an intern
19 program over at OEM. We do have interns that
20 we're lining up to come in and work with you.
21 What OEM does is goes out when we have
22 something like we just had a couple of weeks
23 ago, week and a half ago, when we had that
24 horrible tractor trailer accident over in
25 Rockville Centre where we, thank God, did not

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2 lose any people. OEM was one of the first on
3 the scene working with the fire marshal's
4 office.

5 I have a longtime personal
6 relationship with Commissioner Ryder. He is a
7 partner with OEM also.

8 The other thing we're going to push
9 for is, talking with some of the folks I have
10 at OEM, I have one of the gentleman that works
11 there he builds drones as a hobby. He's
12 getting his federal drone license. Drones are
13 going to be the newest thing on when we have
14 issues of fires, we have issues of natural
15 disaster and we are applying now through OEM
16 to get a couple of drones to be first on the
17 site. One of the first pictures that we got
18 at that tanker crash was from a drone that was
19 put up by the fire department to show us what
20 was happening and where all that gasoline was
21 going.

22 I would also like to invite
23 everybody, all of the legislature, I would
24 like to do a Saturday or Sunday, whatever day
25 you would like to pick, maybe in a public

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2 library, to offer free CPR training to
3 constituents. I always tell people the person
4 you save might be your neighbor, it might be
5 your uncle, it might be your grandfather, it
6 might be your parent, it might be your child.

7 I lobbied for years Massapequa High
8 School, not to beat them up, to make it part
9 of graduation. Everybody could leave knowing
10 how to do basic CPR. It got put on the back
11 shelf. So I would like to do that. Over as
12 many weekends as we need to do for all our
13 legislators. I work very closely with James
14 Kennedy, my legislator. Fantastic team
15 player. That we invite all of your
16 constituents in your area to come day and say,
17 would you like to get trained in CPR? It will
18 take you 15 minutes to do it. No cost
19 whatsoever.

20 I'll take any questions. Thank you
21 again.

22 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Any
23 questions? Legislator Walker.

24 LEGISLATOR WALKER: Not really a
25 question. Just a comment. I know at our last

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2 police commissioner's counsel he had said -- I
3 know like during Superstorm Sandy, kind of
4 like the command center for dealing with all
5 the different agencies was over at OEM. Now
6 that will be moved to the new police academy?
7 Will OEM still be utilized for that?

8 MR. MONETTE: The other thing I'd
9 would like to do and the most important thing
10 I should have said I would like each and every
11 one of you to come down to OEM. The room is
12 massive. It's almost the size of this room.
13 And show you what happens when we go
14 operational as we did with the blizzard a few
15 weeks ago. So you can see hands on all the
16 partners that we bring in from the bus company
17 to the railroad to the police to our ambulance
18 bureau. So all of you legislators know what
19 to bring.

20 And we are going to plan an open
21 house for residents to come in. I think it's
22 important for the residents to know what
23 Nassau County has ready in the wings to work
24 for. Not just in a building over by Grumman.
25 We'll have an open house out there to bring

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2 their kids and walk them through and say this
3 is what we do if, God forbid, something major
4 happens. OEM would be the first.

5 We've had a number of plane
6 crashes, as you all know, on Long Island.
7 Right on 110 and some in Nassau County. We're
8 right over the flyway. I live in Massapequa,
9 down on the bay, and I can count every night
10 hundreds of planes going over. You always
11 look up and you hope they all make it to JFK.
12 But we're right in the flyway there.

13 OEM, we have people ready to go
14 24-7. We're on the Nassau County CB. If
15 something happens at 2 o'clock this morning I
16 get a call right away from CB as soon as it
17 happens and we activate immediately. We have
18 people on standby to activate if, God forbid,
19 we have to go operational as the call it.

20 LEGISLATOR WALKER: Thank you
21 very much. OEM happens to be in my district
22 and Laura Schaefer and I share Bethpage. But
23 it's an amazing place. I'm sure many of our
24 legislators have been there. But to see it
25 and to really see it in action. I mean, I was

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2 over there quite a lot during Superstorm
3 Sandy. I didn't have electric for 17 days and
4 it was warm there, so it was nice to go there.

5 MR. MONETTE: We're also inviting
6 all of the public safety groups in. We have
7 five public safety departments on Long Island,
8 in Nassau County. We're also going to invite
9 in all the mayors that are in Nassau County to
10 let the mayors see what they need in their
11 community if something happens. I thank you
12 very much.

13 LEGISLATOR WALKER: Thank you.

14 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
15 DeRiggi-Whitton.

16 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: I
17 just have a quick question. It's not probably
18 on the top of your list but Nassau County
19 hosts the largest Toys for Tots collection in
20 the whole nation. And I honestly don't think
21 the event could take place without --

22 MR. MONETTE: I'm sorry.

23 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON:
24 Nassau County hosts the largest Toys for Tots
25 collection every year in December, and I

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2 honestly don't think that the event could take
3 place without the assistance of OEM. In fact,
4 they actually store the toys for us with the
5 Marines until we have them distributed.

6 I know you have to find out more
7 about it but I would really appreciate it if
8 you would consider continuing helping us out
9 that way.

10 MR. MONETTE: I'm on the board of
11 directors of the chamber of commerce in
12 Massapequa and, as you know, we have very a
13 robust Toys for Tots. So the answer is yes.

14 The other thing we did last summer,
15 we're going to do it again this summer with
16 Joe Saladino, Town of Oyster Bay and it was
17 with County Executive Blakeman before, we gave
18 away 390 life jackets free to kids 12 and
19 under on the south shore and the north shore
20 of Long Island. You have to have a life
21 jacket on if you're under 12 on a boat.

22 We did a little program and we ran
23 our of life jackets. I jokingly say my wife
24 has a Ph.D. In shopping. She found another
25 350 life jackets at a Walmart in South

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2 Carolina that we bought through our chiefs
3 association and gave them away to anybody that
4 showed up that day to put on their kids.

5 So, the other thing too, and I
6 don't want to go on and on, but we've had
7 tremendous, terrible fires in New York City.
8 My next brainstorm is I think we have to get
9 out to our veterans and our senior citizens in
10 all our communities, including especially some
11 minority communities, does everybody have a
12 smoke detector in their house? Does it work?
13 I venture to say if we knocked on a lot of
14 doors in some communities people don't have
15 them. They're expired. They save lives. We
16 had that tragedy in New York City. We've had
17 about seven people die in house fires in
18 Nassau County so far this year.

19 Again, I can get the funding
20 probably through our chiefs association so
21 it's free. Knock on the door. Do you have
22 any smoke detectors? Yeah, but it's been up
23 there a few years. We'll put it in for you.
24 We'll give you a new one. No cost to
25 anybody. I got plenty of volunteers to do

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2 that. And I'd love to work with every single
3 one of you in your district to target where
4 you think we can give away some smoke
5 detectors. Like I said, we wound up with
6 almost 400 life jackets and can wind up with
7 400 smoke detectors we're certainly going to
8 save some lives I hope.

9 LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: Thank you.
10 Hi Dennis. I am Dennis's legislator. Over
11 the last several years we've become good
12 friends. I've gotten to know you very well.
13 He has boundless energy. I just love the
14 ideas. The open house, CPR training. I know
15 there's going to be many, many other ideas. I
16 just want to say I support you fully and I'm
17 very happy that you're in the position that
18 you are and you can help all of us as you have
19 been able to do within my community and yours
20 in so many different ways. And pretty much
21 any time I've reached out to you you've always
22 been a great help. I know you'll do a great
23 job and appreciate everything that you're
24 doing.

25 MR. MONETTE: Thank you very

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2 much. Appreciate it.

3 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
4 Bynoe.

5 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: You had me at
6 interns. When you said interns, you wanted to
7 have interns in your office, I support that
8 wholly. I've been out to OEM about three or
9 four times and I've taken my interns on those
10 trips. And to my demise, one of my staffers
11 got totally enthusiastic about that
12 department. So he went back and got a degree
13 in, a masters degree in OEM, and he left me
14 and he's now in New York City working for OEM.

15 But it's a tremendous amount of
16 work you folks do out there. I was concerned
17 when I was there each and every time because
18 it seems like there's a lot of work that you
19 would be required to do in an emergency and
20 that you do on an ongoing basis. It just
21 doesn't seem that you have enough staff
22 there. I would be very interested to hear
23 from you in the next coming weeks how you feel
24 like you're staffed there.

25 MR. MONETTE: We are very well

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2 staffed and I just learned yesterday or over
3 the weekend we have two more people that are
4 going to be assigned to OEM. And then last
5 week we picked up another two people at OEM.
6 So we do have four. There's never enough
7 staff. I don't have to tell you.

8 When we activate if, like I said, I
9 hope you all come and visit us and see every
10 single station has to be manned. We never
11 will turn down more help. I know it depends
12 on the budget. But we recently just got four
13 brand new people and one intern. We're going
14 to keep pushing that.

15 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: So that's four
16 additional to the staff that was there that
17 you met when you came on?

18 MR. MONETTE: Yes. Just got four
19 over the last few days.

20 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Very good. I
21 fought for like two additional positions and I
22 think they ended up with one. So to hear you
23 have three additionals that makes my heart
24 feel glad. Thank you.

25 LEGISLATOR WALKER: And I just

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2 also look forward to I know you're starting a
3 new -- you're having a CERT class that's going
4 to start next week. I'm sure you're familiar
5 with that.

6 MR. MONETTE: CERT is out of
7 OEM. You know my guy that does it there he
8 does it with a passion. He loves it. And I
9 promised him I'll get the county executive to
10 come to the graduation. Those are volunteers
11 in the community that when we have a disaster
12 or whatever that are willing to come down.
13 They helped when we gave out over I think
14 12,000 or 24,000 test kits. We gave out cases
15 of water. We gave out masks. All volunteers
16 through CERT with our OEM staff working with
17 them. The folks are fantastic. They stood in
18 the cold and the rain at Mitchell Field for
19 hours and hours on end to make sure our
20 constituents as far as COVID when we were
21 giving out the masks and test kits and the
22 water and anything else that they needed.

23 We get a lot of stuff in OEM.
24 Sometimes it's hard to give it away. That's
25 why we're putting out to anybody now. For

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2 instance, in this room, we're getting to a
3 point where we have so many cases of water and
4 water is dated. Which I didn't know. A
5 bottle of water has a date on it. It's a
6 pretty long date but we want to get this water
7 out maybe to fire departments or volunteer
8 organizations that can use it rather than
9 dispose it because it's outdated.

10 We just had somebody go through the
11 warehouse today. I think we have 11 pallets
12 of water that are good for another two and
13 half, three months that I want to get out of
14 the warehouse and into people's hands.

15 LEGISLATOR WALKER: That's
16 something we can reach out even to our fire
17 departments if they can utilize them and reach
18 out to you. But I look forward to this first
19 CERT class getting back up next week. And I
20 know that often times we do the CERT classes
21 in other districts. It's easy, my residents,
22 OEM is not far away. But for residents that
23 are on the south shore or up on the north
24 shore they might not want to come other to
25 OEM. They might love to because it's a

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2 facility they'd like to see but sometimes it's
3 easier for them to have it in a place located
4 within their district. Hopefully we will
5 continue that too.

6 MR. MONETTE: Very easy for us to
7 move the people to another location. A
8 library, a high school auditorium. No
9 objection to that whatsoever. We happen to
10 have a massive, massive training room that we
11 have which is how OEM and CERT has morphed
12 into giving it there because we have so much
13 seating there. We can get 300 or 400 people
14 in there.

15 But I think you're right. I don't
16 want somebody not to come because it's too far
17 to drive to. They're all the way up on the
18 north shore or they're all the way down in the
19 Five Towns area and they say nah, it's too
20 long. Takes them 40 minutes to get up there
21 with the traffic. We can certainly move the
22 trainers around very easily.

23 LEGISLATOR WALKER: Excellent.
24 Thank you so much. Looking forward to working
25 with you.

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2 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Thank
3 you. Any other discussion? All in favor
4 signify by saying aye. Those opposed? That
5 carries unanimously.

6 Item 27, Resolution number 17, a
7 resolution to confirm the county executive's
8 appointment of John Capece to the position of
9 commissioner of consumer affairs.

10 Moved by Legislator Kennedy.
11 Seconded by Legislator Schaefer.

12 MR. CAPECE: Good afternoon
13 everyone. I'm not going to go over my total
14 resume. You heard it from some of the union
15 people. But I would just like to add that for
16 the past 13 years I have been an adjunct
17 professor at Adelphi University teaching
18 criminal justice.

19 The job of consumer affairs I would
20 like now to publicly thank my staff. The
21 staff at consumer affairs, a lot of you
22 probably don't realize it, they do a hell of a
23 job. They're understaffed. There's a lot of
24 problems there. Through my guidance, I knew
25 nothing about consumer affairs, I'm not going

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2 to lie to you, I'm going to tell you the
3 truth. I knew nothing about it. I went there
4 with an open mind, and if you heard some of
5 the officers talk about me, when I go to a new
6 unit, in the police department we call things
7 units, I go to a new command I listen to the
8 people because I want to hear what they have
9 to say. They've been there a lot longer than
10 me. I would like to publicly thank them.

11 I've come up with have a -- after
12 two months there and being welcomed by the
13 staff and listening to them, in fact this
14 morning we had a two-hour meeting with our new
15 county attorney that was assigned to the
16 office, which I'm very happy about. We spent
17 two hours talking about how we can improve the
18 scheduling of hearings for licensing
19 violations and consumer complaints. Something
20 that's very important.

21 Efficiency. We have less staff.
22 In 2014 you had 40 people. In 2018 32
23 people. In 2022 you have 19. I will talk
24 about that. I hope to talk next week to you
25 in our meeting about consumer affairs

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2 directly. But I have a five-point program
3 that I'm just going to lay out real quick.
4 That's my vision of what to do with consumer
5 affairs.

6 Because, besides the police,
7 citizens look to consumer affairs to be on
8 their side to help them. We have to be
9 transparent. We have to be responsive to
10 their complaints. If we're not responsive to
11 their complaints we failed. We can make
12 excuses. I don't have enough people. I don't
13 have this. That doesn't matter because to the
14 average person. They want someone who's going
15 to listen to their problem because they have a
16 problem.

17 First thing, I told you
18 efficiency. We had a meeting to schedule
19 hearings for licensee violations, consumer
20 complaints. I want to redo the website. I
21 want the website to be more user friendly. A
22 lot of our cliental, meaning our contractors
23 and such, a lot of them don't walk around with
24 Apple laptops. They're not really computer
25 savvy. So I want my staff to start to reach

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2 out by phone. Not just sending emails. A lot
3 of these people work with their hands.

4 I want them to be more responsive
5 that there's a phone call conversation. So
6 they feel they talked to someone, a human. So
7 there's some contact.

8 I told about the staffing.

9 I want to do some more aggressive
10 enforcement. By aggressive enforcement I mean
11 we hear a lot of complaints from legitimate
12 contract licensees that there's people
13 operating in Nassau County with no licenses,
14 working out of the back of vans, doing a lot
15 of illegal things. I want to send teams out
16 to start to enforce our laws. And in
17 conjunction with the county attorney, now that
18 I have a full-time county attorney, we can
19 have some teeth to what we do.

20 Also our weights and measure
21 division. I want our weights and measure
22 division to get out there. We've
23 reestablished a relationship with New York
24 State. For a while New York State was not
25 interacting with us very well. I had a

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2 meeting with the two people from New York
3 State that cover Nassau County. They have a
4 lot of really cool pieces of equipment that
5 measures gasoline, measures octane.

6 We want our residents when they go
7 to a gas station and they get a gallon of gas
8 we want to make sure it's a gallon. If they
9 buy 93 octane you want to make sure it's 93
10 octane not 90 octane. I want to get
11 aggressive with that.

12 Because we have a lot of different
13 moving parts in consumer affairs. We have
14 taxi and limousine, weights and measures,
15 consumer complaints, licensing.

16 And one of the last things I want
17 to do is I want to have a more visible public
18 relations. We have people there, especially
19 my acting deputy, Kenny Heino, that could go
20 out to a lot of community groups and start to
21 educate the public, especially our seniors, on
22 a lot of things that are occurring in the
23 world of consumer fraud. We have to be aware
24 of that.

25 We have to let our citizens know

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2 that we are working to help them and give them
3 that information. If we sit in an office and
4 we just next, next and we act like the
5 Department of Motor Vehicles we've failed. I
6 don't want to do that. I want us to get out
7 there and be aggressive.

8 I also am looking in conjunction
9 with Adelphi to start an intern program.
10 There's a lot of young kids that are very into
11 consumer relations. They're very into that
12 whole world. And after I talk to the county
13 attorney, if it's possible to have free
14 labor. Have some kids that are really anxious
15 and excited to work with us to get our message
16 across.

17 Thank you for this opportunity. I
18 was happily retired. It's a challenge. I
19 love challenges.

20 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
21 Ford.

22 LEGISLATOR FORD: Good
23 afternoon. Thank you very much for wanting to
24 be very proactive with consumer affairs. It's
25 a very important department. And as you

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2 highlighted, whether or not schemes with our
3 seniors and the contractors. And I like your
4 approach that you want to go out to the
5 public. I've had the good fortune of a being
6 at some of those presentations with Ken
7 Heino. Especially after Sandy with residents
8 that had to deal with unscrupulous contractors
9 and having their money stolen from them.

10 I think that one of the things that
11 really struck me was that a lot of residents
12 are not really aware of like when you are
13 going to deal with a contractor how much like
14 that you should have something written. How
15 much you should give in the beginning and in
16 the middle. This was something where
17 everybody handed over all of their money in
18 the beginning and the person walked away with
19 it.

20 So I like this educational aspect
21 of consumer affairs. Because I think it's
22 very important. Whether or not helping our
23 seniors with scams. Not every senior is as
24 savvy as that woman who called the police and
25 was able to tackle it. But there are a lot

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2 that are not aware. They get these phone
3 calls and they think that it's best to try to
4 save somebody. And even though, you know,
5 like it's just we need to get that message out
6 there. Even for young people to make sure
7 they don't fall victim to any type of scams as
8 well.

9 So I thank you very much and I look
10 forward to working with you on this and
11 pushing forward to do more and more. I hope
12 that you will take a look at your staffing.
13 We keep hearing from everybody who's
14 testifying before us, that yes, you're down a
15 lot of people. So, I think that we need to
16 work with you to also bring in the people that
17 we need to be able to make sure that we can
18 effectively go out and whether or not it's
19 weights or measures, doing the proper
20 investigations in regard to some of the
21 legislation we already passed. And I don't
22 know if we're really following up on
23 everything that we requested of consumer
24 affairs. But thank you.

25 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Anyone

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2 else? Minority Leader Abrahams.

3 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: How are
4 you? Some of you may or may not know this. I
5 had an opportunity to meet John Capece many,
6 many years ago. He was the first commander in
7 our precinct, in the First Precinct, back in
8 2006. So I've known you for quite some time.
9 Not too sure anybody here other than maybe
10 Denise and Rich were actually here at the
11 legislature at that time in 2006. I know you
12 sat there at the First Precinct.

13 I always felt that I was able to
14 connect with your precinct and your
15 department. My office, Robin Wheat, I know
16 probably reached out to you on several
17 occasions and you always responsive in making
18 sure that we had police officers assigned to
19 local civic associations and so on and so
20 forth.

21 I bring that up in a good context
22 because I'm a little concerned in regards to
23 some of the things that have developed since
24 that time. Since you've been at the First
25 Precinct. And in one of the cases that came

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2 up that obviously we haven't had a chance to
3 talk about because you were out of your
4 capacity as the First Precinct commander, was
5 the case of Tusillo versus Capece. Are you
6 familiar with this lawsuit?

7 MR. CAPECE: Say that again.

8 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Tuccillo.

9 MR. CAPECE: Oh yes. I won that
10 case.

11 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Well, the
12 case was dismissed. I'm not going to try to
13 regurgitate everything that was in the case
14 and obviously it was dismissed in 2017 and
15 affirmed by the appellate court.

16 However, some of the stories that
17 I'm more concerned about that came up is
18 something that I'm going to ask you about
19 now. There was a story here in Newsday that
20 cited that there was a 2011 -- this case was
21 tied to a 2011 road rage incident that
22 involved your auto mechanic.

23 MR. CAPECE: That's Tuccillo.

24 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Tuccillo is
25 an auto mechanic?

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2 MR. CAPECE: No. He was the
3 complainant.

4 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Tuccillo
5 was complaining against your auto mechanic?

6 MR. CAPECE: I used in Glen Cove
7 R&R Collision. It's a guy named Richie and
8 Russell. I knew Russell. I went to his son's
9 wedding. I was close to Russell. Richie was
10 his partner. Richie gets involved in a road
11 rage, calls me up and says he's involved in a
12 road rage. I say what do you want me to do
13 about it? Call 911. He says I did. There's
14 five or six police cars there. I just forgot
15 about the whole thing.

16 Mr. Tuccillo thought that Richie's
17 last name matched the name of the first vice
18 president of the PBA. So he thought there was
19 some sort of connection and it was proven in
20 court not to be true.

21 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Okay. So
22 your only involvement was that you took a
23 phone call from Richie and told them go call
24 911?

25 MR. CAPECE: Which he already did

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2 because there were police cars there.

3 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: The other
4 serious matter, which I'm sure you're aware of
5 because it received a lot of attention, was
6 the issue with Randy White. Which this county
7 paid out \$295,000 in 2016. If you forgive me,
8 as well my members and colleagues will indulge
9 me, one of the stipulations that came out of
10 the case is that White was arrested on an
11 outstanding warrant for failing to pay fines
12 involving bootleg DVDs.

13 White said that he was falsely
14 detained in prison and subjected to strip
15 searches after Nassau County police stopped
16 and handcuffed him at a public bus in
17 Hempstead Village. White sued Nassau County
18 for civil right violations and settled in
19 2016, as I mentioned, for \$295,000.
20 Apparently your involvement in this case was
21 to instruct the detectives to actually arrest
22 Mr. White?

23 MR. CAPECE: I'm glad I can
24 finally talk about this. Newsday did not
25 report -- if you saw something that was in

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2 Newsday --

3 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: This is
4 actually from the court. This actual
5 stipulation came out of the court.

6 MR. CAPECE: What happened is,
7 I'll tell you the whole truth. What happened
8 was -- I'm on some antihistamine, so I got to
9 refresh the mouth. What happened was, the
10 then commissioner of police came to me when I
11 was chief of detectives and he requested that
12 I look into some sort of, to refresh my
13 memory, some sort of election fraud case that
14 occurred in the Village of Freeport. I went
15 and looked into it.

16 I said we have to refer this to the
17 district attorney on this particular
18 individual. I believe his name was Randy
19 White. In looking at this individual we found
20 out he had a warrant for selling bootleg CDs.
21 Counterfeiting. Not counterfeiting money
22 counterfeiting CDs.

23 I gave that up line to my
24 commissioner, to chief of department and the
25 commissioner, and I thought that would be the

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2 end of it. The next day I was at a
3 fund-raiser for Children of Hope. I was
4 called by the commissioner and I was told that
5 this kid, Randy White, was getting on a bus.
6 Send your detectives there to arrest him on
7 the warrant.

8 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: On the
9 bootleg DVD warrant?

10 MR. CAPECE: Correct.

11 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: At the time
12 you served in the capacity chief of
13 detectives. How many outstanding warrants
14 were outstanding at that particular time?

15 MR. CAPECE: Hundreds if not
16 thousands.

17 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: But you
18 chose to go after a guy selling bootleg DVDs?
19 The outstanding warrants, did they include
20 murderers?

21 MR. CAPECE: Probably so. I
22 can't say for sure.

23 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: But on that
24 given day we chose to go after the guy selling
25 bootleg DVDs at the side of a bodega?

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2 MR. CAPECE: Well, Newsday said I
3 resigned. I retired.

4 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: I'm not
5 asking about your resignation or your
6 retirement. You chose --

7 MR. CAPECE: I did not choose
8 sir. I was given an order.

9 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: How did the
10 detectives get there. Who ordered the
11 detectives to arrest Randy White and take him
12 off the bus?

13 MR. CAPECE: Commissioner of
14 police.

15 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Not
16 yourself?

17 MR. CAPECE: Not myself.

18 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: I find that
19 funny because also when I look at the court
20 documents and I'm just seeing here it says
21 that you had a role in directing those
22 detectives to arrest Randy White.

23 MR. CAPECE: That's correct.

24 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: You just
25 said the commissioner did that.

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2 MR. CAPECE: The commissioner
3 ordered me to do it.

4 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: So the
5 commissioner ordered you to do something to
6 arrest Randy White -- let me make sure I'm
7 clear here, sorry to cut you off -- the
8 commissioner instructed you to arrest Randy
9 White, violate his human rights as per the
10 payout that this county made in \$295,000, you
11 may not have known that at the time but that's
12 the case that happened in 2016.

13 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: You don't
14 have to answer that the way you phrased it.
15 There's no one here accusing him of he
16 intentionally violated anybody's rights. You
17 chose to include that.

18 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Presiding
19 Officer, you don't have to protect him. He's
20 a big guy. He can stand for himself.

21 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: There's
22 some level of decorum. Maintain it.

23 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: What I'm
24 asking is, I know that at the time he did not
25 know he was going to violate his rights at

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2 that time. However, I'm bringing out the fact
3 that in 2016 we paid out \$295,000. Which
4 clearly states that his rights were violated.

5 From that standpoint, maybe we have
6 more of a reflective history to be able to
7 talk about this. But his rights were
8 violated. That's stipulated by the court. We
9 paid out \$295,000 to him already. So from
10 that standpoint, I'm not making up anything up
11 nor am I implying that you knew that you were
12 going to violate his rights back in 2013 when
13 it occurred. I'm not saying that.

14 That being said, your role in that
15 particular situation -- and this is where I'm
16 getting to also -- your role in that
17 particular situation was that you got ordered
18 by the commissioner of police, who at the time
19 was Commissioner Dale, who was fired
20 apparently by County Executive Mangano, you
21 were instructed by him to, ordered by him to
22 arrest Randy White on an outstanding warrant
23 of bootleg DVDs while there were warrants of
24 murderers and God knows what else out there.
25 That's what I want to make sure I understand.

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2 That the commissioner ordered you to do
3 something. And we talk a lot about crime but
4 we had a perfect opportunity to address
5 crime. Why do we go after the people that are
6 murderers?

7 But that being said, I bring that
8 up because here you are. You're advocating
9 for yourself and you gave a very nice
10 presentation. You're advocating for yourself
11 that you can protect consumers rights. I have
12 a hard time reconciling that. Because from my
13 standpoint you violated somebody's human
14 rights. So now you're going to tell us up
15 here that you're going to be able to protect
16 people's consumer rights?

17 MR. CAPECE: I was not on the
18 bus. I did not arrest anyone on the bus. I
19 was given an order, a legal order that was
20 proven by the district attorney. The district
21 attorney exonerated me. Said I followed an
22 order. That's what I did. The ramifications
23 from that were not from me sir.

24 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Let me read
25 you an excerpt from District Attorney Kathleen

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2 Rice's report. I'm sure you know she
3 investigated this. She actually investigated
4 this at the request of myself and some of my
5 colleagues at the time. District Attorney
6 Kathleen Rice wrote, this is what she wrote,
7 that Capece's involvement, while it was not
8 typically -- it was not typical protocol for
9 comparatively low level allegation of
10 criminality.

11 When you got that order from --
12 because we're trying to get into the mind set
13 of why this would even occur and now you're
14 here before us to advocate to be the head of
15 consumer of affairs. When you got that
16 order -- and she also goes to say that it was
17 not illegal. I just want to make sure I'm
18 clear on that playing both sides and being
19 fair. But when I read something to the effect
20 that it's not typically protocol for a
21 comparatively low level allegation of
22 criminality and when you get that order from
23 Commissioner Dale don't you reconcile that
24 there's some type of disconnect?

25 MR. CAPECE: I objected to that

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2 order.

3 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: So how did
4 the order happen?

5 MR. CAPECE: We're a paramilitary
6 organization. I was told to give the order.
7 The commissioner said it's on me. I'm
8 ordering you to do it.

9 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Just
10 forgive me. What's the process when you
11 reject an order --

12 MR. CAPECE: Let me rephrase
13 that. Not reject. I counseled that it might
14 not be a good idea to do it.

15 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: It sounds
16 like to me that you were uncomfortable with
17 that order?

18 MR. CAPECE: Yes.

19 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: If you have
20 some level of uncomfot with this particular
21 order what's the process to eventually reject
22 that order?

23 MR. CAPECE: If it's a legal
24 order I can't.

25 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Even

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2 though, as per our chief law enforcement
3 officer, it's not typically protocol for
4 comparatively low level allegation of
5 criminality?

6 MR. CAPECE: Correct.

7 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: So there's
8 no discretion?

9 MR. CAPECE: At my particular
10 level getting an order from someone above me I
11 did not have discretion sir.

12 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: How do you
13 think you will be able to apply discretion
14 now?

15 MR. CAPECE: I'm not sure I
16 understand the question.

17 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: The
18 position will have multiple different levels
19 of people that are violating people's consumer
20 rights. How would you use your discretion to
21 go after the ones that could be perceived as
22 more egregious than others?

23 MR. CAPECE: Well, my
24 investigator -- I'm not personally going to go
25 after.

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2 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: You are
3 here advocating to be the leader of the
4 consumer affairs department, aren't you?

5 MR. CAPECE: Right. I want to
6 lead my investigators to go after everyone.
7 Whoever violates the law.

8 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: I
9 understand that. But obviously your
10 investigators, you just said you have a short
11 staff, you have 19 individuals, you can't go
12 after everyone all at the same time, right?
13 So you do have to use some discretion on how
14 you use your resources. I'm asking you how
15 would you plan to use your resources? Because
16 I'm concerned that even though you're saying
17 that it was under the instruction of
18 Commissioner Dale, the resources here in
19 Nassau County Police Department were used
20 grossly negligent. And we paid out for it.
21 We paid out \$295,000. Which I'm surprised my
22 colleagues to the right are not upset by the
23 fact that we're hearing from your testimony
24 today to be the director of consumer affairs
25 but at the same time they have no problem with

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2 the fact that actions that you were a part of,
3 not saying you were solely a part of, but
4 actions that you were a part of cost us
5 \$295,000.

6 MR. CAPECE: I did not make that
7 decision.

8 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: You didn't
9 make it but you carried it out.

10 MR. CAPECE: May I?

11 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: No, you may
12 not. And the district attorney actually
13 indicated in their case, who investigated it,
14 who was the chief law enforcement officer, so
15 it wasn't someone that was brought up and
16 hired by Democrats or anything along those
17 lines. She says your involvement with this
18 case this is not, this is a quote, not
19 typically protocol for a comparatively low
20 level allegation of criminally.

21 Again, we're talking about
22 bootlegged DVDs. We've got murderers, God
23 knows, rapists. What else I can't even think
24 of, that has outstanding warrants and we chose
25 a guy that bootlegged DVDs.

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2 So now I'm asking you the
3 question. You've got 19 people in your
4 department. You're going to have to use
5 discretion. I would like to know how you
6 would apply that discretion. Because
7 obviously, I'm just being fair with you, your
8 discretion on how you applied it that day,
9 even though it was an order from Commissioner
10 Dale, that order and that discretion was
11 grossly poor. Because I would have gone for
12 the 999 guys that were a real threat to this
13 county. Not the bootleg DVD guy. Unless
14 they're all bootleg DVD guys. But they're
15 not. You just said they could be murderers.
16 So, from that standpoint, I wouldn't use my
17 discretion to go after that guy. So that is
18 why I'm asking you the question about your
19 discretion.

20 MR. CAPECE: I understand what
21 you're saying. That's why I retired. I
22 didn't want to work for these people anymore.

23 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: That's
24 funny you mention that because maybe the
25 Newsday story got it wrong. Which I wouldn't

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2 dismiss that. Usually gets it wrong. The
3 story indicates that you were going to retire
4 and you were offered -- you were going to be
5 demoted to the rank of captain and that's the
6 reason why you retired.

7 MR. CAPECE: Yes. I retired.
8 They were going to demote me to the rank of
9 captain and I would have lost over \$100,000.
10 That was more important to take care of my
11 family.

12 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS:
13 Absolutely. I would want to take care of my
14 family as well. Which one is it? You didn't
15 want to work with these people or --

16 MR. CAPECE: My thing was to take
17 care of my family and I wanted to separate
18 myself from the police department and the way
19 it was going.

20 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: It was a
21 combination of both?

22 MR. CAPECE: Yes.

23 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: So, if they
24 weren't going to demote you to the rank of
25 captain you would have stayed on or no?

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2 MR. CAPECE: I know for a fact I
3 wasn't staying because there was someone in
4 the police department that wanted me out.
5 Someone above me, who became the acting
6 commissioner after him, who I objected to a
7 lot of his policies, that wanted me out. So,
8 I was retired.

9 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: I
10 understand. Look, you see what's going on
11 today. We have supported 99 percent of the
12 county executive's appointments. I mean, we
13 want to support the county executive.
14 Especially as he's trying to put together his
15 departments and his leaders in his
16 departments.

17 But you got to understand here that
18 there's a tremendous disconnect here. You're
19 looking to apply for a position, which you're
20 already in, I understand that you, but you're
21 looking to apply for a position that quite
22 frankly you're going to advocate for consumer
23 rights when this county paid out \$295,000 for
24 somebody's civil rights being violated.

25 MR. CAPECE: But that was not my

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2 decision. I did not make the decision to make
3 it out.

4 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: But you
5 carried it out though.

6 MR. CAPECE: I didn't physically
7 carry it out. I passed it on to my
8 detectives.

9 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Not
10 physically but you instructed two detectives
11 to do so. You could have instructed them to
12 go after some murderers.

13 MR. CAPECE: It's a paramilitary
14 organization. If I would have refused that
15 order I would have been probably terminated.

16 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: If you
17 refused that order you would be in a much
18 better standing today. Do you understand Mr.
19 Capece, do you understand the significance of
20 this?

21 MR. CAPECE: Yes, I do.

22 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: We, as a
23 body -- because you're smiling and smirking.

24 MR. CAPECE: No, no. I'm not
25 smiling. I'm saying of course I understand.

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2 You know me. You know when I ran the First
3 Precinct.

4 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: I do know
5 you. That's why I couldn't make the
6 connection.

7 MR. CAPECE: When PAL didn't want
8 to have a dance for the minority kids in
9 Roosevelt I stood up and I put my officers
10 there. We put a metal detector and we let
11 those kids have a dance. Kids were able to be
12 goofy kids without guns or anything. So, what
13 you're implying is you're trying to imply that
14 I'm something that I'm not.

15 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Mr. Capece,
16 that's why I started out by saying that in my
17 time in serving the legislature since 2002
18 I've know you. This is above any of this had
19 happened. But I knew you in your capacity.
20 That's why I brought it up. Because I
21 couldn't --

22 MR. CAPECE: I'm glad you did. I
23 want to defend myself.

24 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Because I
25 couldn't reconcile in my mind -- and I haven't

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2 talked to you since then -- I couldn't
3 reconcile in my mind these particular cases,
4 the Tusillo versus yourself, as well as the
5 Randy White situation. It didn't seem like
6 the same person that was serving in the
7 capacity as the First Precinct commander.

8 MR. CAPECE: Kevan, Tusillo, the
9 judge threw it out before it went to the
10 jury. It was a ridiculous case. Mr. Tuccillo
11 sues constantly.

12 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: You cleared
13 that one up. The one that I have a bigger
14 issue with which is tied with the civil
15 rights, I don't know if you're going to be
16 able to clear this one up for us.

17 MR. CAPECE: Well, I'm a man of
18 my word, you know that, and I'm telling you
19 what my word is. I was given a direct order.
20 I'm in a paramilitary organization. I
21 followed the order because it was a legal
22 order. It wasn't an illegal order. I'm not
23 argue with Kathleen Rice's assessment. I did
24 not go in front of the district attorney's,
25 that board for public corruption. I did not

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2 in front of the board. Commissioner did. I
3 did not.

4 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: I'm going
5 to say this in summation. You said a lot of
6 good things in terms of what you want to do
7 with the department. We hope that you're able
8 to accomplish most of those things. But
9 looking in the light of fact that some of
10 these situations, I mean, the county paid out
11 \$295,000 in a violation of Randy White's
12 rights. Which I understand the whole thing
13 about you were directed or you were ordered to
14 do it. But your involvement and based on the
15 lawsuit you were named in it, I just have a
16 tremendous problem recommending to my side of
17 the aisle to vote for in your affirmation for
18 director of consumer affairs. So, we're going
19 to vote in the negative.

20 And that being said, at the same
21 time -- I'm sorry, Legislator Solages is going
22 to vote in the positive. But the rest of us
23 are going to vote in the negative.

24 That being said, I truly hope that
25 what happened in this particular case with

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2 Mr. White never happens again and that you
3 truly are a defender of people's rights.
4 Because obviously in the case of Randy White
5 they were violated. But thank you.

6 MR. CAPECE: I'm a man of my word
7 and I'm giving you my word. If I break that
8 word then I'm not a man of my word. I'm
9 giving you my word on what I will do. Thank
10 you.

11 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: We're
12 going to open it up to other legislators and
13 just ask that as we have with the minority
14 leader whoever's speaking let them finish what
15 they're speaking before. We all up here start
16 interrupting.

17 My first point is, there was a lot
18 of passion about concern about your role as
19 consumer affairs commissioner. It's a little
20 bit troubling to me because there was silence
21 before, up until December 31st, when that
22 organization, that agency was run into the
23 ground. I mean, you had applicants,
24 contractors, waiting for months, months upon
25 months upon months to get applications.

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2 People losing their livelihood. The office
3 was a disaster. The way they kept their
4 finances. The number of hearings that they
5 weren't having. But we're going to go into
6 detail on this. But it would have been nice
7 to see that passion before the current
8 administration came in.

9 Look, you've spent 37 years in the
10 police department. The list of your titles
11 and service is extraordinary. You've received
12 awards from numerous community organizations.
13 Baldwin PTA, Bellmore Chamber of Commerce,
14 Uniondale Civic Association, Roosevelt Chamber
15 of Commerce, Long Island Clergy Task Force,
16 Latino African-American Clergy Association,
17 Nassau County Explorers, etcetera. You are
18 serving now and have served for some time as
19 an adjunct professor of criminal justice.

20 So, to leave the implication out
21 there that somehow you cannot be trusted to do
22 the right thing in the Department of Consumer
23 Affairs is wrong. If we apply that same
24 standard we're applying to you about anything
25 that any one up here wants to do with our

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2 careers, I'm sure we can go into the pasts of
3 many, many people in public life and they
4 would not be found trustworthy if that
5 standard is applied.

6 Look, I mean, you've explained your
7 role in the process. Obviously you were
8 exonerated by the district attorney's office.
9 Found that you did nothing illegal. The
10 county did pay out and you described the
11 decisions that were made by the commissioner
12 of police and it resulted in a financial loss
13 to this county. Which was probably the right
14 decision. Because, as the minority leader
15 indicated, there's lots of people with
16 warrants and that was directed from what I
17 understand from the record.

18 But getting back to my main point.
19 You've had an incredible career of service and
20 you have every ability to run this department
21 the way it's supposed to be run. Again, I
22 think you're the right man for this job.
23 Anyone else? Legislator Solages.

24 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Thank you
25 very much. To the presiding officer, you

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2 truly spoke very eloquently and I thank you
3 very much for your words.

4 And to Mr. Capece, I have done a
5 lot of research on you. Spoken to a lot of
6 people in those areas that you served for
7 multiple years, over 30 years, and they all
8 say great things about you. I have one
9 question to ask you. Have you learned from
10 your experience?

11 MR. CAPECE: Yes, I have. My
12 reputation is everything to me.

13 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: That's
14 great. I went to church last weekend at Saint
15 Boniface and the priest kept on talking about
16 how when you forgive you operate from a
17 position of strength. And based on the fact
18 that you told me that you learned I support
19 your appointment. I do plan on voting for
20 your appointment. And consumers of Nassau
21 County need your help. I've already referred
22 some constituent concerns to your office. As
23 a Christian, I forgive you and I'm a big fan
24 of second chances. Congratulations. Thank
25 you.

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2 MR. CAPECE: I look forward to
3 working with every legislator.

4 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
5 DeRiggi-Whitton.

6 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: I
7 just want to mention about the concerns that
8 we've had with that office. We kept the same
9 commissioner who had been here under a few
10 different administrations in different roles
11 and I thought he was really trying to do a
12 good job. Have you been able to increase the
13 staffing at all since you've been there or
14 have you had any direct conversation with the
15 county executive about that?

16 MR. CAPECE: I've had
17 conversations with the deputy county
18 executive. Myself and my acting deputy we
19 have a meeting Thursday with Andy Persich and
20 we're going to discuss in the budget, I did
21 read the budget for 2022 even though I didn't
22 write it, I have three empty positions. I'm
23 hoping to hire three investigators. And I'm
24 going to try to hire or rehire someone who
25 worked in another department to work part

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2 time. Just to do our time and leave and our
3 purchasing.

4 Listen, I'm a realist. I'd love to
5 have 40 people. I know you're not going to
6 give me another 21 people. That's not
7 happening. So I have to look at it like I did
8 in the police department because everything
9 was cut, cut, cut there. I have to look at
10 it. We have to see where our priorities are.
11 And I think I articulated my priority is that
12 the citizens think, not think, they know we're
13 going to work for them. So I have to put my
14 emphasis on streamlining.

15 It's an arduous process to download
16 everything online. I have to thank the staff
17 and I have to thank Kenny. We have already
18 changed some of the procedures to renew your
19 license. We've already done that. I'm hoping
20 to, probably we're hoping by June if we get
21 some more staffing, we're going to be up to
22 date.

23 Also, there was a sprinkler rebate
24 program. Almost 900 people applied. Only 300
25 people were paid. I have to go through -- and

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2 there was another, to be all fair, there was
3 another -- 358 people were paid, there's
4 another 85 approved. I have to go through 400
5 something applications. I spoke to Kenny and
6 the staff. We're going to try to do 50 a
7 week. So if I have to pay another 400 out.
8 I'm hoping in two months in two and a half
9 months to get that done.

10 Because I myself have that
11 sprinkler. I didn't know about the rebate. I
12 didn't get the rebate. But I got that the
13 sprinkler and I have New York American Water
14 or whatever they call themselves. I wish I
15 had a \$200 bill. I live in Malverne. My
16 bills in the summertime are three and change.
17 However, since I put that system in it went
18 down. I saved about 400 bucks. I'm going to
19 work hard to get that done. It's going to
20 take a lot of extra work. The system we have
21 to work with it. But thank you.

22 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON:
23 You're going to get approved there's no
24 doubt. I stand with the minority leader in
25 the fact that I feel that it's just not the

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2 right message for us to send, you know, to our
3 constituents. However, I hope you prove us
4 wrong and I hope that, as Legislator Solages
5 mentioned, that now you follow your gut and
6 you follow your heart. You're not in a
7 paramilitary situation anymore. If you have a
8 problem we're always here. You're going to be
9 dealing with a lot of different levels of
10 human beings in your capacity. Please make
11 sure that you take what you've learned from
12 the past and prove us wrong and do a good,
13 fair job.

14 MR. CAPECE: I'm going to work
15 hard to prove you wrong.

16 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: I'm
17 counting on it.

18 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Mr.
19 Krompier you've been here all day. Is there
20 anything that you wanted to say?

21 MR. KROMPIER: I'm not on the
22 speakers list. Just a couple of things.
23 First of all, I want to introduce my intern,
24 Michael Disler. He's in the intern program at
25 Nassau Community College. So some of the

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2 departments that you have that are looking to
3 create internship programs Nassau Community
4 College is here for you.

5 The second thing that's important
6 for me to say is and a second reason I'm here
7 is that today was an appointment day and I had
8 hoped that some appointments would have been
9 made in conjunction with the Nassau Community
10 College. It did not happen but hopefully it
11 will happen at your next meeting.

12 Most importantly, I have an intern
13 here and we hear very often about people who
14 work in government and they're not qualified,
15 they're lazy, they only care about themselves
16 and that's the biggest message that he got
17 here today. Watching you ask the kinds of
18 questions that needed to be asked, hearing
19 every one of your appointees put together a
20 presentation that convinced me that they were
21 the right people for the job.

22 And also, you're not getting rich
23 sitting at this table and I appreciate all of
24 that as well. Because of COVID there are some
25 of you I haven't seen for a couple of years.

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2 I know that you have Nassau Community College
3 it's very important to you and I'm going to
4 leave you with this. I'm going to try to be
5 bipartisan. Nassau Community College has to
6 be built back better. It has to be made great
7 again. At one point in time we had 24,000
8 students. We're down to just under 11,000.
9 So, many of our young residents out there have
10 missed opportunities that would have made
11 their lives and changed their lives and that
12 has to be changed. So thank you very much.

13 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
14 Mule.

15 LEGISLATOR MULE: Thank you
16 presiding officer. Mr. Capece. I too will be
17 voting no.

18 MR. KROMPIER: I'm going to
19 interfere. Something just occurred to me.
20 Nassau County had the first consumer affairs
21 department in the country, and I was one of
22 the first consumer education teachers in the
23 country teaching at Holy Trinity high school
24 in Hicksville. This department is so
25 important to all of us. Thank you.

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2 LEGISLATOR MULE: So, I too will
3 be voting no but I'm in the camp of I hope you
4 prove us wrong. I just have to say that when
5 you said I had no choice that gave me chills.
6 Not in a good way. We always have a choice.
7 I sympathize with the fact that you were
8 looking out for your family. But we always
9 have a choice. If we choose to do something
10 that we know is wrong history has shown us
11 where that leads us in too many occasions.
12 Tragic occasions. I just want to say I hope
13 you have learned. That you will bring that
14 learning into this new position.

15 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO:
16 Mr. Capece, during your 37 years, obviously
17 you started more down the chain, but during
18 those years there occasionally became times
19 when your supervisors would give you an order
20 that you didn't necessarily agree with?

21 MR. CAPECE: More than a few.

22 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: It's part
23 of being part of a paramilitary organization,
24 right?

25 MR. CAPECE: Correct.

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2 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Legislator
3 Gaylor.

4 LEGISLATOR GAYLOR: Thank you
5 presiding officer. And congratulations on
6 your appointment today. There's no doubt in
7 my mind you're going to get approved by this
8 legislative body. First of all, I'd like to
9 thank you and your family for a long line of
10 public service. I think if my memory serves
11 me correct your dad was also a police officer
12 for a life time. But you had a long and
13 distinguished career.

14 I appreciate the energy that you
15 come before us today and the energy that
16 you're going to bring to the consumer affairs
17 department. Without a doubt, consumer affairs
18 is probably, maybe right behind assessment, as
19 one of the bigger problem areas that the last
20 administration left behind for this
21 administration in my mind to have to reconcile
22 with. You come before us with a lot of
23 energy, a lot of great ideas. I know you will
24 be successful. I wish you the best and hope
25 that you deliver results as timely as

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2 possible. We're looking forward to that.

3 MR. CAPECE: Thank you. And this
4 gentleman said not too many years ago consumer
5 affairs was number one in the state if not the
6 country. That's my goal. I'm very goal
7 oriented. I want to have a goal and that's
8 the goal I'm going to have.

9 LEGISLATOR GAYLOR: I know you
10 are. Thank you.

11 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: I would
12 just echo that you have some people who are
13 there who are hard working, sincere,
14 conscientious and very talented people in the
15 office. You're going to be able to do some
16 things and rely on them.

17 Anyone else? There being no
18 further debate or discussion, all in favor
19 signify by saying aye. Those opposed? It
20 passes by a vote of 13 to six.

21 There is only one item left on the
22 calendar which is Item 38, Resolution 28. A
23 resolution to amend Resolution 119 as amended
24 by resolution number one of 2022 establishing
25 the special legislative task force to combat

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2 antisemitism.

3 Moved by Legislator Pilip.

4 Seconded by Legislator Giuffre. Anyone want
5 to discuss this or you all know what it
6 contains? Legislator Drucker.

7 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Hi.

8 MR. LEIMONE: Chris Leimone from
9 the administration.

10 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Just a
11 couple of things. Obviously I commend the
12 county executive for his commitment on this
13 issue. That goes without saying. But I have
14 to tell you time is a wasting. This bill
15 passed us, we passed this bill back in the
16 summer and the bill was signed in January.
17 And now I'm just afraid that with this new
18 amendment, it's not that I'm not going to
19 support it, but I'm just afraid that it's
20 going to become unwieldy.

21 The law that we passed called for
22 five community members and now we're going to
23 have 18. I don't know how we're going to ever
24 be able to get a consensus among 18 different
25 opinions and different community leaders with

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2 different agendas. And we have more
3 legislators now. I always welcome the
4 participation of my colleagues on the
5 legislature but I'm concerned.

6 Now we have deadlines in terms of
7 dates, Chris. We wanted to have it
8 completed. The statute calls for a 60 day
9 public comment period with public hearings.
10 We need to have it done by April 28th,
11 Holocaust Remembrance Day. We haven't even
12 had a meeting yet.

13 Now this law's going to be passed
14 and then it's got to be signed and now we're
15 going to be into March and April is the next
16 month. I'm just afraid that it's going to
17 become too unwieldy. I don't mind if the
18 county executive wanted to tweak it a little
19 bit but to go from five community members to
20 18. What is the justification for that?

21 MR. LEIMONE: As was discussed at
22 the last committee meeting after passage of
23 the initial legislation, many Jewish community
24 members and leaders of different groups from
25 different sects from all across the county

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2 contacted the county executive interested in
3 serving on the task force. Which created an
4 interest and a need to expand the membership
5 personal to the county executive. He didn't
6 want to disenfranchise any members of the
7 Jewish community. And it was very important
8 to him considering the amount of input and the
9 amount of questions and interest that he had
10 in the task force.

11 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: It' not a
12 matter of disenfranchising them. It's a
13 matter of seeking input from community members
14 that are well respected. I think we can
15 narrow that down. We were poised. We had our
16 first meeting and then we got a message that
17 the county executive asked us to postpone it.
18 Which we did. But I think we were poised to
19 be able to, each of us, collaborate on the
20 task force, on both sides of the aisle, and
21 select community members that were worthy and
22 we discussed them and they were not
23 objectionable. None of them were politically
24 minded. They were all either clergy leaders
25 or respected members of Jewish organizations.

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2 But we're in a world right now that
3 is critical for us to get moving on this
4 situation. It's imperative. And I'm just
5 afraid that this amendment is going to make
6 the task force unwieldy.

7 MR. LEIMONE: I understand your
8 concerns, legislator, but the county
9 executive, this is a very important initiative
10 to the county executive and he's ready, once
11 this amendment is passed and signed, to move
12 very promptly on this and move swiftly.

13 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: I really
14 hope that that's the case, Chris, because time
15 is of the essence when it comes to this issue,
16 as well as discussing discrimination and
17 hatred of all groups. But the antisemitism
18 that is on the rise throughout this country is
19 very concerning to me.

20 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Any other
21 questions or comments? All in favor of the
22 items signify by saying aye. Those opposed?
23 Carries unanimously.

24 Legislator Rhoads makes a motion to
25 adjourn. Seconded by Legislator Drucker. All

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in favor of adjourning signify by saying aye.

Those opposed? Carries unanimously.

(Meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATION

I, FRANK GRAY, a Notary
Public in and for the State of New
York, do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing is a true and
accurate transcript of my stenographic
notes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have
hereunto set my hand this fifth day of
March 2022.

FRANK GRAY