	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE
3	COMMITTEES MEETING
4	* * * * * *
5	RICHARD NICOLELLO
6	PRESIDING OFFICER
7	* * * * * *
8	RULES COMMITTEE
9	RICHARD NICOLELLO
10	CHAIRMAN
11	* * *
12	FINANCE COMMITTEE
13	HOWARD KOPEL
14	CHAIRMAN
15	
16	County Executive and Legislative Building
17	1550 Franklin Avenue
18	Mineola, New York
19	
20	* * * * * *
21	
22	Monday, October 24, 2022
23	2:59 p.m.
24	
25	TAKEN BY: KAREN LORENZO, OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER
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	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	APPEARANCES
3	
4	RULES
5	LEGISLATOR RICHARD NICOLELLO Chair
6	LEGISLATOR HOWARD KOPEL Vice Chair
7	LEGISLATOR STEVEN RHOADS
8	LEGISLATOR LAURA SCHAEFER
9	LEGISLATOR KEVAN ABRAHAMS Ranking Member
10	LEGISLATOR DELIA DERIGGI-WHITTON
11	LEGISLATOR SIELA BYNOE
12	* * * *
13	MICHAEL PULITZER Clerk of the Legislature
14	* * * *
15	FINANCE
16	LEGISLATOR HOWARD KOPEL CHAIRMAN
17	LEGISLATOR JOHN FERRETTI VICE CHAIR
18	LEGISLATOR THOMAS MCKEVITT
19	LEGISLATOR ROSE MARIE WALKER
20	LEGISLATOR ARNOLD DRUCKER RANKING MEMBER
21	LEGISLATOR CARRIE SOLAGES
22	LEGISLATOR JOSHUA LAFAZAN
23	
24	
25	
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	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
1	
2	ALSO APPEARED:
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4	Department of Assessment
5	Matthew Cronin, Acting Assessor
6	Dave Ross
7	Michelle Spara, Deputy Assessor
8	****
9	Mr. Diamond, Homeowner
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	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: I'm going to
3	call the Rules Committee to order.
4	Please call the roll for the Rules
5	Committee?
6	CLERK PULITZER: Rules Committee
7	roll call.
8	Legislator Siela Bynoe.
9	LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Here.
10	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Delia
11	Deriggi-Whitton?
12	LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: Here.
13	CLERK PULITZER: Ranking Member
14	Kevan Abrahams?
15	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Here.
16	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Laura
17	Schaefer?
18	LEGISLATOR SCHAEFER: Here.
19	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Steven
20	Rhoads?
21	LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Present.
22	CLERK PULITZER: Vice Chairman
23	Howard Kopel?
24	LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Here.
25	CLERK PULITZER: Chairman Richard
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2	Nicolello?
3	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Here.
4	CLERK PULITZER: We have a quorum,
5	Chair.
6	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: We have a
7	quorum of the Rules Committee. Open the
8	Finance Committee as well.
9	CLERK PULITZER: Yes, sir.
10	Roll call Finance Committee.
11	Legislator Joshua Lafazan?
12	LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN: Here.
13	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator
14	Carrie A. Solages?
15	LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Here.
16	CLERK PULITZER: Ranking Member
17	Arnold Drucker?
18	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Here.
19	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Rose
20	Marie Walker?
21	LEGISLATOR WALKER: Here.
22	CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Thomas
23	McKevitt?
24	LEGISLATOR MCKEVITT: Here.
25	CLERK PULITZER: Vice Chairman John
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2	Ferretti?
3	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Here.
4	CLERK PULITZER: Chairman Howard
5	Kopel.
6	LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Here.
7	CLERK PULITZER: We have a quorum.
8	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: All right.
9	Deputy Presiding Officer Kopel is going
10	to be making a motion with respect to
11	these items. That motion is being made
12	in both the Rules and Finance Committees.
13	LEGISLATOR KOPEL: We're going to
14	call items for both Rules and Finance
15	Committees: 339-22, 340-22, 341-22.
16	I'll make the motion for both committees.
17	In Finance, Legislator Ferretti seconds
18	and in Rules, Legislator Abrahams
19	seconds.
20	Clerk Items 339-341-22 which are
21	resolutions authorizing the County
22	Assessor and/or County Treasurer, and
23	Receivers of Taxes of the Towns of
24	Hempstead, North Hempstead, and Oyster
25	Bay to partially exempt certain real
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[RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	properties situated in various school
3	districts assessed to designated owners
4	appearing on the assessment rolls for the
5	specified school and county years. The
6	items are before us.
7	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Mr. Cronin, I
8	think you're gonna come up and give a
9	presentation.
10	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Good
11	afternoon, Legislature. Matthew Cronin,
12	Acting County Assessor, Nassau County.
13	I'm here today to ask you to correct
14	the 842 parcels that were here for the
15	correction of our petition for the Town
16	of Hempstead, the Town of North Hempstead
17	and the Town of Oyster Bay.
18	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Do you want
19	to just give us a little bit more
20	description?
21	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Sure. We
22	were made aware of a clerical error in
23	our system in October. A column that was
24	on an Excel spreadsheet was uploaded to
25	the system as opposed to a different
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	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	calculation. And we're here today to try
3	to rectify that situation.
4	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: So Mr.
5	Diamond, who was here before and spoke
6	before, said that his property has not
7	had any demolition, destruction or fire
8	damage in the decades he's been here. So
9	why would his property have shown up on
10	in this error?
11	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: So we have
12	quantitative adjustments on properties
13	and that would have accounted for a
14	change in the Phase and Exemption Act of
15	2020.
16	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: But I think
17	his question was why would it have
18	affected his property in particular? Was
19	it just simply a matter of chance that
20	that the error affected his property, or
21	something else?
22	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: That would
23	be the facts of the well, a
24	quantitative adjustment on the property
25	would constitute a change in the phase
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	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	and exemption amount. If it's something
3	that is an individual parcel, I'd be
4	happy to speak to the constituent about
5	that.
6	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Okay. But I
7	mean, just in terms of our understanding,
8	is it, when you say quantitative Blah,
9	blah, blah; is it an error?
10	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Sorry, any
11	negative inventory change on the
12	property.
13	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: In our
14	parlance, is that an error made by the
15	random error that affected his property
16	and 841 others?
17	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: It's not an
18	error, no.
19	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: It's not an
20	error?
21	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: For a
22	negative change on the parcel, no. But
23	the 842 that were uploaded in the system
24	had the wrong amount applied via the
25	exemption.
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2	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Yeah.
3	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: I'm sorry
4	if I'm confusing I'm trying to. Unless
5	I'm not answering the question correctly.
6	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Legislator
7	Ferretti.
8	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: How are you
9	doing, Acting Assessor? I think what
10	we're trying to get at is, from Mr.
11	Diamond's testimony it sounded like an
12	error like this would only happen to
13	those properties who had a change to the
14	property that would change their
15	assessment because it's a frozen roll,
16	right?
17	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Correct.
18	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: So Mr.
19	Diamond's contention, if I'm getting it
20	correctly, is that he did not have a
21	change to his property. He didn't do any
22	work, he didn't get a permit, he didn't
23	have a fire, he didn't have construction.
24	So why was his property one of these 842
25	when there was no quantitative change to
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2	to his assessment? Mr. Diamond, am I
3	getting that right?
4	(Whereupon, Mr. Diamond
5	acknowledges from the
6	audience.)
7	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: I'd have to
8	look into it individually, and I can get
9	back to you on that.
10	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Please get
11	back to me because Mr. Diamond's one of
12	my constituents. I'll get a hold of him,
13	but I'd like the answer to that.
14	Also, Mr. Diamond brought up that
15	this error was known to the County in
16	June; is that the case?
17	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: That's not
18	true, no.
19	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Okay. So it
20	was October. We knew nothing about this
21	until October?
22	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Yes.
23	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: But I just
24	wanted to get those. Those are the two
25	questions I had. Thank you.
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]	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: The
3	spreadsheet was uploaded in June, but the
4	error was caught in October; a couple of
5	weeks ago.
6	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Okay. So it's
7	not like the County knew this in June and
8	didn't notify anybody or anything?
9	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Absolutely
10	not. As we knew, we
11	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: And what type
12	of notice was done to those who are
13	affected?
14	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: So we sent
15	the data files over to the receivers of
16	taxes that showed the updated
17	information. With that, I included a
18	letter that was expected to be sent out
19	once, I believe, that we voted on it
20	today, and that was going to be
21	communication that was given to all the
22	constituents that were affected by this
23	clerical error.
24	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Okay. All
25	right. Thank you.
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2	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Have you
3	confirmed that this error affected
4	(Whereupon, Mr. Diamond
5	interrupts proceeding and is
6	addressed.)
7	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Have you
8	confirmed that the universe of properties
9	affected by this is limited to the 842?
10	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Yes.
11	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: So no other
12	properties other than 842 were affected
13	by this?
14	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: That's it.
15	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Okay.
16	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Thank you,
17	Presiding Officer.
18	Mr. Cronin, I just have several
19	questions just to follow up from our
20	hearing from a couple of weeks ago.
21	So if I understand it correctly, the
22	data has been sent to the Assessors, and
23	since that point or in between that point
24	of when the hearing happened and today,
25	did the notices go out to residents
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2	correcting their
3	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: I'm not
4	sure about that. I don't know if the
5	receivers had have sent anything.
6	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: It's our
7	understanding from hearing from several
8	constituents that they have sent them
9	out. And I'm concerned because,
10	obviously, then this Body or this county
11	is participating in something that
12	shouldn't have happened or was illegally
13	happened. Can anyone in your office
14	verify whether or not those notices were
15	sent out?
16	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: We can
17	certainly look into it. I can't at this
18	moment tell you one way or the other. But
19	once again, once we did identify that the
20	issue existed, we did act upon it
21	proactively, as I said in my last
22	statement. You and I had a lot of
23	conversation. Department of Assessment is
24	notorious for being reactive to
25	situations, and this was an opportunity
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	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	for me to be proactive.
3	Once I identified the issue, I sent
4	it over to the receivers as diligently as
5	I could. What they do with that
6	information is not, you know, not my
7	call. I'm not aware if there was anything
8	sent.
9	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Can you verify
10	with the receiver taxes whether or not
11	anyone has paid the taxes?
12	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: I can ask
13	for sure.
14	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: When can you
15	get back to this Body with that
16	information?
17	I mean, obviously, we're going to go
18	forward today because it's important that
19	we are able to establish the adjusted
20	rolls or address these corrections or
21	error. We're going to have to go forward
22	with that today. And it's unfortunate
23	that that gentlemen like Mr. Diamond for
24	being in the position that they're in.
25	But I do have a grave concern. I
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2	want to ensure that whatever was done in
3	terms of the assurance between when the
4	error was found and when these actual
5	corrected statements go out: One, it's
6	actually corrected, that there is no
7	other errors. At least not with 842 or
8	any other errors. Can you verify what has
9	been issued to the Receiver of Taxes is
10	sound?
11	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: I can
12	verify that. And I was just made aware
13	that the letters did go out in the mail
14	from the ones that I sent out.
15	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: They did go
16	out?
17	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Yes.
18	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: All the
19	respective towns are just
20	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: All of the
21	towns. I was just made aware of that.
22	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: I'm hearing
23	from counsel that not North Hempstead.
24	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: I was just
25	told by my administration that the
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2	letters were sent out.
3	As I said before, this was an error
4	that happened. It was a human error. Once
5	we found this out, I did my best to get
6	ahead of it and to try to make it as
7	clear for the taxpayer that this was an
8	error. I owned it and it's something that
9	they don't deserve to have an effect on.
10	I did my best to get the information
11	out there to the receivers. What they do
12	with that information; it's not my call.
13	But as the acting county assessor, I want
14	transparency for everybody, and that's
15	what I did.
16	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: But if the
17	receiver receives it, they normally would
18	think to send it out because they're not
19	hearing that anything's wrong, until you
20	notify them that something was wrong
21	later on. Right?
22	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: I'm sorry.
23	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: For example,
24	normally when the receiver has received
25	the data the receiver of taxes
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2	received the data, they generally would
3	send it out. Unless they hear from the
4	County that there's an error that was
5	made.
6	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Yeah. I
7	can't speak for how the receivers conduct
8	that. I really don't know.
9	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: But you're
10	So when you send the data to them, the
11	intention is for them to send it out?
12	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Eventually,
13	yes.
14	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Eventually. So
15	if they do not hear anything in regards
16	to the roll having any amount of errors,
17	they're going to send it out, correct?
18	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: I can't
19	speak to that. What the receivers do, I
20	can't.
21	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: No, it's
22	general intentions of what they plan to
23	do. I mean, we don't send it to them to
24	verify it. We send it to them to
25	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: I
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2	understand what you're saying.
3	Intention. Right, right, right. I
4	apologize.
5	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: No, that's
6	okay. That's okay.
7	So just going forward, can you just
8	elaborate a little bit more on what your
9	department is going to do to ensure that
10	we don't get this level of errors going
11	forward?
12	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Right. So
13	we have implemented in our system what
14	the gentleman standing next to me and I
15	have worked on for about two years now,
16	which are review codes, drop down codes
17	in the system which will clarify things
18	like you're speaking about. It would be
19	much more focused area that we could
20	quality control as opposed to the 2023
21	tax roll in the system. A lot of that
22	data was unavailable at that time. It was
23	more scattered, if you will.
24	We've really honed it in the past
25	two years and able to identify these
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2	issues on a much tighter scale. It's
3	something that we've implemented in the
4	past two years.
5	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: So you've
6	implemented some level of quality
7	assurance, correct?
8	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Yes,
9	Correct.
10	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: And I guess
11	from that standpoint, so when the next
12	data dump that you make to the receiver
13	of taxes the next data drop off, I
14	should say. When does the lead time
15	begin? When you start that assurance,
16	that quality assurance. Does that
17	begin because it sounded like you just
18	found the error in October after you just
19	sent it. Is this something that you're
20	going through and scrutinizing for a
21	series of weeks, months?
22	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Well, it's
23	something that we review on a weekly
24	basis. We do. We do quality control
25	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Is that going
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2	forward now or that's how you did it in
3	the past?
4	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: It's how
5	we've been doing it since since May,
6	since I've gotten here.
7	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: I'm confused.
8	How come the error was found in October?
9	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Because as
10	I said, it was uploaded in June and it
11	all looked okay and that was the danger
12	of it. It was a number that looked okay
13	in the system. And once we looked at it
14	and realized that the number was not at a
15	40%, it was at a base number, it slipped
16	through and it was a human error. It was
17	something that we're forcing the system
18	to calculate manual calculations. And
19	when you upload things into a system
20	that's meant to run from A to Z without
21	any human interruption, it slipped
22	through.
23	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: So I'm not too
24	sure. How do you address the actual human
25	error from happening again, if you have
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2	the same quality assurance process that
3	was implemented now?
4	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Well, it's
5	a very fair question. We constantly look
6	at data. It is never a human error is
7	always a possibility. In a parcel count
8	of 425,000 parcels, it was something that
9	we caught. And with scrutiny and more
10	focus on it. Now that I realized how it
11	happened, we can look at it differently
12	now.
13	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: So I'm not
14	trying to put words in your mouth, can
15	you how can you assure this Body that
16	this error, this same type of error won't
17	happen again?
18	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Through
19	more quality control measures. Things
20	that I've continued to implement in this
21	office from day one, from both a human
22	perspective and a statistical
23	perspective, it's something that you've
24	got to go at it from two different
25	angles. And it's something that we've
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2	started to implement for the past, like I
3	said, few months and this one did get
4	through. And how do we do it? We
5	continue to move forward and to
6	scrutinize the data even further.
7	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: And then I
8	just want to go back again on a different
9	point. So the folks that have paid
10	already, because we found out that some
11	people have paid already, the residents
12	that have paid already, they're going to
13	be issued a refund in April?
14	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: I believe
15	June.
16	DEPUTY ASSESSOR SPARA: Michelle
17	Spara, Deputy Assessor. We've received
18	assurances from the receivers that
19	anybody who has paid before November
20	10th, they can refund right now.
21	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: They can
22	refund immediately?
23	DEPUTY ASSESSOR SPARA: Correct.
24	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: And how would
25	that refund take place?
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2	DEPUTY ASSESSOR SPARA: I believe
3	it's a check issued directly to the
4	homeowner from the receiver.
5	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: But I guess,
6	Michele, what I'm asking is also, how is
7	that paid for? Is it from the County?
8	The County Guarantees?
9	DEPUTY ASSESSOR SPARA: Yes.
10	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: And do we have
11	an idea of how much that is, of people
12	that
13	DEPUTY ASSESSOR SPARA: I do not. We
14	don't know how many have paid, but we can
15	find that out. I believe, as Mr. Cronin
16	had stated, we can find out exactly how
17	many people have paid and what that
18	dollar amount is.
19	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Okay. All
20	right.
21	Well, Mr. Cronin, if you could get
22	back to this legislative body with that
23	number.
24	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Absolutely.
25	LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: I appreciate
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2	it. Nothing further at this time.
3	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Okay.
4	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Thank you,
5	Presiding Officer. Minority leader asked
6	a couple of my questions.
7	Thank you, Mr. Cronin, for being
8	here and your office as well.
9	I contend that I have no greater
10	intelligence than the average person, but
11	I have a trouble understanding most of
12	the things you said.
13	Legislator Ferretti talked about,
14	for Mr. Diamond's case in particular,
15	there being a, I think he said a
16	quantitative discrepancy. But wouldn't
17	I don't want to mince words, but isn't it
18	really more of a qualitative adjustment?
19	Because he's talking about the adjustment
20	being his house is classified as
21	something that was destruction,
22	construction, alteration, whatever.
23	That's a qualitative description. The
24	quantitative would be the amount of his
25	taxes, correct?
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	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: No.
3	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Okay. That's
4	where I'm losing you. So sorry. I think
5	that I always thought the distinction in
6	a qualitative means the classification,
7	the characterization of the property, and
8	the quantitative would be the amount of
9	the taxes that he has to pay.
10	MR. ROSS: Good afternoon, Dan Ross.
11	The change I don't want to speak
12	specifics as to Mr. Diamond, because I
13	have to do research on it.
14	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: I'm just
15	talking about the language that he's
16	used. I'm not talking about his specific
17	house. I'm just talking about how it was
18	described by Legislator Ferretti myself,
19	because I'm not understanding. I'm
20	confused.
21	MR. ROSS: So we look at things when
22	we pull things from an inventory
23	perspective. So change in data: So
24	whether we went from simplicity, from
25	three bathrooms to two bathrooms; one
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	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	story to two stories; two stories to one
3	story; change in square footage, all
4	falls into the type of change that we're
5	referencing, which is quantitative or
6	qualitative?
7	MR. ROSS: It would be quantitative.
8	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Okay. I always
9	thought qualitative. All right, let's
10	move on. So continue. I'm sorry for
11	interrupting you.
12	MR. ROSS: That's it.
13	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Oh. So you
14	mentioned a number to me that just all of
15	a sudden stuck out: 40%.
16	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Right. That
17	was the Phase and Exemption Act of 2020.
18	It's currently in its third year, and
19	each year the amount is reduced by 20%.
20	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: So that's a
21	systemic control system.
22	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Correct.
23	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: So now if you
24	could walk back and explain to me, that's
25	the magic number you look for when you're
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RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022 1 2 going over the data or no? 3 ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: No, no, no, no. That would be the amount of the 4 5 exemption that is applied to this tax 6 roll for 2023. So that phase and 7 exemption value would be you have a base number that was derived from the 2020 8 final to the '21 tentative back in, I 9 10 think it was 2020, that was the base 11 amount. 12 So each year -- so the first year of 13 the exemption, it was 80% of that number. 14 It is reduced from your assessment to 15 create your taxable assessment. After 16 that is 60% in the next year. And then 17 we're at the third year, so it's 40%. LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Now understand. 18 19 Thank you for that. See, that I can 20 understand. 21 So I can actually answer 22 constituents when they ask me this 23 question: Specifically, describe how you 24 learned of this error. 25 ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: So we were TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516)414-3516 _____28 _

	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	reviewing the data in the system and I
3	had a look and I said, that doesn't look
4	right to me. There was something
5	after we sent it out, I said that that
6	does not look like the 40% of the base on
7	the adjustment. That looks like the
8	value that we needed to subtract it by.
9	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: That was just a
10	subjective evaluation by you personally?
11	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: We had
12	interoffice a second look. We did look
13	at it from our Quality Control Division.
14	We did. And then we reviewed the
15	information that was brought to our
16	attention and that's what we sent to the
17	receivers with the updated data files.
18	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: And that
19	quality control is based on the
20	improvements that you said you have made
21	or worked on over the past couple of
22	years; is that what you're saying?
23	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: That's
24	correct.
25	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: So when you
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	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	looked over the numbers, it stood out to
3	you based on what you've been doing for
4	the past
5	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: It was
6	identified by my quality control unit,
7	who then brought it to my attention.
8	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: What exactly
9	did they identify and bring to your
10	attention?
11	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Saying that
12	the numbers didn't look right to them,
13	that it looked like the base amount was
14	taken as the actual exemption amount not
15	reduced to the base. And I looked at
16	that and I confirmed their suspicion. And
17	that's why I'm standing here before you
18	today.
19	LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: So I assume
20	going forward, your office is going to be
21	even more hypervigilant in taking a look
22	at these numbers going forward?
23	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Yeah. I
24	strive every day to do a better job than
25	the day I found it, and I know it sounds
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12it sounds corny, if you will, but I3really do. Every day we go in there, it's4a new day. And we have to look at this5data. It's scrutinized and it's something6that we we live and die by the data.7So, yes. Every day.8LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: So you don't9think that this particular error10represents any sort of trend?11ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: I don't12believe so. No.13LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Okay. I have14nothing further. Thank you so much.15LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Legislator16Ferretti.17LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: 842 houses; it
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15 LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Legislator 16 Ferretti.
16 Ferretti.
17 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: 842 houses; it
18 was all human error, correct?
19 ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Correct.
20 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Was it one
21 human? Multiple humans?
22 ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: It was it
23 was one unit. It was one spreadsheet that
24 was uploaded.
25 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: So it was one

	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	person that made the error, but it was
3	So I guess what I want to know is, was it
4	something that person was just doing
5	incorrectly each time he or she was doing
6	it?
7	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: No. It was
8	an upload of a spreadsheet that was put
9	into the system one time.
10	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: So it was one
11	spreadsheet with 842 parcels on it?
12	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Yes, that
13	was uploaded in June.
14	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: So that person
15	did something incorrectly on that sheet?
16	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Correct.
17	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: The rest of
18	the sheets have been looked over?
19	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Correct.
20	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: And they were
21	okay?
22	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Correct. You
23	ever used Excel?
24	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Kind of.
25	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: You can
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	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	hide columns and delete columns. The
3	wrong column was presenting itself as the
4	one to load. It was a human error.
5	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: So the wrong
6	column was presenting So in other
7	words, the column that was supposed to be
8	checked, or whatever, for the phase in,
9	wasn't?
10	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Correct.
11	It was hidden.
12	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: And so all 842
13	on that sheet, didn't get to phase in.
14	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: They got
15	the wrong phase in the wrong number.
16	So I say it's just simple math. If
17	the base number was 100 and the reduction
18	needed to be 20%, you should subtract 20
19	from that. The new base should be 80.
20	Instead, 20 was uploaded as the new
21	exemption amount.
22	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Instead of?
23	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Eighty.
24	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Okay. I guess
25	my point is, this was something clearly

	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	identifiable in terms of how the error
3	happened. It was only one employee,
4	correct?
5	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Correct.
6	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Okay. All
7	right. I just didn't know if it was like
8	840 different errors.
9	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: It was one
10	error.
11	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: So essentially
12	one error that affected 842 parcels.
13	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: That's
14	exactly right.
15	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Okay. Thank
16	you.
17	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: So you
18	mentioned quality control. So what
19	systems or procedures have you put in
20	place to say, double check to make sure
21	that this type of error does not
22	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: We look at
23	things from a both human perspective and
24	now a statistical perspective. We have an
25	analytics group that has now in the past

	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
1	ROLES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
2	six months taken front and center in the
3	check of the Quality Control Division. So
4	one of them being a no bias, very
5	numerical perspective. And one is a very
6	assessment appraisal-related perspective.
7	So the combination of the appraisal
8	background and the statistical
9	background, you do get a double look at
10	these parcels. And 842 parcels on the
11	roll of 425,000, something that I do take
12	personally. And a number like that, I
12	would like to bring it to zero. It's
14	
14	something that, once again, we look at
	this from a perspective of every single
16	bit of data. Whether it be I think 842
17	parcels is 0.001% of the assessment roll
18	the tax roll, but it still means
19	everything to us. So it's something that
20	we look at from two different angles now.
21	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Legislator
22	Deriggi-Whiton.
23	LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: I just
24	want to take a moment to tell that as a
25	Legislator, I appreciate your approach to

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	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	this, how you handled it from the time
3	you came here. You owned it and you
4	explained how it happened.
5	I can be honest. I might not
6	completely comprehend what you said in
7	some ways. And I think I'm not alone. But
8	I do appreciate that you did not did not
9	try to hide it or in any way disown it.
10	So that's refreshing. And I understand
11	how complicated this process is. And I
12	appreciate your candor and just being
13	straight with us.
14	I have one question: Do you feel
15	that this roll that we're about to
16	approve, you're confident it's accurate?
17	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: 100%.
18	LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: All
19	right. Thank you.
20	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: Thank you.
21	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Mr. Diamond,
22	since this affected your property, did
23	you want to add anything else?
24	MR. DIAMOND: There are two issues
25	here and that and they're getting
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confused. The first issue is the fact
that the properties were changed in the
first place. They were changed back in
June with no notice to anyone, no reque

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RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022

first place. They were changed back in June with no notice to anyone, no request for correction of errors, no transparency at all. Even if the changes were valid, then they still should have been done with transparency, with informing the homeowners that, yes, we're making a change to your property and this is why and here's your chance to dispute it. That's why I'm getting so angry sitting here and listening to to this, because that's one big piece. And nobody is addressing the fact that these changes were made in the first place.

LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: They said that although the error occurred in June, they didn't discover it until October.

MR. DIAMOND: That that error is a second piece.

LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: If the mistake that occurred was not known until October, how could they have notified you

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	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	that they had made an error?
3	MR. DIAMOND: That wasn't a mistake.
4	They consciously, they consciously went
5	into the system to change the assessment.
6	The way they did it was the mistake. But
7	they actually went in and consciously
8	changed the assessment. Do you agree with
9	that, Mr. Cronin?
10	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: No, Mr.
11	Diamond. Address your comments to us.
12	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Can I just
13	can I ask you a question, Mr. Diamond?
14	If I understand where you're coming from,
15	I think it's what I was kind of asking
16	the acting assessor before, I believe the
17	acting assessor stated that these errors
18	only happened to properties that had
19	quantitative changes; is that correct,
20	Acting Assessor? And that goes back to
21	the information he's going to be
22	providing to me. Because according to
23	you, your property did not undergo any
24	act that would result in a quantitative
25	change to your assessment. Because with
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RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
a frozen roll, the only reason you'd have
a quantitative change is if you made a
modification to your property, there was
destruction, fire, whatever, and you're
saying you didn't do that. So I think we
already kind of addressed that.
MR. DIAMOND: Not quite. Sorry. But
the point I'm trying to make is that even
if they were justified in making those
changes, they made them back in June and
they made them without any information to
the homeowners.
When I got my bill on October 3rd
and I looked at my bill and I looked and
saw that the TPP, which was supposed to
be 73, was actually seven, that's when I
knew that a mistake was made. But the
fact that they went in and made that

change in the first place without notifying me --

LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: But was your assessment changed?

MR. DIAMOND: Yes. Okay. There's two issues here. There's the issue of making

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	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	the change in the first place, which was
3	not a mistake, at least according to
4	them, but was something that they
5	consciously did.
6	But the second issue is that when
7	they went to make this change, they
8	messed it up by putting in the amount of
9	the adjustment, not
10	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: I get it, I
11	get it. And I think that we're going to
12	get the information from the Department
13	of Assessment that's going to at least
14	shed some light as to why your assessment
15	was changed.
16	But in terms of when you talk about
17	the transparency component, obviously
18	they're going to tell us why they changed
19	your assessment. But generally it may be
20	because you made a modification to the
21	property. And when you do that, what
22	comes with that is a change to your
23	assessment.
24	MR. DIAMOND: But if they can show
25	me what criteria they used to decide that
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	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022				
1	Roles and FINANCE COFFITTEES TO.24.2022				
2	my property is one of the 942. Ild be				
	my property is one of the 842, I'd be				
3	willing to accept.				
4	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: And that's				
5	what he's told us. He's going to get me				
6	the information. I will be				
7	MR. DIAMOND: You're still missing				
8	my point. Okay. Don't you agree that				
9	when they made the decision to make that				
10	change, that they should have informed me				
11	first? Wouldn't that be transparency?				
12	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Are you				
13	referring to a change in your assessment?				
14	MR. DIAMOND: Yes, they went and				
15	changed by assessment.				
16	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Everyone is				
17	sent a copy of their assessment in the				
18	mail.				
19	MR. DIAMOND: Right. No, no. They				
20	did that after the fact.				
21	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Look, I think				
22	that we're kind of saying the same thing				
23	and we're going in circles. The bottom				
24	line is they comply with all the				
25	statutory requirements in terms of				
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	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022
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2	sending you your proposed assessment.
3	MR. DIAMOND: So you're saying that
4	by going in after the fact and making a
5	change to the base exemption that,
6	therefore, changed my net taxable value,
7	that going in and doing that was totally
8	legal without informing me?
9	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: What I'm
10	telling you is I've asked for the
11	information from the acting assessor. If
12	he provides me information that indicates
13	that there was lack of notification as
14	the statute requires, that's certainly
15	something we're going to address.
16	MR. DIAMOND: You're dodging the
17	issue.
18	LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: I'm not. I'm
19	not. I think we've gone over this.
20	MR. DIAMOND: I don't understand why
21	when they first made this change,
22	homeowners weren't informed.
23	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: This is
24	okay. Now, I think we've gone completely
25	around the circle. I've said this before.

	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022				
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2	They've told you they inadvertently				
3	changed those 842				
4	MR. DIAMOND: No. You're blending				
5	the two				
6	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: No, you're				
7	misunderstanding.				
8	MR. DIAMOND: They're separate				
9	issues.				
10	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: You're simply				
11	not understanding what they're telling				
12	you, basically. I mean, I understand it.				
13	MR. DIAMOND: I understand it a lot				
14	better than you do.				
15	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Okay. Okay,				
16	we're good. All right. Thank you, sir.				
17	MR. DIAMOND: It's two separate				
18	issues here.				
19	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: All right.				
20	Thank you, sir.				
21	I would like to say that a couple of				
22	my legislative colleagues have indicated				
23	they appreciate your transparency. I				
24	would echo what they said, Mr. Cronin.				
25	And I would also say I would give you				
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	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022			
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2	some credit for at least moving to			
3	swiftly fix this.			
4	So did you have anything else you			
5	want to add?			
6	ACTING ASSESSOR CRONIN: No, I'm			
7	okay. Thank you.			
8	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Any other			
9	legislators?			
10	(Whereupon, no verbal			
11	response.)			
12	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: So we're in			
13	committees. I guess we'll have a vote in			
14	Finance first.			
15	LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Okay. Finance.			
16	Members of Finance voting on items 339,			
17	340 and 341. All those in favor of			
18	passing those three items, please say			
19	aye.			
20	(Whereupon, all members of			
21	the Finance Committee respond			
22	in favor.)			
23	LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Any opposed?			
24	(Whereupon, no verbal			
25	response.)			
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	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022					
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2	LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Those items					
3	passed unanimously. Thank you.					
4	Motion to adjourn Finance made by					
5	Mr. Ferretti and seconded by Mr. Lafazan.					
6	All those in favor of adjourning					
7	Finance, please say aye.					
8	(Whereupon, all members of					
9	the Finance Committee respond					
10	in favor.)					
11	LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Any opposed?					
12	Whereupon, no verbal					
13	response.)					
14	LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Finance is					
15	adjourned.					
16	(Whereupon, Finance					
17	Committee adjourns, 3:33 p.m.)					
18	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Rules					
19	Committee same three items: 339, 340 and					
20	341. Any further debated discussion?					
21	(Whereupon, no verbal					
22	response.)					
23	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Hearing none.					
24	All in favor signify by saying aye, Rules					
25	Committee.					
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	RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022					
1						
2	(Whereupon, all members of					
3	the Rules Committee respond in					
4	favor.)					
5	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Those					
6	opposed?					
7	(Whereupon, no verbal					
8	response.)					
9	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Passed					
10	unanimously.					
11	Motion to adjourn by Legislator					
12	Rhoads, seconded by Legislator Schaefer.					
13	All favor of adjourning Rules signify by					
14	saying aye.					
15	(Whereupon, all members of					
16	the Rules Committee respond in					
17	favor.)					
18	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Those					
19	opposed?					
20	(Whereupon, no verbal					
21	response.)					
22	LEGISLATOR NICOLLELO: Rules is					
23	adjourned.					
24	(Whereupon, the Rules					
25	Committee adjourns, 3:34 p.m.)					
	TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516)414-351646					

RULES and FINANCE COMMITTEES 10.24.2022 CERTIFICATE STATE OF NEW YORK) : SS.: COUNTY OF NASSAU I, KAREN LORENZO, a Notary Public for and within the State of New York, do hereby certify: That the above is a correct transcription of my stenographic notes. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 24rd day of October, 2022 Karen Lorenzo TOP KEY COURT REPORTING, INC. (516)414-3516 _____47 =

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