1. Public Notice 8-3-20
   Documents:
   8-3-20 MINORITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE PUBLIC NOTICE.PDF

2. Minority Affairs Hearing 8-3-20
   Documents:
   8.3.20 - MINORITY AFFAIRS HEARING.PDF

3. MINORITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
   Documents:
   MINORITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, 08-03-20.PDF
PUBLIC NOTICE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE THAT

THE NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE WILL HOLD A
MEETING OF THE MINORITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
ON
MONDAY, AUGUST 3, 2020 AT 9:30 AM

REGARDING THE OFFICE OF MINORITY AFFAIRS
IN
THE PETER J. SCHMITT MEMORIAL LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER
THEODORE ROOSEVELT EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BUILDING
1550 FRANKLIN AVENUE, MINEOLA, NEW YORK 11501

Please be advised that public attendance is permitted at this meeting, but due to health and safety concerns associated with the COVID-19 virus and New York State requirements restricting public gatherings, the maximum capacity of the Peter J. Schmitt Legislative Chamber is limited to fifty people, inclusive of elected officials, staff, and attendees. Passes will be distributed on a first come first served basis beginning one half hour prior to meeting and attendees will be given an opportunity to sign in to address the Legislature for a maximum of three minutes. Attendees will be subject to temperature checks prior to entering the chamber, and must adhere to social distancing guidelines and wear a mask while they are in the chamber.

This meeting will also be available for viewing online at
http://www.nassaucountyny.gov/agencies/Legis/index.html As in-person attendance is limited, public comment on any item may be emailed to the Clerk of the Legislature at LegPublicComment@nassaucountyny.gov and will be made part of the formal record for this Legislative meeting.

While this meeting is open to the public at a reduced capacity, the Nassau County Legislature is committed to making its public meeting accessible to individuals with disabilities. If, due to a disability, you need an accommodation or assistance to participate in the public meeting or to obtain a copy of the transcript of the public hearing in an alternative format in accordance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact the Office of the Clerk of the Legislature at 571-4252, or the Nassau County Office for the Physically Challenged at 227-7101 or TDD telephone no. 227-8989.

DATED: July 27, 2020
Mineola, NY

MICHAEL C. PULITZER
Clerk of the Legislature
Nassau County, New York
MINORITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF THE NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Hearing on the Office of Minority Affairs

Committee Membership

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<td>Rose Marie Walker</td>
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<td>James Kennedy</td>
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<td>Kevan Abrahams</td>
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AGENDA

August 3, 2020
9:30 AM

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NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE

RICHARD NICOLELLO
PRESIDING OFFICER

MINORITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

LEGISLATOR STEPHEN RHOADS
CHAIR

Theodore Roosevelt Building
1550 Franklin Avenue
Mineola, New York

August 3, 2020
10:15 A.M.
A P P E A R A N C E S:

LEGISLATOR STEPHEN RHOADS
   Chair

LEGISLATOR ROSE WALKER
   Vice Chair

LEGISLATOR JAMES KENNEDY

LEGISLATOR DENISE FORD

LEGISLATOR CARRIE SOLAGES
   Ranking member

LEGISLATOR KEVAN ABRAHAMS

LEGISLATOR DEBRA MULE
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LEGISLATOR RHOADS:    At this time we will call the hearing to order. I will ask the clerk to call the roll.

MR. PULITZER:    Thank you legislator. Minority Affairs Committee roll call. Debra Mule.

LEGISLATOR MULE:    Here.

MR. PULITZER:    Kevan Abrahams.

LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS:    Here.

MR. PULITZER:    Ranking member Carrie Solages.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES:    Here.

MR. PULITZER:    Legislator Denise Ford.

LEGISLATOR FORD:    Here.

MR. PULITZER:    Legislator James Kennedy.

LEGISLATOR KENNEDY:    Here.

MR. PULITZER:    Vice Chairwoman Rose Marie Walker.

LEGISLATOR WALKER:    Here.

MR. PULITZER:    Chairman Stephen Rhoads.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS:    Present.
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MR. PULITZER: We have a quorum sir.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank you Mr. Clerk. I do want to welcome Lionel Chitty, who is the executive director of the Office of Minority Affairs, Bishop Lionel Harvey who is the deputy director, as well as Dr. Regina Williams, also a deputy director. Thank you so much for being here and I appreciate your time. Again I apologize in the delay in getting started this morning. I'm aware you have a power point presentation to make.

Just to give some brief remarks regarding the purpose of today's hearing. Obviously last year prior to your appointment, Mr. Chitty, we did conduct a hearing of Minority Affairs to try and get into some information about the Office of Minority Affairs, what the vision for the office was. It was clear from those hearings, even though we did receive some information, it was clear that the lack of an executive director, a permanent director, really did impact the operations of the office.
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And your executive director position, at that point we were a year and a half into the administration, your executive director position and your appointment a little less than a year ago was the last appointment of any major office within the county. I really feel as though that hindered to a certain extent the operations of the office. But now that you are there and now that you have been there for a while we had wanted to have these hearings earlier but then we were hit with COVID.

So, first off, I want to welcome everyone back. This is actually the first public hearing that the county legislature is having since the COVID pandemic. This is the first hearing that's actually open to the public. At least in some limited way since the COVID pandemic. And in light of everything that's been going on, it really underscores from a business standpoint and from a personal standpoint, it really underscores the importance of the Office of Minority Affairs.
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The purpose of today's hearing, sort of like the last one, is to get your vision for the operations of the office. Now that you've been there for a while you've had an opportunity to evaluate your staff, evaluate the department's needs. Your office is vitally important in that it breathes life into the promises that Nassau County government has made to make county government more inclusive, to make county government more accessible to every minority community.

I want to make sure, this committee wants to make sure that you have all the resources that you need to be able to get that done. And now that you've had the opportunity to be in that office for awhile, we wanted to hear about your vision, your goals, what you think the strengths and weaknesses are within that office. How your office is interacting with other divisions within county government. Whether you are getting the information that you need in order to be able to fullfil your mission under the charter and in what ways we as a legislature can assist in
Because we want to make sure that the Office the Minority Affairs is not just an office that exists on paper to make everybody feel good. We want to make sure that the Office of Minority Affairs exists to fulfil the very broad and very important mandate that was set forth in its charter. Our responsibility is to make sure that that takes place and you have the tools and resources that you need to be able to do that.

So that, to me, is the most important reason that we are having the hearing today is to get that perspective and see how we can move forward together to make sure that we are fulfilling the promise of the Office of Minority Affairs and the promise that we've made to all the constituents at Nassau County to make Nassau County accessible and reachable to everyone. Again, I thank you for being here.

Carrie, did you have a statement?

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Thank you Chair. Good morning to everyone and good
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morning to this highly esteemed panel
established here today. Bishop, director
doctor. It's my pleasure to have you here.
Thank you for calling this hearing and it is
very symbolic and important that this is the
first hearing being held in post-COVID times.
I would like to welcome everyone to the new
legislature. Although it may look like the
DMV it is not the DMV. I want to thank the
administration and DPW for installing this for
our safety.

And although my colleague here,
Legislator Bynoe is here this morning, she
will not be allowed to speak because she is
not on the committee as per the chair,
Mr. Rhoads. Yet, she has been very helpful on
these issues.

And furthermore, I would like you
to please take advantage of this opportunity
here today to provide information to us so
that we can learn how to help further your
department.

In addition, I guess your role
today is a quite difficult role. At the same
time you're here to talk about the great work you're doing, it's very difficult to mention the lack of support that you don't have from the administration. The same administration that is supposed to support you. We are walking a very fine line here today.

But I would ask you please to be as candid as possible. I have a copy of the transcript from the last hearing. I going to be asking some questions from the transcript. If you would like to share a copy of this transcript I would love to pass it over to you.

In addition, and I mention that because on the transcript of the last hearing I pointed out that this office has a very important regulatory role with respect to Title 6 and Affirmative Action. These important laws are meant to help to diversify our government and our community to make sure that our government reflects our community. We're not asking for much here. Just asking for diversity. Right?

So, one important thing in this
transcript that I noticed is that there was a need for an attorney in this office to help accomplish and fulfill some of the regulatory roles. I don't know whether or not we have an attorney in the office or someone in that capacity that can help understand the compliance when it comes to Title 6 and Affirmative Action. But we're going to hopefully help to establish that here today.

I want to thank all my colleagues for being here today and let's get started.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank you Legislator Solages.

Mr. Chitty, I understand you have a presentation. The floor is yours.

MR. CHITTY: Thank you everybody for this opportunity to come before you today, all the legislators. Especially thanks to my team here. Dr. Regina Williams, Bishop Harvey and my entire staff. Thank you very much for attending. We do have a presentation and we entitled this presentation as Building a New Foundation.

OMA 2020 Strategic Plan primary
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Objectives. Assist County efforts to ensure access to services, employment and housing opportunities and address economic disparities. Enhance diversity and inclusion awareness throughout Nassau County. Increase participation of MWBEs, DBEs and SDVOBs in county procurements, other governmental and private sector opportunities.

Next we have our entire staff myself as executive director. Bishop Lionel Harvey, deputy director. Dr. Regina Williams also deputy director. We have Lynne Poole, special assistant. Dexter Hedgepeth, program coordinator. Michelle Crosley, program coordinator. Also Victoria Roberts, program supervisor.

Objective one, enhancing opportunities for minority residents and addressing disparities.

During COVID-19 our response. Urging community members to stay safe, get tested at county's free community sites. Assisting residents with securing county services. Supporting residents in applying
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for unemployment insurance benefits.
Assisting with community food distributions.
Celebrating the strength of our community through challenging times.

COVID-19 response, second portion,
minority health equity.

On April 17 myself, deputy executive director Amy Flores from the Office of Hispanic Affairs and also Andrea Ault-Brutus, director of health equity for the Nassau County Department of Health, we recorded a Zoom conference and that conference was created out of the facts that we realized and it was proven that communities of color were hit extremely hard with COVID. This video has about 3900 views already on Facebook and we went about 20, 30 minutes just to discuss why communities of color were hit, what are the resources available to them, how to be able to prepare yourself and protect yourself during COVID specifically for those communities.

Supporting minority businesses.
Assisting MWBEs with the Boost Nassau loan
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applications, the federal Paycheck Protection Program and the SBA's emergency industry disaster loan process. Promoting and assisting county's personal protection kit giveaway. Advising businesses on New York State closure rules and reopening guidelines. Participating in the county executive's COVID-19 Economic Advisory Counsel with the Long Island African-American Chamber of Commerce, the Long Island Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Nassau Counsel of Chambers of Commerce.

Reopening safely. Supporting our MWBEs. Our OMA team has been out and about visiting our MWBEs throughout this crisis and reopening of their businesses. We will continue to connect with our constituents in order to assist them in navigating through these challenging times. Our small businesses are the economic engines of our communities.

Objective two, increasing diversity and inclusion. To foster inclusion and diversity in collaboration with our other outreach offices, Office of Hispanic Affairs,
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Working collaboratively on known shared interest areas such as Census 2020, civil service opportunities, minority mental health and workforce development.

Identify and engage key stakeholders, community leaders, faith-based and nonprofit partners. Create and support community cultural events and encourage participation amongst diverse groups.

Continuation of increasing diversity and inclusion. OMA collaborates with other county departments to prioritize language access. Throughout the pandemic OMA ensured translation of important documents for the Haitian-Creole community. An example of those documents included Know Your Rights, COVID-19 testing locations, coronavirus fact sheet, messages from the Nassau County Department of Health and community resources booklet. Also working with the county we notified residents that they can also receive the county's text updates in multiple
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languages. Text COVID Nassau one to 888-777 specifically for Haitian-Creole. Those will give you updates continuously as they come across.

A voice in important conversations. Unified Long Island is a bi-county task force intended to empower communities to stand united against all acts of hate and bias that are based on anti-Semitism, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, gender identity, disability or sexual orientation.

The task force partners with existing stakeholders, leaders and residents as well as law enforcement agencies, human rights advocates, community organizations, religious institutions, government offices and education platforms to advocate for unity, acceptance and diversity.

The task force is working to develop and implement an action plan to identify and document hate and bias incidents while working towards strengthening the bonds of friendship and respect within and amongst.
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the communities across Long Island. OMA's
deputy director, Bishop Lionel Harvey, is the
Nassau County chair for this endeavor.

A voice in important

conversations. The Police and Community Trust
or PACT. On June 17th, County Executive
Curran announced the creation of PACT, a new
initiative aimed at building trust,

transparency and a working dialogue between

community activists and Nassau County police.

Cochaired by County Executive Curran and South

Floral Park mayor Jeffrey Prime, PACT

membership includes Police Commissioner Ryder,

community leaders, activists and police

officers. Ongoing meetings engage additional

participation from law enforcement and the

community. OMA's program supervisor, Victoria

Roberts, is our liaison for this important

effort.

Objective three, increasing

minority participation in county contracting.

Curran administration is committed to

maximizing participation by MWBE, DBE and

SDVOB vendors in county contracting
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opportunities. It's good for business, good for the county. It's an essential element of effective public procurement, ensures greater competition at lower cost and higher service levels. Strengthens the local and small business communities. Encourages greater entrepreneurship in the county. Promotes open, fair and transparent process for county contracts.

Curran administration building blocks to increase MWBE participation.

County vendor portal. Elimination of the $125 vendor registration fee for that portal. Comprehensive tracking system for MWBE, DBE and SDVOBs. A new certification app and next up our disparity study.

OMA's new MWBE certification app.

OMA has endeavored to further streamline MWBE participation by combining the registration and certification processes in a new electronic filing system. The new online filing system launched during COVID and fully functional on June 12, 2020 will tremendously aid OMA in serving MWBEs.
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Allows for easy upload of documents and speeds up OMA's staff review. Includes a step-by-step tutorial to assist constituents with registration in county's vendor portal, how-to for uploading MWBE documents for certification and a training tutorial for staff instructional purposes.

OMA's deputy director, Dr. Regina Williams, created this concept and oversees the MWBE program, while program coordinator, Michelle Crosley, functions as the certification analyst for MWBEs.

OMA thanks Commissioner Stanton and the IT team for a successful collaboration.

Continuation of OMA's new county certification app. Fully automated process for county certification. Captures info from the vendor portal. Step-by-step tutorials for business owners and OMA staff.

Database encompasses all pre-2020 files plus all new certifications. Conducts surveys, contacts vendors and more.

Here we have the new certification app. Here's a screen shot of the application...
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itself. This is our total directory that lists all the MWBEs.

Next we have a detailed display in bold which it was extracted from our vendor portal which shows a sample of contact information.

Next we have a tab here that shows all the certifications, lists all the businesses that are currently certified with Nassau County.

OMA's new MWBE app also allows us to send email notifications. We can send out certification information, community functions, county solicitations, events, forums that are being held, precertification notifications and also registrations.

We also have the ability to utilize that system to inform businesses that already have been certified with OMA yet never registered with the county. Be able to get them recertification reminders for businesses once their certification has expired. Community functions, events. Certification forms including the long form application, the
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short form application and recertification application. Site visit questionnaire. We can also inform them of county solicitation, prebid forms and also surveys. Which is important that we conduct surveys to ensure that we're meeting the needs of our MWBEs.

Next you see a sample of an email that is sent to those who have gained certification once it's been approved congratulating them and welcoming them and also including our contact information moving forward.

Next we have a copy of the certification letter that is emailed to them once they are approved.

Next we have the certification itself. Here is a sample certification automatically emailed once they are approved.

Next we have the Nassau County Office of Minority Affairs' MWBE online filing tutorial for 2020. We have a QR code here. If you scan that code it will take you to directly to a Youtube video that will walk you through the entire process.
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Next we have the numbers. Our MWBE vendor registration numbers. We will start with January. From January 2019 to April 2019. Total number of minority-owned businesses 197. Woman-owned businesses 262. Minority women-owned businesses 58. Veteran, service disabled veteran-owned businesses 29.

As of July 31, 2020 we now have minority-owned 770. Women-owned 875. Minority women-owned 267. Veteran, service disabled veteran-owned businesses 96.

Our certification process going back to January 2019 to December 2019. Total MWBEs certified by the Office of Minority Affairs 132. As of July 31, 2020 total MWBEs certified by the Office of Minority Affairs year to date 77. This is from the app which was fully functional as of July 12th. What we did was we focused on completing that application and automate the certification process and we moved forward from there.

Total MWBEs pending certification. This includes new businesses and recertifications. We had a large influx
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during COVID. That total number is 990.

Next up, the MWBE-SDVOB disparity study. The disparity study is a critical component to setting meaningful goals of MWBE participation in county procurement. Funding was authorized by the Nassau County Legislature and included in county's capital budget. RFP number MA 1216-1965 for the study was issued December 2019. It includes consultant services as well as study to maximize impact.


OMA's summer youth 2020.

Participants in the Nassau County Summer Youth program have been assisting OMA with the enormous amount of MWBE work by updating records in the MWBE app. They have started the process of scanning our paper files totaling 1,136 as of December 31, 2019. Our goal is to scan the documents for each MWBE filed into our automated system to have everything accessible online.
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OMA's vision moving forward. To establish and implement processes that are productive, sustainable and focused on the overall mission of the department. Items designated for improvement include RFP bid
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solicitation receipt and distribution,
mandated reporting, EFC, which is the
Environmental Facilities Corporation, FTA,
Federal Transportation Administration, MWBE,
SDVOB and internal, external communication.
Create and implement meaningful
ongoing workshops and forums to educate
potential MWBE, SDVOB bidders. Event types
include procurement forms, preconstruction and
technical assistance in collaboration with the
county agencies, New York State Empire State
Development Corp., the Port Authority and
other organizations with expertise in needed
domains.

Continue to increase community
connectivity, expand upon relationships and
participation while working collaboratively
with the Office of Hispanic Affairs, Office of
Asian-American Affairs and county departments
to increase the base of resources available
and awareness for constituents.

Next two pages we have snapshots of
events we participated in starting from 2019.
And again, this is just a snapshot not
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everything. Woman Small Business Award Celebration with LIAACC, the Long Island African-American Chamber of Commerce. We attended the MLK 51st anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

We co-hosted Port Authority of New York New Jersey certification form at Nassau Community College. We attended the Diversity in Business Awards for the Long Island Business News. Presented citations at the Long Island African-American Chamber of Commerce. OMA attends prebid forums which are very key for MWBEs. We attended the 24th annual Nassau County Bar Association mentoring ceremony luncheon. Hosted the mental health forum at the African-American Museum of Nassau County. Attended NCBW 100 Long Island annual event. Hosted the Juneteenth celebration, the first ever, where there was an official proclamation signed by the county executive.

Census collaboration event with our other outreach offices. Attended the New York SUNY-CUCF diversity at work annual MWBE-SDVOB conference. The 2019 ACCA conference in San
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Antonio, Texas. MWBE event at Caribbean business connection monthly networking event.
The Long Island Railroad expansion track tour. Citations for the Vladimir Ukranian Orthodox Church. Citations at Christ's First Presbyterian Church in Hempstead. Their 375 year anniversary celebration.

Caribbean business connections monthly business networking event. OMA and OHA attends MWBE empowerment event. End of last year OMA hosted our Kwanzaa celebration at Roosevelt Field. January 2020 OMA attends Nassau County's annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Ecumenical Service and Scholarship luncheon. OMA attends Nassau County Police Department's black history community forum. OMA hosted the Millenial Chat at the Yes We Can Center in Westbury. Attended a Black History celebration Amistad Case in collaboration with youth services. We hosted a Black History celebration at the Nassau County Legislature. Also attended the Black History breakfast with the village of Hempstead. Attended the Black History
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celebration at Islamic Center of Long Island.

Attended the project restoration Terrace Avenue press conference. OMA hosts minority breakfast in conjunction with the Nassau County IDA and the Long Island African-American Chamber of Commerce. And then we also host a faith-based security grant seminar. Then we were in the midst of COVID.

During COVID we hosted the minority health presentation with Office of Hispanic Affairs and the Office of Diversity and Health Inclusion. Office of Diversity Health with the Department of Health. OMA we did interviews with the county executive on Ire Jam radio. We attended the ABBA Mother's Day celebration. We joined the county executive for a Juneteenth kickoff in Manhassett. We also hosted a virtual Juneteenth celebration via Zoom. Interviews with Tower Talk business with Nassau Community College. And just recently attended the Uniondale Community Counsel via Zoom.

Again, these were snapshots not everything. I think we'd be here a lot longer
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if we did list everything.

Next we just have OMA out in the community. These are pictures of some of the events that we did attend where we gave citations, where we have seminars, working with our MWBEs. And additional outreach of events that we went to including the mental health forum and also our Juneteenth celebration. That concludes my presentation.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank you executive director. Dr. Williams or Bishop Harvey did you have any statements to make?

MR. HARVEY: I certainly want to thank this esteemed legislature for having us here today and for your great leadership. I just want to commend the great leadership that Lionel Chitty is providing to this office. He has taken the bull by the horn so to speak and we have been following his lead as a great team that has been engineered, that is actually out here doing the work.

There are so many different components to this and we have been arduously taking it step by step. I think you can see
by the comprehensive report that has been displayed today that we are keeping in line with the vision of the charter. We're on our way to doing some very great things. We're making some systemic change right off the top and we're excited about what we're able to do and what we have been able to accomplish thus far.

We are automating some things that should have been done a long time ago. But there's no reason to make excuses. We're moving forward and doing it with a mind set that there is so much work out here to be done. Just the very fact that we've gone through devastating times and we've all been confronted with things that we never thought we would be confronted with.

Through all of that, we continue to keep grinding and keep doing the things that were necessary to make sure that our constituents and our stakeholders got the necessary information so that they can endure this pandemic that we are going through.

Also when we're talking about what
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happened with George Floyd and the things that
are happening with the racial disparities
we've been engaging extensively with
Commissioner Ryder and the police department
in terms of moving forward.

The county executive has been
giving us great leadership and we thank all
who have been partnering with us to make sure
that this county becomes a county that we can
all be proud of. Madelyne Tsimis has been
wonderful as deputy county executive who has
been leading up and this team is just
fantastic. The Millenial Chat was something
that was just unbelievable engaging our
youth.

I just think that the work that Dr.
Regina Williams is doing in terms of
automating our system is moving us in the
right direction. We're excited. I'm just
excited to be a part of the team. We commend
you for wanting to hear from us and we thank
you for your support. Thank you.

DR. WILLIAMS:   I really should
have went before Bishop because he speaks so
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eloquent. But I want to also thank this legislative body. My coming into the Office of Minority Affairs now almost a year and a half there were a lot of things that were not be attended to upon my entrance and I did not have a lot of knowledge as to the functionality of the office. So it was quite cumbersome trying to navigate things.

Upon Lionel Chitty's entrance into the office, one thing I can say about Chitty, affectionately call him Chitty, he's an extremely hard worker. He 24-7, sometimes late at night we're on the phone and discussing things and trying to get a handle on what the office should be doing or can do. We go back and forth. We're a brother-sister team here and it's made us appreciate not only exactly where we're at but an understanding of what the community really needs. Especially when it comes to this period of time that we're in in this pandemic.

It's been very difficult. It started off when we were initially assigned to work from home. It was very difficult for the
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staff at large because all of our workings
were something that was in the office. All
the paperwork was in the office. Because of
the fact that we had already started a process
of automating our certifications and it just
came about because of the fact that there were
a minimal number of persons working in the
office last year. This is something that I
had knowledge of doing in my prior job. So we
were going to start off small and do it in
phases.

Then when the pandemic hit we
realized we needed to move fast and get
everything on board so that the staff could
have what they need to keep things going. We
did not anticipate the influx of minority
businesses that would be coming on board. But
it pushed us to really make sure we had a tool
in place that would aid our constituents as
well as give our staff what they needed to be
able to handle this job.

The numbers, the 77 number, is
something that seems small to us because the
app is equipped to be able to handle more.
The biggest difficulty that we have is our constituents trying to ascertain exactly what to do and not really having enough staff to reach them to be able to explain the process. Once they go through the tutorial it makes it quite easy and smooth.

There are some that are able to read the tutorial and submit all the documentation that's required. Then there are others that because of the functionality of their business they may not have a staff, an admin back in the office that can adequately take them through the process. And that's where our program coordinator Michelle Crosley really comes in.

It's something that's helped up. And again, it's a tool that we wanted to put together to outlive us. One of the things I believe in is succession planning. We wanted to make sure that the office, when Lionel came in, was building a new foundation so that the office would have something that could continue and outlive us. But it's not limited just to the functionality that it has right
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now. We do want to add on additional pieces.

We've talked about adding on a piece where we can track the different bids that our MWBEs put in for our contracts. We want to be able to track -- if we had an automated process when it came to all of the contracts. We also started the conversation with commissioner Ken Arnold of DPW in relation to trying to get a handle on all the contracts. We do realize that they're in different segments and we get information in different ways.

Our goal is to really streamline all of these processes so that we can handle it effectively and then be able to present these things to our constituents to train them, bring them up to speed so they will be able to not only bid but to be awarded these contracts. At the end of the day it's all about our economic growth and our economic development.

So we thank you for the support that the legislative body has given the office even in increase the numbers to bring on board
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additional staffing. But I do believe
together we will be able to accomplish the
goal at hand. Thank you.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank you. I
appreciate it. I'm just going to get started
with a couple of quick questions and then
obviously we'll turn it over to members of the
committee. I'm sure there are many questions
from the members of the committee.

You spoke about staffing Dr.
Williams and Mr. Executive Director Chitty. I
see that budgeted you have room for a full
time staff of 12 and two part timers. Right
now you are operating I believe with a staff
of seven based on what I see in your power
point presentation.

Is there a reason that we haven't
been able to come up to full speed in terms of
hiring? Because it sounds as though you are
trying to accomplish a tremendous amount with
a very small number of people. We've provided
as a legislature the financial tools to be
able to get you up to speed but for some
reason that hasn't happened. We've been at
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the same number of staff now since before you
came on Mr. Chitty. I think you may have
hired one additional person if I'm not
mistaken. What are the impediments to your
being able to hire separate and apart from the
existence of a freeze now? I understand that
there's a blanket hiring freeze. But prior to
COVID what were the limitations in your
ability to hire?

MR. CHITTY: Just to go back and
I appreciate that. That's a very good
question. We're currently at seven. Our
total would have been 12. The additional two
basically they fall underneath the intern
portion. Looking at the specific needs of the
office, again working with the team that we
had, we had to do a full assessment. Dr.
Williams was there as an interim and she did a
lot of work and we had numerous conversations
as to exactly what the office needs.

We were at the point of hiring
somebody just to start looking at the contract
portion who was already skilled in that. Then
COVID hit. So we got kind of stuck in a
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little bit of a weird place right then and there. If it wasn't for COVID we would have able to bring that specific skill on board. But for right now we do have some basic knowledge as to taking a look at some of these contracts, putting the pieces together. But again, the overall goal, just like Dr. Williams mentioned, is to have a succinct process in place.

Things come in different ways to the office as far as contracts are concerned and we want to make sure we have a solidified process so that we can wrap our hands around that and know exactly what's going on and automation would be the key.

As far as any additional staffing, we are in a hiring freeze right now and our assessments are always continuous working with the exact staff that we have in order to get through this. A good example right now is we have Victor Roberts on board. She's working with Dexter Hedgepeth, one of our program coordinators, to start taking a look at workforce development. As things change we
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need to be able to adapt and adapt quickly. We're looking at a series of different webinars to try to get people prepared for coming off of unemployment. The changes in work space.

So again, just an overall trying to continuously assess and make sure that we are making the right decisions moving forward.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Separate and apart from the COVID pandemic and the freeze that came into place, did you as executive director, because it seems clear from the charter that essentially as long as there is a budget line for it you have the ability to act independently in terms of bringing on staff.

In your experience has that been how it's worked?

MR. CHITTY: As far as staffing, we've worked directly with HR and also our executive director Tsimis and the administration to make sure we bring on the proper staff that is needed moving forward. Again, it is a process and we continuously assess things. We received a ton of resumes
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that we continue to go through repeatedly and again just to make sure that we find the proper, qualified staffing.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Let's say the hiring freeze were lifted today. How long do you anticipate it taking until your department is up to full staff?

MR. CHITTY: Up to full staff, depending on the needs, I'd probably say, again, things continuously change, I'd probably say -- we also have a backup of working with our other offices, the Office of Asian Affairs and the Office of Hispanic Affairs to work with them directly as to what some of our specific needs. We do have the bear of the certification process specifically for the businesses.

To ramp fully up we would have to get through COVID, do another assessment. Reassess. Take a look to see if our needs have changed and go from there.

I will say that one of the biggest things that I would like to have sooner rather than later is specifically somebody for
contracts. That's a key portion. Myself and Dr. Williams she'll be taking on that part of our process in our mandate right now. But again, we're not versed in that 100 percent. We're just not and we want to make sure we do it right. I believe there are 5,000 contracts that come across, if not more, every year and trying to wrap your hands around that it's a challenge. But it's not anything we can't do but we want to make sure we get up to speed as quickly as possible and get it done right.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Since we got into the topics of contracts, how exactly are contracts being handled today? In other words, do you receive advanced notice of every one of the 5,000 contracts that the county is engaging in?

MR. CHITTY: I could not tell you if there was advanced notice for every one of them. There is a policy in place that we get a 30-day notification prior to bid solicitations going out. But when we take a look at that policy we can't give out the entire bid. It's basically the RFP number,
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when it's expected to go out and what the item is. We cannot talk about quantities, we can't talk about specifics, we can't talk about any details of that specific product. It's just basically a heads up.

After we go through that we have to determine whether or not the funding is just Nassau County, which are aspirational goals depending on the dollar amount, whether they are state funding or federal funding. With state funding it's MWBE or SDVOBs. And with federal funding it's DBEs, disadvantage business enterprises, and a lot of those higher items are through DPW and they are required to make sure that they meet their numbers. We get those reports back in. We go through as best as we can. Most of them have been making their numbers. But to say I have an eye on every single contract I couldn't say that right now.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: It sounds as though you don't have the staff to be able to do that even if you wanted to, which I'm sure you do.
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MR. CHITTY: We're doing the best we can.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Of course you are. Just in terms of -- I know you said you don't receive every contract. You can't say that you receive every single contract in advance. That 30-day notification, do you know what percentage of the total contracts you receive in that 30-day notification before things go out to bid?

MR. CHITTY: Everyone we receive we do a notification. The challenge is --

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Do you know how many you receive on a yearly basis?

MR. CHITTY: Total no, I do not.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Do you know if it's in the thousands?

MR. CHITTY: It would probably close to the thousands. Again, we just get an email notification. We also need to be leery. We have MWBEs out there for a 30-day notification. And it's my been experience if you start out sending out every single one of them over and over and over again people...
become numb to taking a look at it. We've had this problem across the board even in my past life. Sometimes it's too much information.

So as we start to automate things we want to be able to pull out, okay, if there's a bid going out for widgets we want to be able to send that bid out or that notification out to whoever is making widgets. But one of the issues that we have is a that lot of people who are certified in our system they're listed as, quote unquote, professional services. So we need to dig a little bit more into that to extrapolate exactly what they do.

I will say that with the vendor portal businesses do put in their NIX codes and when a bid does go out that the system, on through procurement, automatically sends them an email specific to their NIX codes.

Again, the problems we have seen people's jobs change, people's products change. Sometimes those codes don't always match. So part of what we are going to be trying to do moving forward is to educate them.
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that they need to go into that system and also take a look for themselves. See what bids are there what they can bid. Even speaking with procurement, if you say you sell widgets you can bid on bottles of water or whatever the case may be. It doesn't have to be specific. That's part of our ongoing education process.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: You'd only provide that information to MWBE businesses if you have that information, correct?

MR. CHITTY: Correct.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: I'm just a little concerned about the fact that out of the 5,000 county contracts there's no level of confidence that you're receiving, certainly not receiving all of them. You may be receiving only a fraction of those contracts which means that you can't communicate that information to MWBEs.

MR. CHITTY: Possible, yes.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: I know Dr. Williams' mentioned that there's been conversations with Ken Arnold with the Department of Public Works and obviously the
Department of Public Works has many of the major contracts for the county. Is there any exchange of information with other departments? Other than the Department of Public Works or are you only receiving public works contracts?

MR. CHITTY: We do get them from other departments. Police department, health and human services. Even treasurer's department. Items here and there. But again, I couldn't tell you exactly how many departments are sending in everything. Some departments order very sporadically some people have reached regarding that specific policy because they don't order that often. I could tell you exactly if everybody is getting but we have gotten it from different departments. I wouldn't just say it's Department of Public Works.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: You only know about what you receive?

MR. CHITTY: Correct.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: I imagine we can get that information out of the
administration as to what percentage of the
total contracts are actually being
communicated to the Office of Minority
Affairs.

MR. CHITTY: Yes. If we could
work like that and also have a process to be
automated. That's why we are specifically --
the larger departments we started off with the
Department of Public Works. We work out a
process from there. The majority of the
notifications I get are from them because they
are the biggest purchaser and also from the
police department. We've gotten quite a few
from them also.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: In terms of
evaluating, I know you mentioned that many of
the departments are meeting their numbers,
their targeted numbers for minority women
business participation, how do we know that
they are meeting the numbers? Is the Office
of Minority Affairs doing an independent
investigation or are we simply looking at what
the numbers are that are reported?

MR. CHITTY: For those specific
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departments it would basically be the Department of Public Works. For example, the Bay Park sewage plant project. They are mandated to have monthly reporting and I am to submit a quarterly report to EFC, which is the Environmental Facilities Corporation. I would say out of the, I'll just pick a number, out of the ten or 15 contracts that were there they've met their numbers nine out of ten. The majority of those numbers.

We did have a situation because if they don't meet those numbers they need to notified me and request a waiver. I'm not in the habit of giving waivers. Unless it's an emergency or a specific job or specific skill that is not readily available. We have that conversation. We did have a recent incident where they were off by two points. I think they were mandated to meet 20 percent. But we had a conversation and we gave them some additional information and they were actually able to exceed that minimum quota. But the majority of those reporting capabilities are through DPW or any other specific funding that
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is state or federal.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: So we at least have the ability within the contracts that the county awards to attempt to solicit MWBE participation, but some of the challenges are obviously that we have to go with the lowest qualified bidder. What assistance does your office provide to the MWBEs to try and educate them as to how to prepare a bid as to make sure that they are competitive in that bid process?

MR. CHITTY: We in the past did have seminars including Robert Cleary, chief procurement officer, to explain this process. Again, it is daunting. I have done work with the county many, many years ago and if you're doing a bid package you get a package of like 40 or 50 sheets of paper. You're like wow, this is a lot. I can't do this. But once you go through it the majority of the information there is documentation that's necessary just to do business. Disclaimer forms. EEO information. All that pertinent information.

So we try to educate people exactly

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what the entire process is, to continue to look into the system, make sure you're registered to do business, make sure you're sending in the disclosure forms, make sure you do your footwork. Take a look at the system, see what bids are coming up and go through that entire process.

As you stated, it is still lowest bid and best qualified bidder. That's some of the information we try to relate to people. But then when we really got into it I think we had one or two of them. Then COVID hit. We also had procurement forum with the SBDC at Farmingdale State University where we actually had departments people purchasing from specific departments within the county at these forums with a table so that these MWBEs could talk directly with these purchasers to find out what type of products and services they could meet and just to start building that relationship.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: I didn't mean to turn this into kind of a budget hearing.

It almost sounds like that with me asking
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staffing questions and the like. But in terms
of -- do you feel as though your office at its
current staffing has enough people to fulfill
its standards?

MR. CHITTY: Again, we can work
with the other outreach offices to try to get
up to snuff as much as possible. But again,
some of these specific items, specifically
some of the contract compliance it's a
full-time job. It literally is a full-time
job. You got thousands of contracts.
Regina's done a very good job in the past and
continues to do so and we work together as a
team to make sure that we can understand
what's going on. But it's a lot.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Has there
been any progress in attempting, and
Legislator Solages is quite correct in a
previous hearing mentioning the need for
counsel. Has there been any progress in
attempting to retain counsel?

MR. CHITTY: When I initially
came in I didn't feel that it was exactly
necessary but that's turned a little bit.
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We'd to get more in depth with exactly what is required. I can read a contract but I'm not an attorney and I'm not going to pretend to say I am. But some of us have work with law in the past. Again, it goes back to that full understanding of the contracting process and we are not 100 percent there yet.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Obviously since part of the mandate obviously is the contracting and procurement process and ensuring minority participation obviously that would be a problem not to have someone who is an expert in assisting you in doing that, right?

MR. CHITTY: It would be challenging.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: So now if you were to have the ability to hire the additional five full time staff and two I guess intern positions that you would have what would they do? In other words, what could your department do better if you had the full staff that you were budgeted for?

MR. CHITTY: We would definitely
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focus on the contract portion. We would also beef up our outreach initiatives. We do have program coordinators right now. We have two on staff. One does communication. The other one is Michelle Crosley, who focuses on our certification process. Dexter Hedgepeth focuses a lot on the communications, the social media and some outreach portions. But we definitely need to increase our outreach efforts. Being there on-site, talking to people one-on-one, being able to have them gain that specific trust to call into the office. To be able to educate them. Walk them through their specific processes whether it's MWBE or any social issues. And also try to be that resource for them. So we would expand upon that.

We would also work, if we had increases, to be able to wrap our hands around some of the larger departments. Health and human services is massive. We have had conversations with them to talk about their different services and we want to be that resource so that when people reach out to us
we can point them in the right direction.

We also want to be able to focus on civil service, workforce development. We've had forums with civil service to walk constituents exactly through that entire process. We get them in a room, sit them down with the computers and civil service shows them exactly how to apply for civil service, how to keep on top of the notifications. We would be able to increase our efforts on all those specific factors and look for other opportunities to help our constituents.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: The charter does specifically mention social services, mental health, health services, public works, public safety. Is that something that's happening now or could it simply be happening better if you had additional people?

MR. CHITTY: It could be happening better. Our team has specific tasks. For example, Victoria Roberts she brings a lot of skills to the table to talk about recidivism, to talk about mental health initiatives. We have been in touch with the
Department of Social Services. We work collaboratively with them. We've been in touch with Nassau Community College and other organizations throughout Nassau County and even Suffolk County, which is the beauty of Zoom. Working with the Entrepreneurial System Center at Suffolk County's Brentwood campus. The Small Business Development Center at Farmingdale State College. Hofstra's Assent program. And even organizations from the city that focus specifically on MWBEs to be able to reach out to them, connect with them, for funding opportunities and also to be able to talk about technical assistance to help our people.

We have Dexter Hedgepeth who also speaks directly with our community members. We'd basically be able to touch more upon those specific items in the charter and do it a lot better.

LEGISLATOR RHoadS: I know that you've had -- and I'm going to wrap up because I know you have questions.

It seems as though obviously the
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vendor registration portal you've created certainly has resulted in a large number of certifications. Certainly more than we had a year ago by a significant percentage and that's wonderful. But I know it's probably still only a fraction of the MWBEs that actually exist. What are our outreach efforts in terms of identifying MWBEs and getting them to participate in the certification process?

MR. CHITTY: Right now we cannot go out to solicit those individuals. As we go to events, even as we do Zooms, people have those specific questions and they do call into us or email us with questions. That's why we do things like the Hempstead Chamber of Commerce I just did last week. The Uniondale Community Counsel. People know of what MWBE is but they're not even sure about what it's going to do for them.

So we're honest with them and say listen, Nassau County contracting we have no firm goals. But then we start talking about the diversity study. We talk to them about there is no fee to sign up and that you would
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take the time to take the process to go look
into the system to see if there is something
that you could bid on.

As far as any other additional
outreach not at this moment right now. We do
the best that we can with what we have during
the current situation with COVID. But when we
are able to go back out we do have those
conversations with small groups, existing
organizations that are out there. Not
basically knocking on doors and telling people
hey listen, you need to come and get certified
with Nassau County and start bidding on some
of these items. If that answered your
question.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: What ways
could outreach improve?

DR. WILLIAMS: We talked in terms
of we've already started collaborating with
the different chambers of commerce as well as
one of the larger organizations, Long Island
Business News, has a list of MWBEs. I want to
say in the thousands. Somewhere close to ten
thousand. So we've been in contact with them
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to try to ascertain their list so we can reach
out to those MWBEs as well.

Connecting with the other
municipalities is something that we do on a
regular basis to try to stretch our hands a
little further and reach the MWBEs that aren't
already registered in the vendor portals. So
those are some of the things that we've
already started doing.

As well as building different
committees, different primes that are out
there, MWBE primes, as well as some of the
SDVOB primes. They can aid us in being able
to stretch our hands a little further and
reach out to those smaller businesses.

Outside of going door to door those are the
things we try to do. Look at all the
different processes. And businesses that
already have lists out there and collaborate
with them to try to get that information.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Last thing.

Famous last words. I know that Legislator
Solages is going to ask about Title 6 and I'm
assuming HUD Section 3. Just out of
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curiosity, obviously part of the Office of Minority Affairs is making sure we are implementing the county's own affirmative action program. Do we know presently how many women and minorities we have employed within Nassau County?

MR. CHITTY: I do not have that information. I can reach out to see if I can obtain that. Speak with human resources or whatever the administration has obtained that information for you and get back to you.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Since the department is supposed to be tracking obviously our affirmative action program isn't that something that should be reported to you on a regular basis in terms of hiring?

MR. CHITTY: I feel that should be. What we have done is, again looking at Affirmative Action, is to have collaborative meetings -- I'm sorry, collaborative events with other two outreach offices again with civil service to bring more awareness to constituents as to where do you apply. How do you apply and how did that system work.
I think that's a good opportunity to try to get more people interested in these civil service positions that eventually will spread out into the county, into the libraries, into the school districts and all the other different departments that fall within civil services realm.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Doesn't each individual department have its own affirmative action plan in terms of hiring?

MR. CHITTY: I'm not 100 percent sure. I do know that the corrections facility does but I can take a look at get back to you with that information.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: I appreciate that. I'm going to turn over the questioning at this time. I have more follow up later.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: We can't do that because of civil service but with ordinance jobs is there a plan that would could address that that would promote, increase more minority and women in the various county departments?

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Sounds like
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LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: If I can piggyback off of that question. Do you have any information as to how much minorities are in the police department?

MR. CHITTY: No, I do not.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Do you have information as to how many minorities are in the Legal Aid Society?

MR. CHITTY: No, I do not but I can reach out to see if I can ascertain that information.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: In previous years at budget hearings when Mr. Scott Banks, who heads the Legal Aid Society, stood here, sat here in the same chair that you're sitting in, I asked him if there were any black or brown female attorneys or male attorneys in the Legal Aid Society and he testified that there were not any. And that could be very concerning that there are no minority attorneys in the Legal Aid Society.

So, I've also been talking to various county employees and there is a belief
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that there is an overabundance of minorities in the parks department. Is that correct?

MR. CHITTY: I would have to take a look to see if I can ascertain those specific numbers for you but I do not know right now.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Are you aware of any plan by the administration to increase the participation of minorities in county government?

MR. CHITTY: I do know that the administration has been working directly with us again to go through that civil service process to bring more awareness to communities of color as to the process of signing up for civil service, going through the entire process, taking the testing and keeping an aye on any opportunities that do become available.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Based on your analysis, is it a case that minorities are not applying or is it a case that we need to do a better job of looking for more qualified applicants?

MR. CHITTY: Having a real
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conversation with civil service and the
administration what I have ascertained is that
civil service if you take a test you're not
going to get a callback the next day. It's
going to take a while. You have specific
lists and rules and regulations. Even in my
past experience civil service takes a long
time. They have to abide by the rules and
regulations of the state. You might have
somebody that takes a test today and they
might not get an opportunity to actually get a
call back a year or more from now. At that
point somebody's life changed. If they really
needed a job maybe they took something else.
Maybe they found a better opportunity and that
civil service was no longer attractive for
them. That's what I've been able to
ascertain.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: But if it
was a priority for the administration they
could accomplish these goals?

MR. CHITTY: It would still be a
challenge and that's why we work with civil
service to bring more awareness to minorities
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and communities of color to start that process to make sure that they understand it. Because when we started holding our forums I think we had about five or six forums, each one of them was packed.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Isn't the county saying that like they do not tolerate racism and discrimination but is there any actual plan of oversight and accountability that can help check or identify or control the rampant racism that's going on?

MR. CHITTY: Again, it goes back to that initial conversation as looking back at our civil service processes and again, reaching out to people having them participate.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: But there's no plan by the county to address that?

MR. CHITTY: Not that I'm aware of. There could be. I'm not aware of that.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Is someone here from the administration that can speak on behalf of the IG's office? I mean, is the IG's office getting all these contracts and
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why aren't they forwarding them to the OMA, Office of Minority Affairs? Is someone here from the administration? Can't just the IG's office just forward the contracts to OMA?

    MS. HORST: Katy Horst from the administration. It's my understanding that the IG's has the ability to see every contract. Whether she reviews it or not is up to her.

    LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: And is the IG's office forwarding these contracts to the Office of Minority Affairs?

    MS. HORST: The IG is an arm of your office. I would ask you to speak with her.

    LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Furthermore, the county charter states in Section 211 the Office of Minority Affairs shall have the following powers and duties. And part F, as in Frank, it says provide assistance in the implementation of affirmative action programs in county government employment, housing and development of an annual affirmative action report required by the county for certain of
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its state and federal sources. Has the county accomplished this report?

MR. CHITTY: Not that I'm aware of. Again, when we have these discussions when we talk about workforce, we go through that process of educating people on how to apply for civil service.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: So the county is not fulfilling its mission in producing this affirmative action report?

MR. CHITTY: I'm not aware of an affirmative action report that has been prepared. I can reach out and try to ascertain that information for you.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Furthermore, the county also says in Section E, as in Edgar, produce and publish any research papers or studies on issues affecting the minority community. Has the Office of Minority Affairs helped to accomplish this goal?

MR. CHITTY: Right now the closest we can come to is the awarding of the disparity study so we can have a comprehensive look as far as the utilization and

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availability of MWBEs and SVDOBs. We should
be very close to awarding that contract very
soon and then we can begin that process of
trying to flush out those numbers to make sure
that we can have full utilization of those
that are available.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Going back
to the IG's office, we just need to find out
how the Office of Minority Affairs is granted
for the access and we need to push that more.

Going back to this issue. My
question now pertains to hiring. I mean, this
is important because we had this last hearing
on April 23, 2019 and that was for the
administration and this administration was in
power probably 16 months. And now on this
date, the administration has been in office
for over 32 months. Almost three years. And
it's a concern that we just don't see -- and
you can say that coronavirus or COVID affected
this but it is concerning that after 32 months
we don't have a plan, an actual plan. As they
say, if you fail to plan you are planning to
fail.
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Is there any plan to help with more diversity? I'm looking at the comptroller's report that he issued last year, even before Black Lives Matter was a popular slogan, and he talked about in that report that we're just ten years away from the minority in Nassau County to be the majority. Just ten years away. But if that's the case then why are all these important government agencies in the county such as the police department lacking real diversity?

We had a community forum with the police department, and I thank Nassau County Police Department for the great work, but we had a forum with them, with the community, right after George Floyd's death and one of the heads of the police department mentioned the numbers of black and brown faces in the police department and, my apologies, I don't have the numbers before me now, but the numbers were very low.

I'm just concerned. It doesn't make sense to me that we are just ten years away from minorities being the majority in
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Nassau County but these government departments don't reflect that diversity and that is a clear red flag for institutional racism. I'm not calling anybody a racist here. Not at all. No one's perfect. Not at all. But we have to step forward and try to do better here.

So this office has a very important purpose and it needs an attorney but how can we hire an attorney now with a hiring freeze? How are we going to get around that? Can someone from the administration talk about that? If we can at least establish that there is a need for an attorney in this office. The fact that there is no attorney, what type of -- does that make us vulnerable for litigation the fact that we are not helping to establish or achieve these important laws? Does that make it vulnerable for litigation?

MR. CHITTY: I couldn't answer that question sir.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Who can answer that question?

MR. CHITTY: You would have to
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defer that to the administration. Again, as we've work diligently to wrap our hands around all the different items that the Office of Minority Affairs is tasked with my whole process is that we take things in bits and pieces. We take one item, get a process in place, make sure it's functional, make sure it's sustainable and that it can move forward and be efficient. So as we take different pieces on it will be a continuous process for us to make sure that we can get to meeting all the need of the charter.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Can someone from the county attorney's office come and talk about maybe the number of lawsuits that we've had to settle out due to claims of discrimination and racism? I mean, we're spending a lot of money with litigation, these lawsuits, these settlements. But we can do some pretty simple steps to address these issues. Is there anyone here from the county attorney's office that can talk about that? The average payout in settlements based on claims of racism? Anybody here?
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MS. HORST: No one is here from the county attorney's office. Just director Chitty was invited today to present.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Is it possible that you can call someone from the county attorney's office to come down here and speak on that?

MS. HORST: I can try.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: I continue.

The disparity study. MWBE participation goals. We have an oversized super stadium in Elmont being built as we speak. Are we fulfilling our goals of minority women business participation in that big billion dollar project?

MR. CHITTY: That billion dollar project is still being worked on. We have had forums with the MWBEs to educate them on the processes. We've also had forums with Belmont where we had a packed room working directly with ESD to educate the businesses on how to apply. We've connected with them with the contractors. The challenge with that is, as we look at federal and state funding they need
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to be certified with that authority.
Specifically New York State. If I walked in
right now to certify with New York State it's
at least two years of a process now. The only
way to get past that is if, from what I
understand, is that if an MWBE who is not
certified and the prime contractor wants that
specific MWBE to participate we might have the
opportunity to expedite it. But again, it is
a process. We need to make sure that MWBE's
paperwork is all in order and then we contact
the state and it's their final decision.
Again, depending on where the funding is --

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: In your
professional opinion -- sorry to interrupt --
are minority communities receiving their fair
share of the pie when it comes to these
billion dollar projects all across Nassau
County?

MR. CHITTY: I couldn't
specifically attest to that. I would say no
but I will give you one example. For the Bay
Park sewage plant out of $719 million being
allocated -- I'm sorry, I'm sorry, $719
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million, $93.5 million of that was allocated to MWBEs. They have already been paid. As far as SDVOBs 1.4 percent. So that's $296 million. Veteran contract value was $4,159,000. So there are some successes. Their not as great as some expectations might be. But this specific department, these specific projects have been engaging in order to try to accomplish and meet their numbers overall.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Understood. Thank you. Furthermore, I appreciate everything you've been doing. I truly do. Are there any other roles or duties of this office that, in all candor, are not being met by your office?

MR. CHITTY: As far as the overall charter we do have some areas that need more attention. Again, overseeing the office I need to make sure that no matter what happens each process is taken bit by bit. We need to find out what the process is, adapt it, put in specific processes to make sure they are efficient and sustainable in order to
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move forward. Because as we've seen over years as things change things fall through the hole. Being 2020, there's no reason why we should not have specific automation like the MWBE app and other systems that are out there to expedite us knowing what's going on and being able to meet the needs of our MWBEs and that's my specific goal.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: I'd just like to report that the IG has advised that the Office of Minority Affairs can arrange with the procurement director, Robert Cleary, to receive information. Just received that message.

Furthermore, I really need a deadline from your office and from the administration as to numbers of minorities all throughout the county government. There's an oversaturation of blacks in the parks department and I don't know why that's the case and we need to hopefully understand why that's the case. And furthermore, see how we can help promote diversity in other very important county departments.
Furthermore, I have some more questions but in the interest of time and I really want to hear from some of my colleagues I rest the rest of my time.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank you Legislator Solages. Legislator Mule.

LEGISLATOR MULE: Thank you Chairman Rhoads. First, I want to thank you for this presentation. It's really great to see that there's been so much progress made in getting the office up and running. I know that there have been significant challenges and now with COVID of course that just compounds the challenges. But I did have some specific questions.

You mentioned about, taking from the question from Legislator Solages, with the Belmont project that they had to be registered also with the state and federal government. Is that correct? MWBE?

MR. CHITTY: Right.

LEGISLATOR MULE: Is there any way that we as a county can work alongside with the federal and state MWBE department so
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that we are asking the same questions and if
they are registered for one they could be
registered for another?

MR. CHITTY: What we try to do
is, and I just got this question last week
which I answered numerous times from the
Hempstead Chamber of Commerce. A young lady
asked me should I register with the county or
with some other agency? My explanation to
them is, the majority of the paperwork is
similar to each certification whether it's New
York State, New York City, New York-New Jersey
Port Authority, New York State Dormitory.
It's pretty much the same. If you're going to
do one do every single one of them at the same
time while you have the information in front
of you.

The challenge again is, people
don't fully understand what's the benefit from
it. Over the course of my career, I have seen
people who certified and they haven't had a
real opportunity. A lot that comes down to
education. Again, the bid package. It
becomes cumbersome. Are you making the right
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connections? We also get prime contractors who reach out to us and say I can't find enough MWBEs. We go into the state system and then we see that some contact information was there. Was erroneous or missing.

Again, it's a full process to be able to shine a big spotlight on these huge opportunities. We do have some success stories. Can we do more? Yes, we can. But we are doing our part to make sure that we can increase that.

Dr. Williams you wanted to add something?

DR. WILLIAMS: Last year Chitty and I we did go to Manhattan and we met with Empire State Development. We began the conversation of possible of our office having someone as a satellite for Empire State Development. So that when they certify with us that we already have someone on staff to handle state certification so that we can better serve our constituents. That conversation already started and I believe we received the MOU.
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MR. CHITTY: Yes, we did receive an MOU. The state was looking for additional outlets or offices where people could go more locally to get certified because their process takes extremely long right now. We had that MOU, COVID hit but we do have it and we can share that with the administration to see if there is an opportunity to increase that opportunity for MWBEs.

DR. WILLIAMS: In that conversation the state thought it was a great idea for us to have someone within our department to be able to handle state certification. And they also had shared, because of the backlog they have, we would be handling all of the Nassau County constituents that want to be state certified and that it would really aid them a great deal. The conversation already began. We spoke with administration about it but we just haven't gotten to that point yet. But we did begin that conversation.

LEGISLATOR MULE: Is that a position that would potentially be funded by
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the state?

DR. WILLIAMS: It would have to be.

LEGISLATOR MULE: Along those lines you obviously have a lot of new applications according to your report. First of all, how long does it take for someone to go from handing in their application to actually being certified?

MR. CHITTY: Again, that depends and I going to defer to Dr. Williams because she manages that process.

DR. WILLIAMS: Right now, because of the tutorial that we have they can follow, if someone actually files their documents and after our certification analyst, Michelle Crosley, reviews them and if everything is in proper order where there's nothing for us to actually do or contact them it can be done in six hours.

LEGISLATOR MULE: Are you finding that that's actually happening?

MR. CHITTY: Very rare.

DR. WILLIAMS: We've had two
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businesses that I will say within three weeks
they filed and three weeks later we were able
certify them since we started. I say three
weeks because of the fact that with COVID we
already had paper filings that our clerk
analyst was going through. But in all
actuality when we timed it it can be done just
like that. If they give us what we need.
Which is the biggest hurdle is our
constituents giving us the documentation
that's required. And we're not asking for
anything more, it's less than what they would
do for New York State, but once they give it
to us that's the issue, making sure they give
us exactly what we need.

MR. CHITTY: It is

understandable. Again, over the years as a
consultant I've had people who they just don't
have that quick access to all their pertinent
information. It's tough for some small
businesses. They're focusing on making money,
producing their product, taking care of their
clients. It becomes something tenuous like
doing your taxes.
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LEGISLATOR MULE: That's always been the complaint that it's just too onerous to do for so little perceived benefit to file.

MR. CHITTY: Perceived benefit, correct.

LEGISLATOR MULE: Given the large number of applications that you have how will you be addressing that backlog?

MR. CHITTY: Right now we have Michelle Crosley, who is our analyst, she focuses 100 percent on those and we're trying to crosstrain as much as we can. It's going to take us some time. We did not expect that we would have that many in the queue to get certified. It's a good thing thank goodness we do have this process but it's going to take time. And if we're looking at us versus New York State it takes them years, we're not in such an awkward position compared to any other municipalities. But we're going to do our best to get through it as quickly as we can.

LEGISLATOR MULE: Then going back to the disparity study. How many applications -- you said stay tuned for more
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information. I'm going to ask for a little bit more information. How many applications did you receive?

MR. CHITTY: I'm not 100 percent sure I can answer that because of the -- can anybody help me out from the administration? Can I even talk about that since -- I'm not 100 percent sure I can talk about how many, who or anything like that as far as that process is concerned.

LEGISLATOR MULE: Do you know the projected dated of the award?

MR. CHITTY: I don't have an exact date. I'm hoping real soon. As soon as we can solidify things. We're at the very last stage.

LEGISLATOR MULE: Are you talking one week, one month?

MR. CHITTY: To be safe, I would say within the next 30 -- hopefully within the next 30 days.

LEGISLATOR MULE: I understand.

I'm not going to hold you to that. How long will the study take to complete?
MR. CHITTY: It depends on who the awardee is. What the contracting process is. Negotiations. Then what their process is getting information from us. Again, it's going to be two counties pulling information, historical information, from both counties. Doing a lot of community outreach. I've seen numbers anywhere between nine months up to 14 depending. Again, we don't have an exact number for that. From research that we've done, every disparity study is a process unto itself and you can't really can't compare that much one to another. It depends. It will be a process.

LEGISLATOR MULE: Our legal counsel has advised that there is no legal reason not to disclose how many.

MR. CHITTY: How many applicants we have? We had five people responded to our RFP. Five businesses.

LEGISLATOR MULE: I have many, many more questions but I will stop here with the request that we another committee meeting because there are just so many more topics to
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talk about. To talk about housing, disparity
in housing. Talk about the disparity in
health care, which you mentioned. To talk
about police reform. We just have so many
things we need to talk about. But I will
yield back. Thank you.

MR. CHITTY: Legislator Rhoads if
I could? To a previous question we have been
informed by Robert Cleary from our chief
procurement office that all of the
solicitations that do come into Office of
Minority Affairs all of them are coming in.
We are made of all of the solicitations from
all of the departments. So I can confirm
that.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: But you're
not confident that every one of them is being
reviewed obviously because you don't have the
ability to do that, right?

MR. CHITTY: We do the best that
we can.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Understood.
Obviously you are trying to do that but --

MR. CHITTY: I'm not a million
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percent sure. I would like to say I am but I
can't say that I am.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Legislator

Walker.

LEGISLATOR WALKER: Thank you.

First of all, I want to thank you so much for
your presentation. It was certainly very,
very thorough. I can honestly tell you I feel
like you've accomplished more in a very short
span of time compared to what this committee
had done for years. So I will just leave it
at that. To see you working so hard
together. You said you really have become a
family and taking calls in the middle of the
night because you want to succeed and you want
to see this go very, very well and I really
think you're on the right path. So I want to
thank you so much for that.

I do understand that we are in a
hiring freeze and I do understand finances are
very difficult right now. They always are but
especially after COVID and the amount of
monies that's been spent so on and so forth.

But staffing is very, very important for your
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department and to you being more successful
you really need to be able to get that hiring
done. I would love to be able to see someone
be able to work on the contracts. And what
you've done with IT enables you to be able to,
as information comes in and you can notify the
different businesses that might pertain to is
wonderful because you can do that pretty much
instantly but you really need the manpower to
be able to do that. To be able to do it with
all the contracts. I think that's something
we would all be pushing for to see happen.
Unfortunately that staffing is needed in many
departments but this is very vital to yours.

The other thing and I know it's
very difficult because you're still in limited
access to each other with COVID, but for some
people we find that even with people trying to
fill out forms for -- with assessment or
different things we have here at work it's
almost like impossible for them to do it on
their own. They almost need someone there
with them to help them. Some of them have
very small businesses. Larger business have
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the capability of having someone fill out this paperwork for us. Do this. Gather up all the information.

But a small business you can't gather their information for you but for some of them you hand them that packet of paper it's overwhelming. Before they even begin it's like I can't do it. It's kind of been like home schooling with four grandchildren in the beginning when it was all on paper before it was on the computer. My little seven year old he'd look at that packet and he was already falling off the chair because I can't do all that. It's overwhelming. Especially when you're not sure what to do.

I would hope at some point you would have the staffing and the capability that people could come in and you could sit or go out to that business, somebody could go out to that business, and work with those individuals who really need that help basically on a one-to-one basis even to fill out the forms. Because that could be stopping them right then and there. They don't get any
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further than that. So I would love to see us be able to do that. Again, I don't want to go on and on because I know James has questions also. But please, we are here for you and whatever we can help you with. I for one, I'm sure all of us, will really be pushing for the staffing that you need to make this department work the way it should be. Thank you again for everything.

MR. CHITTY: Thank you very much. It is a team effort. It's all of us working together because we do have a mission to perform. But again, we are working with our other offices to try to share a little bit of that load. But everything is a process.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank you Legislator Walker. Minority Leader Abrahams I understand there is a question.

LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Thank you Chairman Rhoads. Thank you for accommodating us and are able to do this remotely as well. My question to the Office of Minority Affairs is more tied into what we are
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seeing throughout our country and our county
in regards to some of the actions as pertains
to police reforms. And obviously my question
to Mr. Chitty as well as to the entire group,
Mr. Harvey and Dr. Williams, is that there
have been three bills that are, two bills that
have been up for discussion as well as more
conceptual reforms that have been put into
place.

Do you envision the Office of
Minority Affairs opining on the hotline or
body cameras or the mental health study,
mental health unit in the police department
study? I think your opinion as well as your
ability to understand what is going on
throughout not just the minority communities
but from what we've seen from the protesters
it's coming from all communities, I think it's
important that your office demonstrates some
level of a position on those particular
issues. I just wanted to know what's your
level of comfort as well as your ability to be
able do that?

MR. CHITTY: I thank you very
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much Legislator Abrahams. We are engaged in these conversations, whether it's myself or my staff, especially Victoria Roberts who participates in the Police and Community Trust meetings. We've had a couple of those as we move forward into those mental health issues and discussions. We are definitely involved in all of those. We do know that it is needed and we know that the Curran administration is actively engaging individuals, organizations, all stakeholders in order have that initial conversation and come with succinct plans.

But the Office of Minority Affairs is 100 percent engaged and will continue to be engaged whether somebody calls and has any questions with those. We have received calls, issues concerning specific things especially with the police department. We forward those over. We track them.

But again, I do know that the Curran administration is definitely engaged and the Office of Minority Affairs will continue to stay engaged with all stakeholders regarding such issues.
MR. HARVEY: Can I add some things to it? I'm sorry. Because as the deputy director for diversity and community engagement I have been actively involved on many different levels speaking concerning many of these different issues. Actually with our police commissioner, with the communities, for various stakeholders that have been involved even when they were trying to implement some of the laws that Say My Name.

All of these things we have been actively engaged in on a continuous basis. That's one of the efforts we engineer in Minority Affairs. We keep the people informed. We have our finger on the pulse when we're dealing with these issues that are so very important and inform all of our communities.

One thing that we are learning it has an impact not just on minority communities but on everybody. We have to really have intelligent conversation but we've also taken steps to make sure that some of these laws will be implemented. I think already the
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camera law has already been in place. We do have body cams on some individuals I would imagine when we talked about that. And that's something I think that we agree that we should have. It was just a financial thing.

So, when we look at these things going forward all of them are going to make for a better police department. All of them are going to make for a better county. All the things that we need to do will make for a better community and that's what it's really all about.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Bishop, I apologize. My apologies Bishop. I'll probably have to go to confession after this. But it's my understanding that there are no body cameras. Only on Freeport officers. You see what that led to. Nothing. But anyway. There are no body cameras on Nassau County police officers just to be correct here.

MR. HARVEY: Freeport does have them.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: And we have been fighting for that since 2014.
MR. HARVEY: From what I would understand I thought it's something that they are working towards. I think that in the conversations that I've had and I've been pretty engaged at the table on some of these things -- no, no, there are no body cameras. But the general feel is that it's something that they should be looking into and it's something that should be done. The law has been passed. Didn't the law pass on the state level?

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: My sister passed it, yes.

MR. HARVEY: It's been passed on the state level that there should be body cams and that's something that's being discussed. Am I correct?

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: That only pertains to state troopers and state officers not county officers. Sorry Kevan.

LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: I apologize. Whenever you're ready.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Legislator Abrahams.
LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: I don't think I heard an answer to the question. I want to make sure it's clear. Is the Office of Minority Affairs, do they plan to present a position very similar to the impact study that they did many years ago in regards to the position of a particular bill or a particular economic item on how it pertains to the minority community? Do they plan to state a position on the various bills that have been drafted and presented to the clerk's office? Do you plan to present a position on the impact of both bills on the minority community? Such as the complaint hotline, such as the mental health study unit and body cameras or whatever other police initiative or police reform as a whole? Does the office plan to present some level of an opinion on where they stand on these issues?

MR. CHITTY: To answer that question, when you say an opinion or are you looking towards research that can back that opinion up? I would not feel comfortable with the Office of Minority Affairs giving, quote
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unquote, an opinion.

LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Or

position.

MR. CHITTY: I'm sorry, a

position on that. We are the Office of

Minority Affairs. We are here as a resource

for basically all constituents. As far as a

position, we want to do our best to abide by

the rules and regulations set forth for us by

law. As far as positions, I leave that up to

the administration. We know what we need to

do for these communities-- for all constituents

and we're going to do what we need to do in

order to make sure that people feel

comfortable whether it's with the police

reaching out to us with more information and

directing them along the right way. I don't

think that answered your question but that

would be my response.

LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: If I

understand the answer to your response, and

I'm not trying to put you on the spot, it

sounds like you're not going to be able to

provide a position. Which is your opinion as
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well as your position which is fine. But it
sounds like the office will not provide a
position as it pertains to legislation that
impacts minority communities if I'm
understanding you correctly.

MR. CHITTY: I'm in a position
now where what we can do is take a step back
and look at some research and data and provide
that to you at a later date and I think that
would be appropriate.

LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Okay. I
think Mr. Chitty I think you should go back
and take a look and possibly revise your
position. People look to the Office of
Minority Affairs as it pertains to your
mission and I think they would want to hear
from the Office of Minority Affairs on bills
that very well could impact their lives. I
will agree to disagree, but I think you should
take a strong look at your position going
forward because your office is seen as the
leadership office of minority issues.

I would present the same question
as it pertains to any of the other minority
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offices whether it's Asian Affairs or anyone else. But I think it's important that the leadership of those offices do present a position as it pertains to items that impact minority communities. No different than if it was economic issues or contract issues the very same issue that you had specified earlier trying to get that data as well or those contracts as well. Thank you.

MR. CHITTY: I appreciate that.
I will get back to you. I will also rely administration. But again, we will do our best to make sure that we can fulfill our -- did he already leave? Are you still there?

LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: I'm here.

MR. CHITTY: Sorry about that. I will definitely speak with the administration regarding that specific point of a position. But again, we will do the best that we can to meet the needs of all the minorities. But I will get back to you regarding that specific question. I thank you.

LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Very much appreciate it.
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LEGISLATOR RHoads: We would also, Mr. Chitty, and I know we've spoken about PACT quite a bit today. As you know, if you attended the meeting as did Bishop Harvey, had a meeting back in the beginning of June with the police department, with yourselves and with members of the community trying to begin a discussion. We've kind of taken a step back because the following week PACT started, and my view is that we shouldn't have two competing discussions going on at the same time.

As myself as chair, and I'm sure the other members of the committee, other members of the legislature, would want there to be some sort of update as to what progress PACT has been making. What the discussions are. I sent a letter to the county executive's office asking for a list of people that were actually part of PACT because we want to make sure that when you talk about having community stakeholders we want to make sure that we have a fair cross-section of all community stakeholders so that we are
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soliciting all opinions in that.

And also some kind of timetable for
what suggestions and reforms PACT is going to
come up. I haven't received that yet but if
you could just get word back to the
administration and we would definitely be
interested in seeing that sooner rather than
later. I would appreciate it.

Are there any other questions from
legislators? Legislator Ford.

LEGISLATOR FORD: Good

afternoon. Thank you very much for your
presentation. It was excellent to be quite
honest with you. I do also want to echo the
sentiments of many of the legislators up here
in regard to the need for you to get more
employees. If you have been budgeted for 12
and currently you are at seven, just listening
to all the initiatives and the projects and
all the different areas of everybody's lives
that you have to go into. Whether or not it's
with -- we spent a lot of time on contracts,
when you look at housing, when you look at the
issue of health, police reform. I could go on
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and on and I think even so I'm sure that you do get involved in the educational aspect to make sure that our students are prepared.

As you said that even civil service tests. We want to make sure that many of our young people, especially minority communities, are aware that they can take these tests, that it can provide them a good job with good benefits. It's something they have to be a little bit patient. I know what you mean. Because there are people who've waited like seven years after they took a test they got a call to come for that job and stuff like that. So perhaps maybe we can work with civil service so that maybe perhaps there can be a faster turnaround time for many of these positions.

I think that the current climate today and we see everything that's going on has enhanced the importance of your office. And I think that despite the fact that there is a freeze, a hiring freeze, I think in this case an exception must be made by this administration to allow you to bring counsel
in and to allow you to bring in the necessary people that you would need in order to fulfill your duties and your obligations to our community.

I urge the administration to heed all of us because I think we are all in agreement that at this point now is the time. You have a lot on your plate. You're doing an excellent job right now.

I agree with Rose. We have seen a lot more out of this committee, this department, then we had in many, many years. I want you to keep going full steam ahead because I think that next year I want us to have a bit of a better tone in saying -- so that we have all the initiatives that many of us are looking for and that we see more and more minorities coming into county work and to be able to get the contracts that they need.

Just one little question. I know that when we look at these businesses and helping them get the contracts, unfortunately I find that some of our small businesses are going under. I think it's -- and the
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governor's reluctance to allow certain small businesses to reopen. Like gyms, spas, yoga studios. It's been my experiences that many of these business are owned by women.

Is there anything that you can do or maybe advocate on behalf of them -- I don't know if this goes beyond your purview -- in trying to help us try to keep these businesses open? Nothing is sadder then finally getting these people to invest to make a go of it and then all of a sudden have the rug pulled right from under their feet. I would ask you that if that's the case then maybe you can add your voice in trying to get maybe some help for these people and allow them to reopen. Keep up with the good work.

MR. CHITTY: Thank you.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Are there any other questions or comments from the legislators? Legislator Kennedy.

LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: Thank you Legislator Rhoads. I just want to say I'm just impressed and so thankful for everything that you've done executive director Chitty,
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Dr. Williams and Bishop Harvey and the whole staff. Like it was said before, it's obvious that you need more help and five more people would make a tremendous difference. As far as contracts, outreach, that can make a tremendous difference and ease your work load and get you all that are in a different position maybe that could be working toward different things and like give off some of the load that you are carrying so that maybe you can be doing other things that is better for your focus.

And I think that, like it was said before, really have to make sure that the hiring and in this specific case five people and it was budgeted, so it's five people who will make a tremendous difference. I just want to say I, along with everybody else, am pushing for that. I want to thank all of you for everything you've done. It's obvious to see you've done a lot of work here and made some great progress and thank you so much.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank you

Legislator Kennedy. I know that there are
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many other questions that legislators have and we will endeavor to set up another hearing. We will invite you back. Obviously there was some information that you didn't have today. If we can endeavor to get that information specifically with respect to the county's affirmative action program and a variety of other topics which we will exchange by letter. If you can have that information when we come back that would be helpful as well and we can finish up.

Two things. Housekeeping. We are told we have to vacate the chamber at noon which we are at now. However, I know that I don't have any speaker forms but I know we have some members of the public that are here. I don't know if any intended to speak today. Mr. Guilty. If we only have one speaker we'll have Mr. Guilty speak. And was there anyone else? Anybody can submit comments in writing as well which will be incorporated as part of the record. Obviously we will have more than sufficient time for public comment when we have our next hearing.
which I assure you will be soon. In the mean
time Mr. Guilty. State your name and address
for the record.

MR. GUILTY: Andre Guilty, 1122
Van Buren Street, Uniondale, New York. I'm
going to be try to be as brief as possible.

It came to our attention in November 2019 that
the African-American community was being
robbed at a disproportionate amount of tax
dollars for the money they pay into the police
department. What we found, because I have a
TV program called the African-American News
for 28 years and I have been here many times.

What we found was some of the most
unbelievable accounts of police misconduct for
people who pay taxes. Consequently, I was
going to do an undercover operation and expose
these rogue police officers in the First
Precinct. I contacted our legislator, Kevan
Abrahams, and he said don't go out there
undercover and do that because the things that
you're telling me are too outrageous for you
to risk yourself at doing that.

So, we sent it through the line,
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sent it through the chain of command and it
made it to you in February. What I would like
to say is that we're not here today to talk
about good cops. We are here to talk about
the bad ones. I would love to speak to you in
the language that they speak to the citizens
but I can't say those words because I've grown
past that and I'm not doing a comedy routine
today.

But my notes here I have a lot of
buzz words. Nassau County prides itself on
being a sanctuary but it's not a sanctuary for
people who are victims of police terror and
racial profiling under the guise of stop and
frisk. Stop and frisk has been alive and well
out here and it has been found
unconstitutional in New York City but there's
nothing about it. I have sent videotapes. We
have testimony of people who have been
victimized by this behavior. It's almost like
the past laws in the South Africa where police
hide their ID, they hide their badges. Then
they demand your ID.

And this is not happening in a
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bubble. This is not happening to people who are just in the wrong neighborhood. This is happening to the same targeted people on a daily basis whether they're on a skateboard, bicycle, a car or walking they are constantly accosted by police who have a certain racial hatred for the people they are paid to protect and serve.

So they came to me because of my program and because I'm not afraid to speak out on their behalf. So some of them were here today but they had to leave. I'm going to say their names. Archie Stallings. His mother is a nurse. She bought him a Mercedes Benz, a BMW. He gets profiled weekly because he's not allowed to have that kind of a car.

Marcy Brando. She was stopped and frisked and that was almost like a strip search. So she was sexually harassed by officers. You had one officer holding someone's underwear up. He's been reprimanded for that.

You have Cassina Atkinson. She helped police find a dog. They cursed her out
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and threatened to beat her up after this.

We have Sara Whitehouse who was the police said she sold them a kilo of cocaine and they gave her $60,000. She lost her business. She was found innocent. It never happened but she spent $30,000.

We have Ronald Spalling who was profiled. We have a veteran, Charles Oliver, who was profiled.

So, we don't want to whitewash what's going on right now. People want justice and a lot of them want vengeance.

What I can say to you today is that the people I have seen, those people who started protesting after George Floyd, those weren't the church people. Those were the millenials. Those weren't people that you can give a job to and come here and whitewash it. Those were people who don't believe in the Koran, the Torah or the Bible. They're not forgiving. They don't turn the other cheek. You have a different generation. They want justice and they want vengeance.

Now, you can equate this to their
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behavior is a lot of innocent people over in Iraq. They were arrested and they were taken to Abu Ghraib and they were tortured in a lot of instances but they became radicalized by that behavior. Then you formed Isis.

So we see these types of similarities here for people who are innocent. Nobody ever stopped the police from doing good work in getting the criminal. But when you lump people in as all blacks are to the police you guys got to get your heads out of the sand because you are on a powder keg whether you want to believe it or not because people are not looking for support anymore.

You see what's going on in the country. But we were here first back in January telling you that there's something going on here weird with the police. They're not policing. They're abusing their authority. They are operating with white supremacy that keeps white skin privilege letting them know that they can kill people mistakenly without any accountability with impunity.
People are not going to tolerate that. People spend their lives investing in their children. Growing them up. To have them taken away by a mistake and then no charges. These people are not going to be as forgiving as our grandparents were.

So you guys are ahead of the curve so to speak. We need to be able to take these police officers, we need to take their pensions away. We need to lock them up. You also need to have the ability to test them randomly for steroids, alcohol, cocaine and marijuana. Because I have videotape of 30 years that I've caught officers doing things that weren't something that I would destroy their careers for. But what's going on today it has to end.

You are representatives of the state. The police are a state body. Whatever they do you're sanctioning it. You've got to give people another reason to believe in police again. People can't consciously tell their children if you have a problem call the police. So they can mistakenly kill
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Then when COVID came now you're telling the people who are being victimized with trauma and post traumatic stress disorder for watching black people continually getting murdered on TV. And you want me to tell our children call a cop?

You guys are at a point of singularity. There's no turning back. This is all happening on your guard. You guys have been here for years. I have been on TV for years. You all knew this day was coming. I have to speak for the people who are afraid to come to you and afraid of the police. Why are they afraid of the police? You got to ask yourselves these questions.

The Office of Minority Affairs is a policing body for making sure the proper redistribution of our tax dollar. They have a policing body, which was there attorney, to go to the different divisions and make sure that we are being properly compensated for our tax dollars. We not asking for no welfare. We are paying a disproportionate amount of tax
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dollars for bad service.

And you guys know what is going on. We don't got to play semantics here. Because when I got to get up out of my bed and leave my 11 month year old baby because somebody is at a gas station getting gas and the police pull up to wait for them to give them a ticket again this is a failed state. This is a failed state.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank you Mr. Guilty. I'm just going to ask you to please wrap up and there will be an opportunity for public comment at the full legislature.

MR. GUILTY: What you need to do is hold these people accountable. Because all lives do matter but nobody's killing police by mistake. Nobody's running up in their house killing their wife by mistake. Nobody's shooting an eight year old kid by mistake. Nobody's murdering police by mistake. So you guys have to act.

There is a way going on and I'm a harbinger of bad news. I don't have no good
news to tell you. It's going to get worse if you fail to act. Protect your citizens. These are American citizens. How the hell can you have a sanctuary city and you can't protect the citizens? Come on. This is the worst witnessing of taxation with no representation. That's what this Office of Minority Affairs was created for because we were being robbed of contracts, robbed of our rights.

So, you guys have a position here because it's going to get to a point where there's nothing you're going to be able to do to fix this. I just want you to understand, this is no disrespect to religion, people are not turning the other cheek anymore. They're not calling for the Lord. They're going to do something they're going to do themselves. They're not going to wait for you.

LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank you Mr. Guilty. At this time we are past the deadline that we were given to vacate the chambers. So at this time we will close the hearing with the understanding that we will be
revisiting these issues very shortly as soon
as we can work out a new date. Again, thank
you for participation.

I should have mentioned at the
start the last time that we were here we were
able to be joined by both Bishop Gates and
Bishop Watson who are pioneers in their own
right. Unfortunately their absence today due
to their untimely passing certainly it is
noted by all of us, recognized by all of us
and we wish that they were here. Thank you.

(Hearing was concluded at 12:14
p.m.)
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 seventh day of August 2020

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FRANK GRAY