NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE
RICHARD NICOLELLO
PRESIDING OFFICER
FINANCE COMMITTEE
LEGISLATOR HOWARD KOPEL
CHAIR
Theodore Roosevelt Building
1550 Franklin Avenue
Mineola, New York
September 9, 2020
2:08 P.M.
A P P E A R A N C E S:
LEGISLATOR HOWARD KOPEL
Chair
LEGISLATOR VINCENT MUSCARELLA
Vice Chair
LEGISLATOR TOM MCKEVITT
LEGISLATOR ROSE MARIE WALKER
LEGISLATOR ELLEN BIRNBAUM
Ranking member
LEGISLATOR ARNOLD DRUCKER
LEGISLATOR DEBRA MULE
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LEGISLATOR KOPEL: I am now going
to call the Finance Committee to order and I
will call the roll. Joshua Lafazan.
Legislator Drucker is here. Legislator
Birnbaum is here. Legislator Walker here.
Legislator McKevitt.
LEGISLATOR MCKEVITT: Here.
LEGISLATOR KOPEL: And Legislator
Muscarella.
LEGISLATOR MUSCARELLA: Here.
LEGISLATOR KOPEL: We have a
quorum. We are going to -- the first four items we're going to save because we're going to require an executive session for those. So we're going to start now with 174 of '20, which is a resolution making certain determinations on SEQRA. It's a resolution making certain determinations pursuant to SEQRA and authorizing the county executive to execute a lease with 801 Axinn Avenue L.L.C., a property owned by 801 Axinn for use by the county of Nassau Traffic and Parking Violations Agency.

That item is moved by Legislator

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Muscarella. Seconded by Legislator Birnbaum. MR. WALSH: Kevin Walsh from the Office of Real Estate Services. Nice to see you all live again and remotely some as well. This is a lease for a relocation of our traffic violations agency which is currently at 16 Cooper Street in Hempstead to 801 Axinn which is in Uniondale, Garden City. You may be familiar with the Axinn Avenue building. It was formerly operated by the department of motor vehicles other there and they relocated or in the process of moving out. This new lease will be for a 21 year term with a 10 year renewal option. In fact, there's another item before you today because a longer term county lease over five years requires a local law as well. I believe it's an item later on the agenda.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Yes. I will call that right away as well. As a matter of fact, if you just hold on for a moment let me grab that one as well and I'll call it and we can consider them together. Which number is that?

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MR. WALSH: Item 209.
LEGISLATOR KOPEL: I will call
item 209 now. A local law to amend the Nassau County administrative code in relation to the lease of real property. That too is moved by Legislator Muscarella. Seconded by Legislator Birnbaum. Go on.

MR. WALSH: This will be a
relocation. The current lease for the county is set to expire February 2023. Over the past few years we worked closely with the department of public works and with TPVA to look at options at the end of that lease to see if there were other alternatives. Many spaces don't lend themselves for a TPVA agency because of the necessity of parking. Not only for employees but for people coming in. Certainly it's a location that sees a lot of traffic of people coming in.

So, the opportunity at 801 Axinn presented an opportunity with adequate parking centrally located in the county. With negotiation with the landlord we'd be able to secure a tenant improvement allowance. About

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\$55 a square foot on the landlord's own cost expense. He's going to be upgrading the HVAC systems, which is obviously important in this situation, conditions we've had in last few months. We are also going to be getting a rent abatement. We do have an 18 month cancellation option in our existing lease which works in nice with the timing to give us time to secure the approvals, get the build-out done for the new lease relocation location. Any questions?

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: First of all, the county does have a number of vacant buildings of its own, doesn't it? You've considered all of these and none of them are suitable?

MR. WALSH: One of the biggest challenges is obviously parking. Even the existing TPVA agency has I believe close to 65 to 70 employees. The other thing is you need a site that's accessible to the public, you know, with ADA compliance, adequate parking. We've worked with the village. The village has an issue with the parking garage which has

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recently been closed. So it's been kind of a challenge to operate in that condition. This is a location where we will not be paying extra for parking. I think the reason the landlord was able to work with us and negotiate with us the change from the department of motor vehicle's use to the county's TPVA use is a rather consistent use. LEGISLATOR KOPEL: But what
about, as I said, the other county-owned properties? There aren't any that are suitable?

MR. WALSH: Centrally located in the county, I wouldn't say there was one that I'm aware of that's suitable because we did look at all options.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: You would pretty much know them all. What about the question of purchase versus lease? Did you look into that as well?

MR. WALSH: Yes. The particular property was not available, to my knowledge, for sale. Another issue with purchase is the securing of the funds for purchase, taking a

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property off the tax roll. We will continue to be paying taxes as any commercial tenant would be paying on this. The advantage again of this lease we currently do pay all the taxes on the building at 16 Cooper Street. With the new lease we will be paying the increase over base year taxes. So really we won't even be paying taxes on the new building until we are at least occupying it.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: The taxes just
kind of make a round trip anyway.
MR. WALSH: Yes. True.
LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Legislator
McKevitt.
LEGISLATOR MCKEVITT: Mr. Walsh, just coming back to the issue of the parking. You say there's a comparable use between I guess TPVA and DMV right now, but I've gone over to that building where DMV is right now and parking on a good day is tight at best. I'm just curious if you've actually compared the number of employees and customers between building and building. If they're comparable it's fine but $I$ just want TPVA for having many

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more spaces because people literally just won't be able to park at the new location. Right now where TPVA is is a disaster as well with that garage gone. So we're really between a rock and a hard place. I just want to make sure that the 801 Axinn site was actually going to work.

MR. WALSH: Yes, that's correct.
One of the reasons Axinn was such a viable alternative because we had found other buildings that could have accommodated our use of about 30,000 square feet with 70 employees. But I believe the parking we have now at Axinn is 275 or more spaces. Obviously I know on a busy DMV day it was a challenge to find parking there. You try to find a time during the day which is the right time to go so you can find parking.

The village has similar issues. We also have another building we rent in the village so we have competition for parking there. The loss of the garage, and we really don't know the time frame for renovations of that garage, it's created an immediate issue

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problem for us. The nice thing is this is going to help alleviate some of the parking and hopefully it will be better parking for our employees in Hempstead. This building was attractive because it does uniquely so have adequate parking centrally located in the county.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Anyone else?
Legislator Birnbaum.
LEGISLATOR BIRNBAUM: Did you say
that the current lease in Hempstead doesn't expire until 2023?

MR. WALSH: That's correct.
February 2023. We have a cancellation right upon 18 months notice. Which it will take time to get approvals for the build-out even though there's not a major build-out in the new space. But honestly to schedule a move -the other thing is if we stayed in the existing space and we wanted to bring it up to current standards we might have had to actually accommodate two moves because we might have had to move our TPVA employees and staff out while we set up that space and

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renovated on a temporary basis to bring it up to current standards.

LEGISLATOR BIRNBAUM: In that current building in Hempstead aren't there other county facilities working out of there?

MR. WALSH: That particular
building there's no other county facility -it's an interesting building. We occupy about I'd say about 80 percent of the building. The front of the building, which fronts on Main Street, is actually a restaurant. We rent 18,000 square feet on the main level and we have 18,000 square feet of storage space in the basement which is used by both the district attorney's office and also TPVA. We've had some issues unfortunately because we have a restaurant who's a neighbor with a grease trap backup so we've had some flooding and leaks. If anybody's been through something like that it's never a great experience. We've had to deal with that issue.

We still want to see if we still have needs for storage at times. We may

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consider -- we want to consider still maybe using some of that storage space in Hempstead depending on the needs of the DA going forward. Obviously we are in a new situation now with new technology but during the crisis our needs may change a little bit as well. LEGISLATOR BIRNBAUM: How long
would you expect the construction or whatever renovations needed to make the Axinn building useful?

> MR. WALSH: We think it's
approximately a year between plans being completed, approvals, the necessary local approvals and the build-out, we're projecting one year.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Anyone else?
Any public comment on this item? These two items. All those in favor of items number 174 and 209 signify by saying aye. Any opposed? Those items pass unanimously. Thank you Kevin.

I'm going to call the rest of the items and then come back and deal with them one by one as I probably ought to have done to

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begin with. It's item 189, 193, 194, 195, 196, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208 and 210. 211, 219, 220 and 225.

Motion on those items is made by Mr. Drucker. Seconded by Mr. McKevitt.

Number 189, which is a resolution authorizing the county executive for a grant agreement with the Friends of Nassau County Bailey Aboretum.

MS. KASO: Victoria Kaso from the parks department. 189-20 is the hotel-motel tax grant agreement with the Friends of Nassau County Bailey Aboretum in the amount of $\$ 37,500$ 。

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Thank you. Any questions? Thank you. 193 is issuance of a warrant for distribution of mortgage taxes to the various villages and cities within the county. That's all there is. Any questions? Thank you. Great job.

We'll deal with 194, 195, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208 and 225 are all supplemental appropriations. Let's see. Next we have -- are you going to deal with all of

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them? Go on please.
MS. LAURAIN: Mary Ellen Laurain, department of health. I have 194 and 195. Item 194-20 is a supplemental appropriation. It's in the amount of $\$ 847,710$. It's for the early intervention administrative grant and this is funded by New York State Department of Health to pay for the administrative cost for the program.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Go on. 195.
MS. LAURAIN: Item 195-20 is a supplemental appropriation. It's in the amount of $\$ 630,276$. This is for our public health emergency preparedness grant. This is federal pass through money to assist the department with responded to public health emergencies.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Any questions on these two items? Thank you.

MS. LAURAIN: I do have an addendum but $I$ have to wait on that, right?

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: You sure do. It won't take long. Ms. Walker.

LEGISLATOR WALKER: Just while

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you're there, I want to thank you for all your assistance during, you know, the hiatus I guess you'd say of COVID, and you were always there to answer our questions, you were on many of the phone calls when we had our conference calls. First time we're getting to see you. So glad you stayed healthy and thank you for all you did for us.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Number 202 is the correctional center. MR. GOLIO: Captain Michael Golio from the sheriff's department. This is a supplemental appropriation from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services for the sheriff's department for participation in the Give Initiative Program. Gun Violence Elimination Program. The sheriff's department participates with other law enforcement agencies in the county.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Any
questions? Thank you. 203 and 207 would be the police department.

MR. FIELD: Good afternoon. William Field, deputy inspector, Nassau County

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Police Department. Item 203-20 is a supplemental appropriation related to the Give Initiative Grant. The police department appropriates $\$ 306,533$ received from the New York State Division of Criminal Services. These proceeds are designed to provide overtime funding to enhance investigative and street enforcement with a focus on reducing gun violence.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: And 207.
MR. FIELD: Item 207-20, this is a supplemental appropriation of an amount of \$160,000 received from successful forfeiture actions. The proceeds are being used for upgrades and improvements to the Nassau County Police Department headquarters training wing. There is no net impact on the budget.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Any questions? Thank you. Next we have Office of Housing and Community Development. Let's start with 204.

MR. CREAN: Kevin Crean, Office of Community Development. Items 204 and 205-20 are related to the supplemental

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appropriation of the emergency solutions grants funding. Those activities to be funded under this grant were included in the annual action plan that was approved by the legislature in July and has been subsequently approved by HUD just two weeks ago.

Item 206 is related to the Home Investment Partnership Program. Those activities are the same ones included in the annual action plan.

And item 225-20 is related to the supplemental appropriation of the Community Development Block Grant funding. These are all entitlement grant programs that were received by the county annually.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Anybody have questions on those? Keep on going please. Don't you have 206, 207?

MR. CREAN: I have 204, 205, 206, and 225.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: And 208 is not
yours? Of course not.
MR. CREAN: No.
LEGISLATOR KOPEL: 208 is the

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district attorney.
MR. MCMANUS: Bob McManus, district attorney's office. This item before you is a supplemental appropriation for the Gun Involved Violence Elimination Program. This item appropriates $\$ 109,326$ in funds received from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services.

The focus of the program is on individuals and groups that police find are most responsible for gun violence in a particular location. Locations where the most violent incidents are occurring. Coordinating crime fighting efforts and some strategies among law enforcement and local violence prevention groups and involving key stakeholders and the community at large to build support for efforts to reduce gun violence.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Any
questions? Thank you.
LEGISLATOR BIRNBAUM: Can I ask a
question. Could you name a few of the programs that you're involved in? Is there

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anything going on right now or this year?
MR. MCMANUS: Yes. I would say
the main program is the community partnership in Hempstead which has been part of the Hempstead crime prevention program that we started about ten, 12 years ago which tries to provide services to people who are being newly readmitted to the community after incarceration and also young people who are considered at risk. It's the Community Partnership Program, CPP. That's the main focus.

LEGISLATOR BIRNBAUM: Thank you.
LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Thanks. 210 would be Lido Beach Point Lookout.

MR. PERSICH: Good afternoon. Andy Persich, Office of Management and Budget. This item is the PILOT agreement between the city of the Long Beach and the Lido Beach Fire Department. It appropriates I think $\$ 105,000$-- almost $\$ 6,000$ to each of the respective districts to each of the respective districts.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Any

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questions? Thanks Andy. 211 is the sale of property, county property, to Gabrielli Truck Sales. Kevin.

MR. WALSH: Good afternoon
again. This item is a sale of a county property in Bethpage, also known as building 20, a former navy building that was owned by Grumman to Gabrielli Trucks. It was sold through an RFP process late last year and best and final offer. The sale has also been approved both by the Open Space Committee and approved by the Planning Commission without any condition. It will be used for their truck sales and leasing operations. It's in line -- actually exceeds the appraised value of the property. Any questions?

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: When was that appraisal?

MR. WALSH: We had an appraisal
just updated recently. The appraisal I believe was $\$ 3,600,000$ roughly.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Any other questions? Thank you. That's it I think. 219 and 220 are federal transportation

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projects. Who's got that? Ken.
MR. ARNOLD: Good afternoon, Ken
Arnold. 219 is a master agreement which allows reimbursement of monies from New York State Department of Transportation related to road resurfacing phase 67. This was $\$ 4$ million. Total project cost at $\$ 5$ million. And 220 is a master agreement that allows reimbursement for the design services associated with the pedestrian safety action plan. At the last session this body approved the design consultant, which is Nelson and Pope. This is reimbursement towards other surfaces in the total of $\$ 211,000$. Additionally, we will come back with a supplemental to this when we are ready for construction which will be in the ballpark of about $\$ 3.6$ million. It's to address 176 pedestrian crossings that have no controlled access throughout the county. LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Any
questions? Thank you Ken. We're going to vote on all the items I just called. Hold on. I missed an item. 196, which is a budget

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transfer.
MR. FIELD: Item 196-20 is a budget transfer. The police department was unable to fully expend the travel training portion due to COVID-19 when it came to events and meetings. We proposed the budget transfer resolution which covers the $\$ 3,053$ to be put from general expenses to the salary line. LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Any
questions? Thank you. All those in favor of the items that I just called please signify by saying aye. Any opposed? Those items are unanimous. Thank you.

Now we need a motion to suspend the rules. Mr. Muscarella makes that motion and is seconded by Mr. Drucker. All those in favor of suspending the rules? Any opposed? The rules are suspended.

We have one item on the addendum which is number 235, which is an ordinance supplemental to the annual appropriation in connection with the Department of Health. That motion is made by Ms. Walker and seconded by Ms. Birnbaum.

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MS. LAURAIN: Item 235-20 is a
supplemental appropriation. It's for \$3,779,000 for the epidemiology and laboratory capacity for COVID-19. This federal pass-through money and this will allow us to increase our staff and capacity to conduct rapid and complete case investigations for COVID.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: What is the increase, from what to what? Numbers.

MS. LAURAIN: This is a
two-year -- just given to us. We also get state aid on our public health activities.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: I'm just asking how you plan to use it.

MS. LAURAIN: For staffing to do case investigations.

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Ms. Birnbaum.
LEGISLATOR BIRNBAUM: When you
say to do case investigations does this involve contact tracing? What kind of case investigations?

MS. LAURAIN: When we initially
get a positive case we interview the positive

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case. Determine their world and everything they've done and from that information we get the contact tracing. And that could be done by the case investigator or could be passed on to a contact tracer. Some cases are much more complicated than others. In fact, the other day we had a case that had 60 contacts. Some of them only have four contacts. So depending on the complexity of the case we make a determination in how we are going to distribute it.

LEGISLATOR BIRNBAUM: We knew in the height of COVID that, I'm assuming -- you tell me -- did we have enough people doing case investigations and contact tracing in Nassau County?

MS. LAURAIN: Right. The state also has contact investigators as well through their program. Every day it varies. Kind of like an accordion. Some days we don't get as many cases and other days we could get, again, a case that has a lot of contacts. We are managing the work but definitely this extra funding will help us to increase that.

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LEGISLATOR BIRNBAUM: Do you have any guess as to how many new people would be hired?

MS. LAURAIN: I don't have the number. We are presently looking to do this through a state contract. So I don't have the numbers. It really depends on that further information.

LEGISLATOR BIRNBAUM: Wouldn't this amount of money from the CDC go towards the hiring?

MS. LAURAIN: Yes. That's what
it's intended. That's what we are using it for. And some laptops and other equipment.

LEGISLATOR BIRNBAUM: Okay.
LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Anyone else?
Yes Mr. McKevitt.
LEGISLATOR MCKEVITT: Are we looking to hire county employees doing this or are we actually contracting out to an agency?

MS. LAURAIN: We are going to contract through an agency. One that's most likely been approved through the state. We're still working out those details. There's a

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state agency called HRI. So it looks like that's the way we're going to go.

LEGISLATOR MCKEVITT: Thank you.
LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Ms. Walker.
LEGISLATOR WALKER: Would we be
looking then to once there's not a need for them, hopefully things really get better, then this just ends? They would no longer be -MS. LAURAIN: Right. That would be written into the contract.

LEGISLATOR WALKER: Would we also use them to assure, like we did during the hiatus of COVID, make sure if someone has COVID and they are supposed to be quarantined will they also go and make sure that they are where -- like you were doing -- I guess after a while you didn't have to do as much.

MS. LAURAIN: We're still doing that on a case-by-case basis. This team is going to do the investigation. It's a skill set that the person is going to need to come from a health science background. It's a skill set that you need to get information from people who sometimes don't want to give

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you that information. The staff that we use to check on quarantine is a different group of staff.

LEGISLATOR WALKER: Which is our own staff members?

MS. LAURAIN: Yes. We will still use our own staff for case investigation as well. This will help. We have a lot of other diseases we also have to investigate.

LEGISLATOR WALKER: Thank you.
LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Anyone else?
Hearing none, all those in favor of this item? Any opposed? The item passes unanimously. Mr. McKevitt moves to adjourn and Mr. Drucker seconds. Oh, we do have an executive session on the four items. I didn't call those four items? First off I will call the items.

## LEGISLATOR MUSCARELLA: Quick

question Howard. How are we going to do executive session? Do we have a number to call to listen?

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: I'm sure we have a number in the room. Somebody will call

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you with it. How many people are there?
Kevan, we have you and Josh I think.
I'm going to just call the items and we will make a motion for the executive session and then call you and figure it out before we do anything. How's that?

I'm going to call items 69, 101, 102, 135 all of which are requests for the committee to approve settlements of various actions against the county. That motion is made by Mr. Muscarella. Seconded by Ms. Birnbaum.

We're going to make a second motion
for executive session. That motion is made by Ms. Walker and seconded by Mr. Drucker. All
those in favor of going into executive session? Any opposed? We are going into executive session.
(Committee recessed at 2:40 p.m.) (Committee reconvened at 3:50 p.m.)

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Reconvene the Finance Committee. We are going to vote on the items for which we were in executive committee being 69, 101, 102, 135. All those

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in favor of those settlements please signify by saying aye. Are there any opposed? Those are approved unanimously.
Mr. McKevitt moves to adjourn. Mr. Drucker enthusiastically seconds. All those in favor of adjourning say aye. We are adjourned.
(Committee adjourned at 3:51 p.m.)
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        by saying aye. Are there any opposed? Those
        are approved unanimously.
            Mr. McKevitt moves to adjourn.
        Mr. Drucker enthusiastically seconds. All
        those in favor of adjourning say aye. We are
        adjourned.
            (Committee adjourned at 3:51 p.m.)
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## CERTIFICATION

I, FRANK GRAY, a Notary Public in and for the State of New York, do hereby certify: THAT the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of my stenographic notes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 19th day of September 2020.

FRANK GRAY

