Speaker BERGSTROM: Good afternoon. Welcome to the Wednesday, March 18th session of the Cape Cod Regional Government, Assembly of Delegates.

Before I call this meeting to order, is anyone recording this besides our normal recording? Hearing none.

I’ll call the meeting to order. We will begin with a moment of silence to honor our troops who have died in service to our country and all those serving our country in the Armed Forces.

(Moment of silence.)

Thank you.

We will now stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Pledge of Allegiance.)

Speaker BERGSTROM: The Clerk will call the roll.

Roll Call (71.96%): Ronald Bergstrom (2.84% - Chatham), Ned Hitchcock (1.27% - Wellfleet), Christopher Kanaga (2.73% - Orleans), James Killion (9.58% - Sandwich), Marcia King (6.49% - Mashpee), Suzanne McAuliffe (11.02% - Yarmouth), Deborah McCutcheon (0.93% - Truro), Edward McManus (5.67% - Harwich), Brian O’Malley (1.36% – Provincetown), Patrick Princi (20.92% - Barnstable), Linda Zuern (9.15% - Bourne).

Absent (28.04%): Edward Lewis (4.55% - Brewster), Teresa Martin (2.30% - Eastham), John Ohman (6.58% - Dennis), Julia Taylor (14.61% - Falmouth).

Clerk O’CONNELL: Mr. Speaker, we have a quorum with 71.96 percent of the Delegates present; 28.04 percent absent.

Committee of the Whole

Speaker BERGSTROM: Thank you.

You have in front of you the Calendar of Business. Any additions or corrections to the Calendar?

Mr. O’MALLEY: Mr. Speaker.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes.

Mr. O’MALLEY: Minor detail. We are approving the Journal of March 4th. I believe we approved the February 18th last time.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes.

Clerk O’CONNELL: Thank you.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay. With that amendment.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Move approval as amended.

Ms. KING: Second.

Speaker BERGSTROM: All right. So you approved the amended Calendar.

(Amended Calendar approved.)

Speaker BERGSTROM: You should have received a copy of the Journal of
February 4th; right?
    Ms. KING: No, March 4th.
Speaker BERGSTROM: March 4th. So we’ve amended the Calendar of Business to reflect the fact that we’re approving the Journal of March 4th.
Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay. So I need a motion to approve the Journal.
Ms. KING: Second.
Speaker BERGSTROM: All those in favor?
(Motion carried.)
Speaker BERGSTROM: All right. We’re not starting off well here. We now have our Communications from the Board of Regional Commissioners. Madam Chairman.

Communications from the Board of Regional Commissioners

Commissioner LYONS: Good afternoon, everyone. Today, I just wanted to let you know that we reviewed and approved the establishment of a Human Rights Advisory Subcommittee. I just informed that to your subcommittee on Human Rights.
This had nothing to do with the budget per se. This is to look at the Ordinance because the Ordinance is stated that this is to be housed under the Human Services department.
I think that there needs to be a discussion between the Human Rights. They have sort of -- it’s really to hash out lines of responsibility. So the committee that was approved today, you will get the exact language over.
It was proposed but there are three members of the Assembly we’re asking to participate on this committee. So if anyone has an interest in the Human Rights Commission, then it would be good for you to be on that and to make sure that the Ordinance is written to reflect the position and where it’s supervisory -- where its supervision comes from. Whether it be the County Administrator to the Commissioners or under the Human Service Department and what those responsibilities would be, reporting responsibilities.
So there’s three members of the Assembly, two members from the Human Rights. Beth Albert would be representing her department and someone from the administration. So I would imagine Michael or Bob and that would be it. So there would be seven members to hash that out. And it’s just to send back the recommendations to the language, the change of language to the Ordinance. It will all become clear when you’re sitting at that table. It’s not as difficult as it sounds.
So we did do that today. Pat was not well today, so we moved on the -- on hiring a firm for our search until next week. And we are going to go ahead and give our County website support to Mercy Otis and we are still looking for language if there’s -- what is it to -- what would have to be done if we ever wanted to support this in a formal way. And there is suggestions like for next year that we should just think of adopting it and being part of ours. But that’s something we have to go through legal and make sure we are straight on it.
But we can give in-kind services so we are allowing them to put up their website. It should be up by this week, so if anyone does have nominations for the Mercy Otis Woman-of-the-Year Award, you’ll be able to go on to our website and submit your
nomination through that portal and that is a great assistance to them. It just gets shipped off to them and they do the rest of the work. But that way we don’t have to do a website. And that was our business today.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay. Any questions? Yes, Pat.

Mr. PRINCI: Just as far as the hiring of the new County Administrator, have you set forth any timelines as to when you’d like to see someone there?

Commissioner LYONS: Well, it would be nice to have somewhere there by July 1, but we’ll have to -- at the rate, you know, we have to move it along. So hopefully we’ll have all of the pieces in place by next week.

Mr. PRINCI: So you couldn’t make any decisions today on the contract?

Commissioner LYONS: No.

Mr. PRINCI: You had to put that off for another week?

Commissioner LYONS: No. It was on the hiring firm.

Mr. PRINCI: Okay.

Commissioner LYONS: The contract will really be between hashing out --

Mr. PRINCI: I’m sorry; that’s what I meant, the firm. Okay. Thanks.

Commissioner LYONS: Yes.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes. Anybody else here? Sheila, the hiring of the Administrator, it’s going to be dictated somewhat by state requirements. In other words, you put out an RFP and you have a certain number of days, 60 days, I don’t know what it is.

Commissioner LYONS: Yes.

Speaker BERGSTROM: So I mean there must be some recognition of limitations that we’re going to be running up against as far as being able to complete that process.

Commissioner LYONS: Well, even with the responses we got back from firms, we have 45 days to respond yay or nay to that. So we’re still within that time limit. Pat has the flu today, so we’re just putting that decision off until the three of us can make it.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes, but I mean at that point, you get the firm and then you also -- that’s 45 days. That brings us to, you know, we’re talking about May 1; right?

Commissioner LYONS: Right.

Speaker BERGSTROM: And then you have to put out the RFP for the Administrator to accept it. So I’m just saying at this point it’s not a question of you hope to do it; is it possible to do it within that timeframe?

Commissioner LYONS: It depends on how fast we can do that. But I do think that we’re looking at contingency if we go over June 30.

Speaker BERGSTROM: You know, I used to play basketball and there was one guy we always complained that he was too slow getting down the court, you know, this was an older guy and he said, “At my age, we like to move at a dignified speed”; okay?

Commissioner LYONS: I’ll have to remember that.

Speaker BERGSTROM: So I’m wondering, are you guys moving at a dignified speed?

Commissioner LYONS: Yes. Well, hopefully, dignified and --

Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay. Whatever.

Commissioner LYONS: -- in the right direction. We’re doing the best we can
here. We all know that this is --

Speaker BERGSTROM: All right.
Commissioner LYONS: I'm happy to have more meetings in between if it takes that for us to expedite some of these steps, so we don’t have to just keep putting it off every Wednesday, every Wednesday. I’m happy to schedule meetings just for us to come in and make decisions on this and vote and get out.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Anything else? All right. Well, thank you, very much.
Commissioner LYONS: Well, thank you.

Oh, I didn’t mention the budget. We’ve been getting updates each week on our physical budget and the revenues. I know that -- I didn't mention it because I know that Bob and Michael are here to speak to you about that so why be redundant.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay. Thank you.
Ms. MCAULIFFE: Excuse me, Mr. Speaker, I do have --
Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes. Just a minute, Sheila.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Excuse me. I do have a question and I don’t know if this is something you can answer but because we have two Administrators on board, and you’ve been here longer, maybe you can.

In doing the budget, we’ve been coming across a conversion of some of the contracted employees to bring them in under Mass. General Law 149, Section 128B, and this has been in effect since 1990 and amended in 2004.

Is there some reason why now all of the sudden this year this is happening and it was sort of -- are you aware of the conversion of some of the contracted consulting employees into becoming regular employees?

Commissioner LYONS: Well, I know that it wasn’t something that was on my radar screen until it came up before us so --

Ms. MCAULIFFE: So there wasn’t a policy decision about trying to have as many, you know, kind of consultants as opposed to regular employees?

Commissioner LYONS: No. I think that, you know, when you’re trying to get work done and you’re trying to get it in within a certain amount of money, you tend to -- that was a good way to go. I mean I’ve never been crazy about consultants because especially if they are going to be -- if that is something you need, you’re bringing in a consultant and bringing a person up to speed. By the time the task is over, you know, or you’re going to renew it, you’re bringing in someone else. Sometimes it’s just better to have an employee that knows the show.

But this a General Law. I mean this is the IRS coming through, and I do know that they’ve been tightening it up, so I’m not sure if it was generated by a letter, someone’s questioning on contracts, but once the question was asked, we had to review all contracts and this is where we are.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Okay. Thank you.
Commissioner LYONS: Thanks.

Communications from and Discussions with Michael Brillhart and Bob Lawton

Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay. So that brings us to Communications from and Discussions with County Administrator Michael Brillhart and Interim Finance Director Bob Lawton regarding revenues and merit and cost-of-living adjustments.
So how come you have a big stack of stuff and he only has the one?
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Top; bottom.
Speaker BERGSTROM: He’s more efficient than you.
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: That must be it, Mr. Chairman -- Mr. Speaker.
Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay. Welcome.
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Thank you.
Administrator BRILLHART: Good afternoon.
Speaker BERGSTROM: You know, I scheduled this because I know there’s been some discussions at the subcommittee level about projected revenues, not just the large revenues from like the County Deeds Tax but individual revenues that were anticipated from let’s say IT, you know, department.
So I thought I give them a chance to, I'm not going to say justify those revenues, to explain those revenues and to tell us. So, go ahead. Go do it.
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: I'll start and then Michael can follow up.
We did provide you with a package of two pages. One was, as you requested, the actual revenue for each of the categories for FY14. The estimate which was made last year for FY15; the amount in ’15 to date for the end of February, and then that the last column is the estimate that we proposed for FY16.
The second page is a brief explanation of each of these items. The estimate matches what you see in FY16 for each of those items, and then the detail follows on the right-hand side.
Now I know you’ve only received it today, and there may be some other questions, but that I think answers, I hope, most of your questions concerning why we made the increases or in some cases decreases that we did.
Speaker BERGSTROM: Seems to fall on deaf ears. I know you’re all just looking at this now. Just to keep going here, I asked Bob to circle -- see not all revenues go into the General Fund. Some of these revenues are encumbered. Some are, for instance, the County Dredge Fund goes into an Enterprise Account. The Cape Cod Commission revenues usually stay internally with the Cape Cod Commission. So they’re not all transferable to other departments or to other -- to other needs.
Anybody have any questions then? Yes.
Ms. MCAULIFFE: Yes. Your IT revenues, there’s a huge jump into their regular contracts now with Wellfleet and Truro I think are going to be beefed up because they’ve been doing surveys. Is that 500,000 estimate for July 2016 dependent on hiring three full-time people and a part-time person or is this contingent on the information that came back from the survey that we think that work might be out there. I mean where did the 500,000 come from?
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: It was an estimate based upon a survey that the IT Director did seeing who might wish to avail themselves of County services. We do not have contracts signed.
So we had a number; it was fairly large. We cut it really in half. We now receive about $94,000 from contracted services. And based upon the new hires, the IT Department could go out and be more aggressive in trying to get the contracts signed, etcetera.
So we try to be conservative in our estimate. So if the new people are not hired,
then we would simply lower the estimated receipts.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: We had a discussion in the IT committee -- I mean in the Telecommunications Committee and IT people on Monday.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Yes.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: And there’s a lot of work that needs to be done in terms of getting their pricing and their business plan and their contracts and everything kind of in order. They want to do it right. They don’t want to hire doing piecemeal.

So one of the things we were thinking is this may not be ready to go July 1 and perhaps it might be more appropriate to get birds in hand and then go forward with some of the hiring.

So I'm not sure -- well -- I’m glad to hear that the 500,000 was a cut-in-half from a bigger estimate.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Yes.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: But it would be good to have some actual contracts. It's really tough to be hiring people without a contract, I guess.

ADMINISTRATOR BRILLHART: If I could do a follow up. I’ve talked to our IT Director and requested that we've drafted a memo that's going to go out to each of the towns that we know we want to have services with and have communicated with us so that we’re all on the same page. They realized that we’re in a budgeting process and that we need to have some firm commitment that, yes, if the revenue comes in, we’ll be able to provide those services. So it will enable the County and those communities to fall in the middle.

So we hope to have those letters of support for those services within the next, hopefully, four weeks. And once those are available, then we could come back and talk to you about where we think this could be; whether it needs to be in this fiscal year budget or, as suggested, it could be on supplemental appropriations when we get a firmer handle.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Thank you.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes, Brian.

Mr. O’MALLEY: This concerns the Registry of Deeds. You’ve got a couple lines, one under the Registry of Deeds Tax where you’ve shown that it leveled revenue -- So under the Registry of Deeds tax up in the tax revenues, that’s been shown as leveled income revenue.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Yes, sir.

Mr. O’MALLEY: Yet, under the Registry of Deeds its service income. There’s a substantial drop. And I had the impression from the Registrar when we met that that was really anticipated from reduced activity. How do you account for keeping the Registry of Deeds tax levels?

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: According to the Registrar of Deeds, that is a standard amount and we should see no reduction. It's a different way that those funds are billed and then sent to us.

The second, where we had a reduction, is really based upon traffic into the Registry.

Mr. O’MALLEY: Yes.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: And the Registrar said he was very comfortable or more comfortable with this figure than the prior year. So I relied on him.
Mr. O’MALLEY: Thank you.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes, following up on that, Bob, in looking at the revenue projections, the estimate of 3-1/4 million and the actual, which is just a little over 1-1/2 million, it seemed like we might not make that projection this year. That’s including February? I’m talking about under Department revenues, Registry of Deeds.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Yes, I think we had anticipated there might be a shortfall and certainly the Registrar had told me about that. So we do have some concerns. The County Administrator’s already indicated to department heads they need to cut back on expenses as they did last year so that we balance on June 30.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Well, I’m looking at the revised estimates, 2016 estimate seems to be -- I mean if you project receipts as an act from February on, it seems like the new estimate for 2016 would be more in line with what we will actually be getting this year. I mean I can’t do the math, but I mean we’re probably two-thirds of the way through, a little more.

So you think that that 2 - 2-1/2 million seems fairly realistic, you think? I mean I know you’re not an expert on the Registry of Deeds.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Based upon what the Registrar said in our meetings, he feels very comfortable with that. And he can justify that.

Speaker BERGSTROM: I’m saying it’s probably consistent with this year’s receipts more.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: I would guess; yes, sir. Maybe a little more. I think he was encouraged by some recent activity but --

Speaker BERGSTROM: Well, the 1 percent have been down here getting -- buying their mansions.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Yes.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes, Chris.

Mr. KANAGA: Sorry. I just, in looking back, I mean it’s been two years in a row where that line item has been overstated by a significant amount. So, I guess what I’m saying -- he’s saying he feels comfortable. He felt comfortable probably the last two years as well.

So I’m just questioning that in the overall budget scheme where we go with a number like that that has been unrealistic for the last 24 months plus.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes, well, actually, if I can answer that? And that’s what I’m trying to get at is look at the numbers. They estimated 3-1/4 million was their estimate for last year. Now they’ve lowered that to 2-1/2. So that’s either the Registry’s going to stop, you know, that seems like a more realistic, I think, estimate. But I can’t speak to the previous estimates. Good grief.

Yes, Suzanne.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: This is sort of out there a little bit. This year we voted -- the Assembly voted to not go up 2-1/2 percent to municipal assessments because I think we were all under the impression that we were awash in money and we really had no reason to go ahead and increase assessments to towns if we didn’t need the money. And we voted to not increase the assessment.

So I guess on the revenue side and no one was ahead of us and now having a little bit better handle, when would that happen if we wanted to reconsider a 2-1/2 assessment increase to the towns because it seems that we have a better financial grip on things than
we did last year. When does that happen?

Administrator BRILLHART: It actually needs to happen now because the budget should have been built-in with the 2-1/2 percent.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: But it wasn’t because we voted it down?

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: I think the other piece of that puzzle, however, is, as I understand County finances, that if you do not do the increase you lose it. In a town, if you don’t do your 2-1/2 increase, you keep that amount as your upper limit of your 2-1/2 fund. In the County, you just keep falling further back. So every year you do not vote the 2-1/2 increase, that’s lost and can never be recouped.

So I would encourage you to seriously consider doing the 2-1/2 percent increase so that at least we could try to keep up with the rates of new costs, etcetera. And, frankly, it is $74,000. So it’s not a huge amount of money but it does keep us in line with other communities and probably other counties.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay. Bob or Mike, actually, I know the dredge -- the reason I have you separate these Enterprise Funds so we get a better handle on the actual expenses that the County uses the General Fund for.

But as far as the dredge goes, I went out to collect a few oysters in Mill Creek the day before yesterday and I could have picked one up and hit the County Dredge with it because it’s been sitting there for a couple of weeks.

And, you know, I think it’s pretty much understood that the dredge is seriously in need of maintenance which is an issue. But the greater issue is is this thing going to be able to perform up to expectations, and if it isn’t, then we’re not going to get the revenues in the Enterprise Fund.

So I talked to our dredge guy, I can’t think of his name right now, but we know you’re right on top of that and we’re going to get it maintenance. Because not only is it important for the County, the Enterprise Fund, but there’s a lot of towns are going to be asking for beach nourishment and so on coming down the pike.

So I just want to say that I hope that revenue estimate is based on a nice healthy dredge that’s going to operate because the window, as you know, because of various closures and species and so on is limited, and if you’re broken down for two weeks in that window, you’re up against it.

So, other than that, I think -- if there’s any more questions on revenues, we can move on. Yes. First Deborah then Ed.

Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: I’d just like to have an explanation. I know you did this before in the subcommittee, but I think it would be helpful to everybody to explain what the bond issue is comprised of and then how it’s going to be handled in the budget.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: The bond that is being proposed for FY16, which will be somewhat less when we get our revisions done than the 2 million because of actions by the Commissioners, those will be scheduled through the County Administrator and then borrowed on a bond anticipation note as the work comes forward. Is that what you -- I’m sorry.

Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Well, isn’t some part of that operating expense that are being folded into the bond to be funded?

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: No. There are no operating expenses that I’m aware of that are in the bond issue that we’re proposing for FY16.
Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Okay. There were 15 -- there were operating expenses folded in to some bond issue; is that true or false?

ADMINISTRATOR BRILLHART: Well, to answer your question, some of the costs that you maybe associated were in IT, those were software so they were what we would call more soft capital, not exactly buying something that you can see, but it’s something that's used as part of the operations.

And so bond counsel understands that you have to have this physical purchase of software and/or other IT technical equipment in order to move forward on those operations. So from bond counsel’s point of view, the software is considered capital.

Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: And that's part of the 2015 --

ADMINISTRATOR BRILLHART: Yes, 2015.

Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Okay.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Are you all right with that, Deborah?

Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Yes, I think so.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Ed.

Mr. MCMANUS: Yes, on the report you gave us on revenues is very good, except it would probably be a little bit more useful is if there was a line of the year-to-date from -- actuals from the previous year.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: So FY14, what was happening in FY14?

Mr. MCMANUS: Yes.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: In that same time period? Okay.

Mr. MCMANUS: Because a lot of revenues, there’s a seasonality to it.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Yes, sir.

Mr. MCMANUS: And you need at least a year’s history to be able to judge how you’re doing on the seasonal ebb and flow of revenues.

Administrator BRILLHART: The first column is actual 2014.

Mr. MCMANUS: But that’s total.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: But he wants the year-to-date.

Mr. MCMANUS: Year-to-date.

Administrator BRILLHART: Okay.

Mr. MCMANUS: Okay. And then it would also -- I tend to concentrate on revenues because you can't spend it if you don't have it. You can’t do services but it's also good to find out how our expenditures are going and a similar expenditure report will be useful too. Thank you.

Speaker BERGSTRÔM: Okay.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: I think the expenditures, we did receive an update and the Commissioners, I believe, have a -- they are falling about where they were last year as an example. Most are at about 60 percent as of the end of February expended.

Mr. MCMANUS: Yes.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Other than that, the only ones that are 100 percent are the grants and the charge that we receive from the Retirement Board for the Sheriff's Office.

Mr. MCMANUS: Yes.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: But I think we’re fairly on target with the same expenditure level as last year although some are slowing down based upon the
County Administrator’s directive.
   Speaker BERGSTROM: Doc.
   Mr. O’MALLEY: On the second page -- sorry. On the second page, we’re really looking mostly at grants, I believe. Are these in hand or are these applications? How solid is this?
   Interim Finance Director LAWTON: The only ones that are not solid on the RDO, she believes that they’ll be an additional $15,000 in grants received. She has made applications but does not have the grant in hand. That one --
   Mr. O’MALLEY: The other numbers are real?
   Interim Finance Director LAWTON: I’ll look quickly but I believe that is correct. Yes. Because I think the only other one -- that’s why I just put new grants because I really was not sure, although the RDO Director was confident that for the 15 she has several options and believes that she will receive those.
   In the other cases, the numbers that you see on the right-hand side are contained within the various departments’ budgets. And as a guess, we have Woods Hole we have 167. That’s why he was so exact.
   Mr. O’MALLEY: Great. Thank you.
   Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes, Jim.
   Mr. KILLION: Is that regional services, is that for the IT, the second from the bottom?
   Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Yes, sir. In fact, I did rename it on the front sheet because someone said, “What does that mean?” So it does say on the bottom of -- I think the 1, 2, 3, 4th grouping it says, “IT Regional Service Initiatives.” So I tried to rename it so that makes it more clear.
   Speaker BERGSTROM: Well, that’s revenues. I think we can move on to -- some of the Delegates wanted to discuss the remuneration given to employees and the schedule of step increases and merit raises.
   So I know I had a discussion with Bob. Could you give us a total number in the new budget that would represent the step increases and COLA and merit increases to current employees? In other words, what is over and above what last year’s was?
   Interim Finance Director LAWTON: In general, the 2 percent increase, I believe -- approximately $215,000, those numbers are contained within the budget documents that you have received.
   The other one that we had was you were questioning the merit increase for the small group of people who are managers who are above the top step --
   Speaker BERGSTROM: Well, I’m looking at the -- if you took the pool of employees, all right, that you had last year and you add together what they’re getting this year, you know, don’t include increases in healthcare and pension.
   Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Yes, sir.
   Speaker BERGSTROM: Just basically what they’re getting, salaries and COLA over what they get; what would be that number? Any idea?
   Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Well, we know the 2 percent is about 215,000. If everyone received the maximum is 56. The 3 percent is more difficult because, in talking with the payroll person, people get them different time of the year. What she’s trying to do along with Mark Zielinski is trying to do a better estimate than what we’ve been able to come up with. It’s not an exact number, and it’s not as easy as
just taking last year and this year because they get them at different times.
So what would be a round-number? If you said 300,000, you’d be low.
Speaker BERGSTROM: Two percent -- 2 percent would -- 200,000 would
represent 2 percent --
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Round numbers.
Speaker BERGSTROM: -- of a $10 million salary; right?
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: I’m not sure if that would be the amount.
Speaker BERGSTROM: It seems like a big number; I don’t know. Is that what
we’re paying in salaries; 10 million a year?
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Don’t know.
Administrator BRILLHART: I don’t think it’s that much.
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: I can't tell you. Well, based upon the
calculations by the payroll department, 2 percent is what works out to that because she
tried to do some charts for us by name.
Speaker BERGSTROM: Unless my math is wrong, 200,000 is 2 percent of $10
million.
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: She didn't do totals on them.
Ms. MCAULIFFE: It’s 215,000 but yes.
Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: That's right.
Speaker BERGSTROM: We have $10 million in salaries?
Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: I don't think so.
Speaker BERGSTROM: I don’t believe so.
Administrator BRILLHART: No, we don’t. We don’t.
Speaker BERGSTROM: I don’t want to confuse the issue but it’s too late for
that.
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: There was a calculation done regarding -- I
certainly rely upon --
Speaker BERGSTROM: Well, I know where we need one employee anyway.
Yes, Suzanne.
Ms. MCAULIFFE: I think this is discussed a lot more in the finance
subcommittee, and I think the reason discussed was we were talking about level-funding
the budget and trying to figure out where the increases were.
And one of the things that we just kind of stumbled on was that -- at least I
stumbled, to me, you know, was the fact that all employees get a 2 percent COLA,
everybody, which is about $215,000 in new money.
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Yes, ma'am.
Ms. MCAULIFFE: Everyone up to Step 8 gets a 3 percent step increase. And
Step 8 and above then can get merit and that’s about 15 employees?
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Only 15. It’s only the managers. The rest
of the employees do not receive that benefit.
Ms. MCAULIFFE: Okay. Just 15 managers then that get the merit.
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Yes.
Ms. MCAULIFFE: Which is $56,000 and that’s 4 percent or 3 percent?
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: It would be a maximum of four. We based
it upon the highest number if everyone was outstanding and received the merit increase.
Ms. MCAULIFFE: Okay.
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: And that is not part of the base. It simply is a payment.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: And I think one of the things that, as a person who for 25 years dealt with unions and these are not union contracts, most of them are not --

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: There are two bargaining units as I understand it. One at the Registry and one with the Facilities.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Okay. Then most of these are not in a union?

Administrator BRILLHART: Right.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: I just am very aware that we -- the whole point of steps is you start people low and the steps are to bring them into a reasonable salary range within a reasonable amount of time.

And I don’t know if people can answer if we start people low or if we just bring them in and they get steps because that’s just tradition.

I know the MMA is supposed to be doing a look at jobs and salaries and classifications. They’ve been paid for a study and they have not done this component of the study so we don’t know how our salaries compare to other entities. So we don’t know if we’re over paying or under paying; is that correct?

ADMINISTRATOR BRILLHART: Actually, MMA did complete the study recently and from their point of view, the County was competitive with the other public agencies that they looked at. They looked at some towns. They looked at one or two counties. They looked at, and for comparative purposes, some universities as well because you’ve got professors and planners that deal with that. So they wanted to make sure that everyone was covered.

According to the study, the County does pay competitively, but also the other jurisdictions paid COLAs. We don't have information on the merits so that’s unique to Barnstable County but the COLAs are fairly consistent within that study done by MMA.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: I’m just going from municipal and school budgets, and it’s not typical to have 5 to 6 percent increases in this day and age. Back 20 years ago, yes, either 5 to 7 percent increases.

Now your steps are typically 1-1/2 - 2 percent and your cost-of-living is worked in around that. A good contract is usually a 3 percent increase with a combination of steps and COLA.

And the only reason I bring this up is I think that when you don’t have everybody in a bargaining unit and you’re not sure where the decisions are coming from on salaries or how they’ve gotten where they are, I think it’s time to look at that because a 5 to 6 percent increase on someone’s salary today is not commensurate with the market. I don’t believe, at least in my experience with current municipal and union contracts.

And another thing that needs to be looked at too is if you want to give increases is perhaps staggering them to give a portion at the beginning of the year and then a portion half-way through the year and then you end up with the whole amount on your base but you’ve saved some money in the first six months.

So I guess at some point I think we have to look at the big picture and look at the salaries. But I think as a group, we may want to look at the overall dollar amount and see if this is someplace where there’s some money that we may be able to recoup this year. And I don’t know, that may require an amendment down the road.

But just so people know that we’ve been looking at a salary system that, I don’t
know, has had a lot of scrutiny necessarily over the last several years.

Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Can I?
Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes, Deborah.
Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Just to follow-up on that, my understanding is that the Registry of Deeds salaried to people, the people that are in the union, that’s a completely separate contract and that’s not necessarily 2 percent or 6 percent; is that correct?
ADMINISTRATOR BRILLHART: As far as the cost-of-living, that is consistent so that the union contracts would specify. So if the County got 2 percent, it would be 2 percent of the union contracts. If it were zero, then it would be zero in the contracts.
Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: So you’re saying the contracts kind of a me-too, but whatever the County gets --
ADMINISTRATOR BRILLHART: For COLA, yes.
Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Okay. So in doing this salary study, I mean, you know, it’s sort of like comparing yourself to the world of fat people. If you don’t include any skinny people in there, you look more reasonable. Were there any private-sector jobs that are comparable to the County jobs that were looked at?
ADMINISTRATOR BRILLHART: As part of this study, there were no private-sector entities looked at, only public entities.
Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Right. Because some of the concern comes out of the fact that the private sector does not offer people the same kinds of benefits or guaranteed raises that the County -- that public employment does and that that's a shift in the desirability of public employment.
It's happened over the last maybe 20 years, but it's something that we kind of need to catch up on because -- I mean I would be willing to bet you if you took the COLA out of some of those jobs, like the new IT jobs, you’d still have 20 or 30 people applying for each position.
You know, so I think that that's another reason to kind of follow up on this. I think we’ve kind of got an automatic increases and a kind of bloated salary system here.
Speaker BERGSTROM: Anyway, yes, Jim.
Mr. KILLION: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just something to clarify your comments regarding the cost to these increases, the COLA you said was around 215,000?
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Yes, sir.
Mr. KILLION: And you did not put a number in the step increases because you did not have that?
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: That’s correct. It’s more -- the difficulty -- the payroll department is having trouble getting a good number, shall we say, because the way the system works you’ve got the step increase based upon your anniversary date. The anniversary dates are all over the map.
So she’s trying to figure out if there is an easier way to give a really good, solid estimate. And now she’s working with Mark Zielinski to try to do that.
Mr. KILLION: So we anticipate having that number within a week or so?
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Yes, sir.
Mr. KILLION: Okay. Thank you.
Speaker BERGSTROM: Just to, I’m going to give my little speech here; I used to do this when I was in Chatham too when the same issues came up. But the difference
between public and private employers is that you go in and there’s an entry-level fireman or an entry-level teacher or an entry-level in the administration here in Barnstable County or the town of Chatham, you’ve already limited your horizon. All right. You’re not going to make a half-million dollars ever. All right. If you’re lucky, you’ll retire up to 25 years maybe and a good salary.

If you go into a business, sure, you may toil away for the rest of your life for a modest amount, but there’s also a possibility you’ll become CEO of the company and retire with a golden parachute of $3 million.

People go into public employment, it’s not because that’s the best job they can get, it’s because they’re sacrificing opportunities in their life for the security of a good paycheck, regular increases, and good benefits. That’s what they do. It’s a deal that they get in the beginning.

So the reason that -- part of the reason we can’t compare it to private employment is because you know somebody opens up a T-shirt shop on Main Street and sure enough they may have to struggle, but they’re hoping, yes, some year maybe people buy a lot of T-shirts and they’ll make a lot of money.

But if you were toiled away in the office, you know what you’re going to make next year and you know what you’re going to make the next year after that, and the year after that.

So I just feel that, this is my personal philosophy, we shouldn’t shortchange public employees. Having said that, in Chatham we would give cost-of-living increase which is basically supposed to compensate for inflation, in other words, so you don’t lose ground to inflation.

The cost-of-living increase was based on the consumer price index. So that if the consumer price index went up a point-and-a-half, you would get a 1-1/2 percent increase.

There was one year about four or five years ago during the crisis in 2008-2009, maybe a little more, where there was no raise at all because the consumer price index was actually in a negative range.

So it could be that a consistent 2 percent increase in the cost-of-living over the course of 5 or 10 years would bring you way above the amount you would gain. Although, I don’t know their figures and I’m not going to ask anybody to get to them. So that’s one thing.

The other thing, the step increases, I mean if you work for 20 years, you expect to get a raise, you know, I mean you do. So I don’t know. I’m not going to beat -- I know we have to balance the budget, but I don’t know if I want to do it on the backs of employees. I have a feeling you’re going to disagree with me Suzanne.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Well, I think that they’re kind of doing this blindly. I think that any good employer who is going to provide increases for their employee wants to know what -- how they’re paying their employees.

And anytime you go into a union negotiation or a contract negotiation you know what your market is. You know what your people are competing against. You know what the five average community salaries are so that you can do a fair salary. I’m not talking about on the backs of employees. I’m just talking about being fair. And you don’t necessarily want your people to be at the top, but you don’t want them to be at the bottom, but you try to keep them competitive and on target, and I don’t know if we know that. I kind of get the feeling it’s sort of willy-nilly.
So I just want to know if our County employees are being paid and getting increases commensurate with what other people who do their jobs. Because you don't know, they might be the best paid people in the state. I don't know.

Speaker BERGSTROM: I don’t know. I agree with you. We need that information but it may not be as easy to come up with as it can but we’ll put these hard-working administrators to work getting it for us.

Yes, Marcia.

Ms. KING: As a former town employee and a former state employee, I will take exception to some of what you said, Mr. Speaker.

Just a bit of history. During the recession when many people lost their jobs, many people did not get raises in the private sector, and at that time I was working for the town of Barnstable and we actually were furloughed. The County was not. The employees at the County, and I’m not trying to bash any employees, but the employees of the County did not suffer anything.

The 2 percent raise, if I remember correctly, was either pushed off for maybe six months but not one year -- not one year during the 2008, ’09, or ’10, those horrific years, did not, one year, did they not get a step and a COLA.

So before you go and think about that is I think the point that Suzanne is making is true. In the private industry, people lost their jobs, have not got raises for years. The employees of the County have been paid COLAs and raises every year.

That's the point of municipal jobs and why people say this is why you want to get them because you don't get laid off and there was not a massive layoff here in the County. I’ve been here for 18 years. I went through the recession. There was not a big massive layoff on our budget.

As I said, the budget was increased every year, salaries were increased every year so just to keep everybody on level. And people out there were struggling seriously in this County -- seriously in this County, and the employees of the County did not. There’s people that just need to know that. Thank you.

Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Yes, I’d like to speak to this.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes.

Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Just so you know, for about 25 years I’ve represented teachers in collective bargaining throughout the Commonwealth through my affiliation with the MFT, which is the Mass. Federation of Teachers, which is the AFT.

And we’re talking about some real sacred cows here. The 2 percent cost-of-living is a sacred cow. And as our step increases as are many of these column changes that happen in collective bargaining, I think part of the issue here that we’re grappling with is that over the last, and I would say 20 to 25 years, there’s been a shift in the disparities between public employment and private employment. And that’s something that has very much in some situations turned the public against public employees when they, for example, want to resist longer school days or working more than 181 days in a year, which is something that private employees never even get to think about.

And I think it’s important that we recognize that there are some societal issues here that they may be sacred cows but maybe we need to look at them. And I’ll say nothing further on this point.

Speaker BERGSTROM: When I was a Selectmen in Chatham, it used to be that all these little committees, like the Conservation Commission, the Planning Board, were
all separately elected and they actually got a stipend. They would get like a few hundred bucks and that all went away.

Until finally, somebody came -- I think they were on the ConsComm and they came up before the Chatham Selectmen and they said, “You know, we all work hard on the ConsComm and stuff and we don’t get a stipend.” And yet, I think it was the Airport Commission, their stipend had kind of lingered on and they were getting $300.

So depending on what political party you belong to, you either wanted to get the $300 or you wanted to take away the $300 that they were getting.

Well, of course, that was a universal in Chatham. It wasn’t that, gees, we should get a couple hundred but because times are tough. No. We’re not getting it so they’re not getting it either. That was it.

And that philosophy -- there has been a shift in 25 years. In 25 years, everybody’s given up on trying to make people’s lives better. They just want to make sure that nobody else is getting more than they’re getting.

And I’m sorry to get off on this, but that’s the absolute truth. So no more editorials. Yes, Ed.

Mr. MCMANUS: And we probably -- I don’t know how much more we want to discuss this, but it all depends on what data set you’re looking at.

You know, if you look at the town of Harwich, there was a period that things were tight for four years where our employees got zero COLAs. And I know that happened in many towns on the Cape.

Why that didn’t happen in the County? I wasn’t here, you know. I’ll never know.

But then you go and you look back ’02, ’03, ’04 when the construction was good and you couldn’t get a qualified maintenance/carpenter/public works guy to take the town job because they were making so much money in private industry and they thought they were going to make their million dollars that way.

But times change and there’s ebbs and flows to all of this.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Anyway, have we beaten this to death? No, not yet. Linda.

Ms. ZUERN: I questioned the step increases in our town as well. And what I was finding was that sometimes people were getting 4, 5, 6 percent raise. And when I asked, it was the step increases. But sometimes they were stepping up a couple of steps.

So I think if you -- my feeling is if you just get away -- do away with the step increases altogether, you’ll have a lot more control. Give 3 or 4 percent to everybody. You can figure that out very easily. If you say how much money do we have for salaries this year or how much can we increase them?

Some good years it might be 5 percent or it might be 3 percent, but then you know that everybody’s going to come in -- you know what your salaries are and how much they’re going to increase.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Bob, has there been a reclassification done recently? In other words, these step increases are based on some static number because reclassification can jump everybody up too.

Administrator BRILLHART: There have been some positions that were reclassified according to this study. And those positions would -- have had adjustments during fiscal year ’15 and those adjustments would move forward according to the reclassification in to 2016. And the numbers that you have in 2016 reflect those
reclassifies.

Speaker BERGSTROM: So what we’re talking about is a raise over and above the normal step increase because they were adjusted.

ADMINISTRATOR BRILLHART: Yes, there were just a handful of positions that were examined. And it was realized that some positions were not reflected accurately based upon their workload so they were readjusted accordingly.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Anyway. Yes, Janice.

Clerk O’CONNELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question about bonding, and I think you had some discussions with one of the committees, just seems like there was so many at this point, I think it was finance, where there was going to be an adjustment in bonding. I think it was for facilities. One amount was totally going away for HVAC, I think it was Superior Court, and then another one was increasing. The net was it's going to go down, and I think everybody likes that information.

But I guess what I want to warn you about is the Assembly at some point needs to formally be notified of that because the budget that we received does not account for that. It's going to be too high unless formally it’s brought over, notify the Assembly of that fact, and/or possibly, I guess, get handled through an amendment process when the Assembly votes on its budget, which is going to be very soon.

So just to remind everyone of that, and let you know it so that we know it sooner versus later.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: We clearly understand the process. We clearly understand that once everyone finalizes how much is going to be borrowed, we’ll give you that new figure. It will be lower than the 2,001,000.

And I think you’re probably correct on the one item that is going to be dropped. Another one needs to be increased to match what was appropriated in FY15 and we will get you those figures.

Clerk O’CONNELL: I guess my concern is predicated on some comments that we received from County Counsel. I know as if I put on a different hat and pretend I’m a member of the public, I would like to have as much notice or warning as possible about that. We’re soon going to have a public hearing --

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: On April 1.

Clerk O’CONNELL: -- on the budget. So just keep that in mind.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: You will have it before that. Yes.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes, to follow up on that, we’ve discussed -- I’ve discussed this with Janice and there are two roads you could take.

County Counsel seems to think you could submit an amended budget. But the problem is we’ve got an Ordinance in front of us. The Ordinance is the budget you submitted to us back a month ago. I suspect or I was going to say I projected that on the 15th of April with -- what’s going to happen is if there’s any adjustments to the budget, it’s going to be submitted in the form of amendments.

In other words, amended up, down, you know, say well I think -- nobody’s going to say, “I think we should do this. Basically, I’m going to take X number out of line whatever and X number of line.” So if you guys have changes, it would be best to just submit it as amendments so we could run through them.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: And you will have that before the end of this month -- probably before.
Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay.
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: The County Administrator clear understands.
Speaker BERGSTROM: I just don’t want you to submit a whole other budget.
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: No.
Speaker BERGSTROM: Now we have two budgets.
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Not to worry. We will not be doing that.
Speaker BERGSTROM: Marcia.
Ms. KING: I have a question about the budget submission. In the past, all the towns have shown -- this the first budget I’ve seen in 18 years that some departments don’t have peoples’ names and salaries. All you have is grades. Why was that changed?
And, number two, with the Executive Summary in the past, has gone through each department and it was a really great Executive Summary by Mark Zielinski. Why was it changed? I find this one leaves, you know, it’s not very informative. And I’m just concerned is this how we’re going -- because if you don’t list salaries of employees, you’re really trying to obfuscate like the towns have done so people don’t see what people are making in the County.
So can you answer me why these changes were made and, you know, --
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: I followed exactly what I thought was done last year. I worked two days a week trying to put the budget together. We basically had half-an-hour before I had to submit that to get those changes that were done that day by the Commissioners.
I followed -- I used the same forms as were done last year and the Executive Summary. There are some things that Mark had time to do that I did not. There was no purpose in any obfuscation of salaries. Whatever was included last year was supposed to be included this year. I don’t know what departments didn’t put salaries in.
Ms. KING: The Cape Cod Commission is number one, I can tell you.
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Okay.
Ms. KING: There’s a couple of them that I was just surprised. This one right here. Human Services. So, you know, usually there was a list. The format is -- just some of the formats are different from last year, and I’m just really concerned who decided to change the Executive Summary.
Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Well, it must have been me because I used -- I thought I used exactly what Mark Zielinski did the prior year. I took what he had in the budget and I modified it. I don’t know what -- there were some charts and graphs that I did not do because I don’t understand some of the way he did it. Some of the material flowed into those charts but they were not clear, and I wasn’t able to get to Mark in time to get some of those done. He may be able to do some of those.
MS. KING: Well, for next year, all I know is I would like an Executive Summary which has each department explaining exactly what each department difference is in the budget. We don’t have it in this one, and I just found it a lot more detailed in the past. I was disappointed when I came back and saw this one.
Thank you.
Ms. MCAULIFFE: Mr. Speaker.
Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes.
Ms. MCAULIFFE: Just in defense of the Finance Department, Delegate King, it
was a gong show getting this budget to us in time because I think they were scrambling with, you know, an absent Administrator, and they had a lot of information going on. We put them under the gun. They had less than two weeks to pull it. I’m just telling you that this is a temporary group and I agree with you in terms of wanting specific information.

Ms. KING: Yes.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: But I also think that they did Yeoman’s work in either getting us the budget to work on because it was -- these were really fill-in replacements trying to, for one, trying to learn the County finance system which is not municipal.

So I’m just saying that I have no argument with discussing the finances and what we do, but I think in terms of presentation maybe we need to develop what we want and have it that way for the new Administrator coming forward.

But it was not a simple, small, easy task to get the budget in on time. And everyone in this room was surprised, I think, we did get it on time.

Ms. KING: Mr. Speaker, may I respond?

Speaker BERGSTROM: Sure. Go ahead.

Ms. KING: Just an editorial comment here.

Speaker BERGSTROM: What? An editorial comment?

Ms. KING: I understand that except for the fact that it is in the Charter when they have to give the budget to us. It should not -- I was told what a show it was that one copy or something was delivered.

I even have an argument about why it wasn’t done, to save money, double-sided but that’s all my particular issue.

That’s nice and I understand that it’s really great but the County Administrator has been out on sick leave for a while. People have known that. I just don’t -- I’m not going to chalk it up saying they’re running around, it’s all new people.

There are enough people there that have been doing this for years. The formats are there. It’s just I’m a little surprised -- a little disappointed for it, honestly, that with all this time the budget is -- I mean I just looked through it when I came back two weeks ago and I was like this is not the budget I’ve seen, and I’ve been here, as I said, almost 18 years.

So I’m just a little disappointed. I hope that -- if you want, I can send you a copy from last year. I’m sure you have them. But it’s just a little more detailed Executive Summary because I think that really helps, especially, I thought, for the new members it would really help. The Executive Summary that we get has always been done. Every single department was talked about, and you don’t really have that here, and I think the salaries should be there for every single employee. It should not be their level. If you want to add that, that’s fine, but I think it’s important when these are public documents that people understand, you know, how much the County does cost and where the money’s going.

Thank you.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Well, yes, I’m going to add to that is that I can’t disagree with Marcia. I mean she was on the Finance Committee; I’m not the finance guy, but I know that they did do some adjustments in the budget. For instance, they tried to take out all the capital expenditures to give it more of a reflection of what the operating costs were.

So I agree with both. I agree with Marcia there’s some room for improvement,
but I also agree with Suzanne that it’s a work in progress. And next year it will probably be, I hope, even clearer.

We did get the budget. The ink was not dry when we got it from the Commissioners that day. But we’ve had it for a while now.

So, anyway, are we all spent?

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Yes. Enough.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Enough.

Interim Finance Director LAWTON: Thank you.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Is there any Communications from Public Officials?

Any Communications from Members of the Public? Hearing none.

Assembly Convenes

Committee Report on Proposed Ordinance 15-01

Speaker BERGSTROM: The Assembly will now convene. We will have a vote on the minutes and report from -- do we have --

Clerk O’CONNELL: Mr. Speaker, if I may?

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes.

Clerk O’CONNELL: The Chair of Finance who normally would report on the committee recommendation on Ordinance or Proposed Ordinance 15-01, he is absent. As would be the case, I didn’t realize that the vice-chair is also going to be absent today.

So it's not minutes; it's a report, and, therefore, it’s going to fall to the remaining one or two individuals who were at the meeting, and that would be Deborah and/or Suzanne to report out on 15-01 for the Assembly vote.

Speaker BERGSTROM: We can’t vote on the minutes if we don’t have a quorum.

Clerk O’CONNELL: They’re not minutes. It’s a report.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes.

Clerk O’CONNELL: So you can report on the Proposed Ordinance and then we’re going to vote on it.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Okay. Well 15-01 was for the vehicle replacement?

Clerk O’CONNELL: Yes.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: And this was a fairly straightforward request because there is a vehicle replacement fund that was funded with I think about 125,000 several years ago.

This is a vehicle or a truck that has well beyond its life miles, and it’s a truck that was needed to plow the parking lot because they could throw a plow on it.

So it was just -- so a very logical, reasonable request. It was supported by the Finance Committee and recommended for support of the full Assembly.

And then I would just say that we do get reimbursed for things, and the money doesn’t go back into the fund that it came out of. So going forward, if we are going to tap into a fund for vehicle replacements, perhaps the Assembly wants to consider talking to the Commissioners about having the money that comes in to replace the money that’s expended go back into that fund.

But it was a very straightforward request out of existing funds that are available.
Proposed Ordinance 15-01: To add to the County’s operating budget for Fiscal Year 2015, as enacted in Ordinance No. 14-02, by making supplemental appropriations ($25,000) for the Fiscal Year two-thousand and fifteen.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay. I might need a motion then to approve Ordinance 15-01.

Mr. MCMANUS: Mr. Chair.
Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes.
Mr. MCMANUS: I move approval of Ordinance 15-01.
Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Second.
Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay. Moved and seconded. Any further discussion?
Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Yes. I just want to point out that the committee passed the truck unanimously, I believe.
Ms. MCAULIFFE: Right.
Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Right. So we voted to buy the truck.
Ms. MCAULIFFE: And get the plow.
Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: And get the plow.
Speaker BERGSTROM: And get the plow.
Ms. MCAULIFFE: This was a few weeks ago.
Speaker BERGSTROM: It's a roll call.

Roll Call Vote on Motion to approve Proposed Ordinance 15-01: To add to the County’s operating budget for Fiscal Year 2015, as enacted in Ordinance No. 14-02, by making supplemental appropriations ($25,000) for the Fiscal Year two-thousand and fifteen.

Voting YES (71.96%): Ronald Bergstrom (2.84% - Chatham), Ned Hitchcock (1.27% - Wellfleet), Christopher Kanaga (2.73% - Orleans), James Killion (9.58% - Sandwich), Marcia King (6.49% - Mashpee), Suzanne McAuliffe (11.02% - Yarmouth), Deborah McCutcheon (0.93% - Truro), Edward McManus (5.67% - Harwich), Brian O’Malley (1.36% – Provincetown), Patrick Princi (20.92% - Barnstable), Linda Zuern (9.15% - Bourne).

Voting NO: (0%)

Absent (28.04%): Edward Lewis (4.55% - Brewster), Teresa Martin (2.30% - Eastham), John Ohman (6.58% - Dennis), Julia Taylor (14.61% - Falmouth).

Clerk O’CONNELL: Mr. Speaker Proposed Ordinance 15-01 passes with 71.96 percent of the Delegates voting “yes”, 0 percent “no”, 28.04 percent absent. Now known as Ordinance 15-01.

Committee Minutes

Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay. Thank you. Now we have committee reports, but the committee on finance cannot approve minutes because we don't have enough of a quorum.

So we'll go onto the standing committee on public service meeting minutes of 3/11/15. Do we have a public service chair here?
Ms. KING: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Marcia.

Ms. KING: We’re just taking a vote for the minutes?

Clerk O’CONNELL: That’s it.

Mr. O’MALLEY: Move approval.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Do you have a quorum here, three of your members?

Ms. KING: Yes, we have four.

Speaker BERGSTROM: As long as you have a quorum.

Ms. KING: Yes.

Speaker BERGSTROM: All right. So it’s moved. Do we have a second? Well, actually, you’re running the -- Marcia you’re doing the vote.

Ms. KING: Jim, you seconded the motion? Did you --

Mr. KILLION: Yes.

Ms. KING: Oh, okay. We have a motion and a second. All those in favor?

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Aye.

Mr. O’MALLEY: Aye.

Mr. KILLION: Aye.

Ms. KING: Aye. 4-0.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay. The standing committee on Telecommunication minutes. Jim.

Mr. KILLION: Motion from Deb or Patrick on minutes for March 11th.

Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Motion to approve the minutes of March 11th.

I believe there is a change in the minutes.

Clerk O’CONNELL: Yes, I got it.

Mr. KILLION: As amended.

Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: As amended.

Okay. Great. So motion to approve as amended.

Mr. PRINCI: Second.

Mr. KILLION: All in favor?

Mr. PRINCI: Aye.

Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Aye.

Mr. KILLION: Aye. 3-0.

Clerk O’CONNELL: And there’s one more, I think, that can be done.

Mr. KILLION: Okay. Then I’ll -- I have also the minutes of March 16th for Suzanne and Deborah, two other members.

Speaker BERGSTROM: So you have those ready?

Clerk O’CONNELL: Yes, I did.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Wow.

Mr. KILLION: Do you need to read them?

Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Just for a second. Almost done.

Mr. MCMANUS: Mr. Chair.

Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Okay. Motion to approve.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Second.

Mr. KILLION: Second. All in favor?

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Aye.

Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Aye.
Mr. KILLION:  Aye.  3-0.
Speaker BERGSTROM:  Jim -- rather Ed, sorry.
Mr. MCMANUS:  Those were the minutes of the 4th?
Ms. MCAULIFFE:  The 16th, Monday.
Mr. MCMANUS:  Monday.
Speaker BERGSTROM:  Monday.
Mr. MCMANUS:  They were not listed on the agenda for action.
Clerk O’CONNELL:  They really don’t have to be.
Mr. MCMANUS:  I beg to differ.
Clerk O’CONNELL:  Because it’s a committee that’s taking action on it.  It’s not for action for the full Assembly.
Mr. MCMANUS:  I know but if the committee’s taking action on it, it needs to be done at one of their committee meetings, and the action item has to be posted.
Speaker BERGSTROM:  You know, I thought that would slip.  I probably agree with Ed.  I was hoping that would slip by without somebody jumping up and, you know, reading us chapter and verse, and I see I was wrong.
Ms. MCAULIFFE:  I love it.
Speaker BERGSTROM:  We can put that off if you want, Ed, and we’ll put it on the next agenda.
Ms. MCAULIFFE:  It’s no big deal.

Report from the Clerk

Clerk O’CONNELL:  Just a couple of items.  We’ve just about finished the first phase of the budget process.  We have one remaining committee meeting once the Assembly adjourns today to finish up some business that they were not able to conclude on.  That would be Economic Affairs.
And I’m doing my best to get all of those reports done and at least to you in draft form so that when the chairs meet next week you have that information.
I’m also working on a spreadsheet where I will update by committee the departments that were reviewed, the action that was taken, the day it was taken and the votes, sort of like a little cheat sheet if you will.  So committee chairs will have that information hopefully along with reports to share when the chairs meet on the 25th.
I think you also all received a timeframe memo that I had supplied to the Speaker with regards to how the rest of the budget process will proceed depending upon action that is or isn’t taken once we get to the voting stage with the Assembly.
And I guess that’s it for the budget process at this point in time.  The public hearing is scheduled for April 1, voting by the Assembly on the 15th.
Also, I just want to remind you that for some of you I have placed mileage logs in your folder.  If you don't have one, it's because I’m presuming you’re going to come to a meeting of the chairs next week which means that that will technically go on the quarter report for March.  So when you get here next week, I will have that.  And if you come and you’ve already submitted a log, we’ll add it on to the next quarter.
And I thought I had forwarded reports of the Classification and Pay Study once that was completed by the County.  I thought I forwarded copies of those to the
Delegates. I think at some point they were online with the County. I don’t know if they’re still there on the Web, but I’m more than happy to scan that and forward it to you.

It was completed by MMA in November of 2014.

And, in addition as a side note, the Succession Planning Committee, which I was a member of, also had a few comments relative to the County’s ability to attract and retain staff that would be beneficial for the County and the difficulty that that poses living on Cape Cod with the cost of living being what it is.

So if that's helpful, I can forward those two reports to you.

And that's it. That's all I have for today. I guess that's enough.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay. I know you guys are getting tired of having me say this but last year -- I think it was last year -- but we voted down the budget without recommending changes. Then we started looking at each other saying, “Okay, what do we do now?”

So I guess, as I’ve said this before, but when it comes to budget items, you can’t just say no. You have to provide alternatives. So it’s one thing to say we don’t like the budget of the Human Services department or we don’t like the health -- whatever, but when the budget is presented, you’re going to have to come up -- you’re going to have to submit alternatives. You’re going to have to say we amend the budget by taking X number of dollars out of line -- this line 5 and adding it to line 6 or so on. So we’re going to have to get those.

Try your best to get any recommended amendments to the budget and changes to the full Assembly as soon as you can because I want the Delegates to be aware of what’s coming and be able to look at it with some kind of understanding and not like the Commissioners sending it to us at the last minute. No, I’m sure they did that, but, yes, Janice.

Clerk O’CONNELL: I’d like to add just one thing to what the Speaker is indicating. If you have amendment planned from my perspective based on the way the Proposed Ordinance is crafted, it's in various sections, and it can be somewhat complicated if, for example, you’re going to be extracting a certain amount of money that will cross all the various departments, that's going to be extremely difficult to do if you come into the Assembly meeting when the budget is going to be voted on two hours in advance and try to craft that because it may be located in several pieces of the budget.

It’s one thing to take out a capital item and say, okay, we’re not going to do the roof and that comes out of capital. But if you’re trimming a salary or eliminating a position, those costs are located in different pieces of a department’s budget or in some cases maybe in several departments.

So just be forewarned of that because when the budget Ordinance passes, it passes with a total amount of money and it's broken out into departments and then further broken out into group codes. And it makes a difference because that's what establishes your system of checks and balances.

When you get an Ordinance over that asks to transfer money from one group to another, you will not know what your starting point was if you didn’t have a budget that identified what those amounts were in group codes.

So that's sort of what keeps everybody honest when these transfers need to be made and it requires the approval of the Commissioners and the Assembly to, okay, here’s where we started when we adopted the budget, and now you want to move money
from one group to another.
   So that's why it's important to get those numbers where they belong, and they all need to tally and tip and tie so that the grand total matches everyone and everywhere.

   Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay.

   Clerk O’CONNELL: So as the Speaker indicated, the sooner you can start to work on that and have that ready to present to the Assembly in writing, preferably typed, so everyone will understand what it is that’s being proposed and where the money is either going to or coming from. I think everyone would appreciate that.

   Speaker BERGSTROM: Yes. Now this may be a little awkward, but, of course, we’re not all budget experts and if you have any difficulty with a proposal to amend the budget, I would suggest you would try talking to either Bob Lawton or Mike Brillhart. They work for the Commissioners. Of course, that might probably be a little awkward to get them to change the Commissioners budget, but they are County employees and we’re County officials.

   So don’t hesitate to try to get the right format from them or even from Janice, a former Finance Director.

   Okay. Yes, Suzanne.

   Ms. MCAULIFFE: So if there was going to be an amendment let’s say to propose cutting cost of living and because it cuts across every department --

   Speaker BERGSTROM: Right.

   Ms. MCAULIFFE: -- you’re saying that that would be too -- could that amendment pass and then could you go back into the budget and do the numbers? Or do you have to -- if you bring the amendment in, and this is just a hypothetical. I’m not making an amendment.

   Speaker BERGSTROM: Right.

   Ms. MCAULIFFE: But I’m just trying to put something out there. So you wouldn't have to have all those new figures when you vote the amendment? Would that be something that if the amendment passed, then you would go in and do the numbers? I mean it’s --

   Speaker BERGSTROM: Well, no, because we’re going to take a vote on the budget. So the budget -- we are going to put a number. We’re going to put a figure at the end of that budget on the 15th. So that number has to be --

   Ms. MCAULIFFE: I know but what I just heard was if you’re going to make an amendment --

   Speaker BERGSTROM: Right.

   Ms. MCAULIFFE: -- that crosses -- or let’s say we want to cut a person, or two people, or three people out of the budget, because it may cross too many lines, it’s something that is so difficult that, you know, why do it?

   Speaker BERGSTROM: It’s not difficult. What you’re saying is I want to cut Salary $50,000. I want to take Salary out of IT. Then you also have to go into -- if benefits are on a separate line, in other words, if benefits were listed collectively in the budget, you’ll have to go --

   Ms. MCAULIFFE: I understand that but what about something as universal as, you know, as a COLA or a step or something?

   Speaker BERGSTROM: I think those are listed -- COLAs are listed as a separate thing in the budget.
Ms. KING: The COLAs’ Salary Reserve. I think the COLA’s in the Salary.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Okay. Well, if that amendment gets -- if that amendment gets submitted, then we’ll deal with it. But I just -- I would -- this group voted for a level-funded budget, and I’ve been reminded repeated by the people who did not want a level-funded budget that are we going to, you know, try and do a level-funded budget or not and maybe it’s worth the effort to try and do it. And you do that by big ticket items, and big ticket items happen to be some of these salary accounts or large capital whatever.

But I don’t want to micromanage but I also want and try and meet a level-funded budget that the Assembly voted for.

So I’m just hoping that it’s not going to be something that we can’t submit an amendment and then because everything is too complicated it can’t be done.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Okay. All right. Anybody else? Jim, did you have a question?

Mr. KILLION: No, just a follow-up. I think that is a good question to ask the Finance Director if, in fact, we want to make amendments that perhaps go across several departments, what is the best way to do that?

And I can follow-up with an email or the Speaker can follow-up with an email to the Director to get a little bit of direction on that. I think that's probably good information to have.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Yeah, let’s try some of that. You say you want to eliminate a position, you simply ask the Finance Director what would be the budgetary effect if we eliminate the position? And they might say, well, your salary line is deducted and then the -- something else is deducted and so on.

So I’m just looking -- I just want you to realize that we want to pass this -- we want to pass this budget -- a budget, not their budget but a budget on the 15th. That budget is going to have a specific number at the end of it. We have to know what that number is.

Just like at Town Meeting, you’re passing a specific number to the cost, and it’s important to know the effects of those amendments. So that’s -- it’s not my decision. That’s the way it is.

Okay. Ed, did you have something? You’re all set? All right. Any other business to be brought -- yes, Ed.

Mr. MCMANUS: Just continuing on the need for blood in our County blood bank reserves still continues. So to remind folks in the mid-Cape area anyway that tomorrow in Yarmouth at the Moose Lodge, Cape Cod Healthcare is holding a blood drive from 11 to 5.

And they will continue to have an accelerated number of blood drives throughout the Cape until they can get back ahead of the appropriate level of blood supply for the County.

And I urge everyone to participate over if you know of folks in your communities to ask them to participate.

The other thing I’d like to note is that John Ohman, who’s not here, will be honored a week from Saturday. Both he and his wife, Kathy Ohman, are the Brewster Town Democratic Committee to receive the Andrew Kamarck Community Service Award principally for their commitment and work in providing housing and services for the autistic community and those afflicted with autism on the Cape. If you get a chance
to congratulate them on that, I think it would be well received.

Speaker BERGSTROM: Any other business to be brought before --
Ms. MCAULIFFE: Move to adjourn.
Ms. KING: Second.

Whereupon, it was moved, seconded, and voted to adjourn the Assembly of Delegates at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Janice O’Connell, Clerk
Assembly of Delegates