

BARNSTABLE COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES
Standing Committee on Finance
Public Hearing Report and Journal Minutes on FY16 Proposed Budget
Proposed Ordinance 15-02

April 1, 2015

This is a public hearing report and journal minutes on Proposed Ordinance 15-02. The Proposed Ordinance was submitted to the Assembly of Delegates by the Board of Regional Commissioners at the Assembly of Delegates regular meeting on February 18, 2015. A public hearing was scheduled and held by the Standing Committee on Finance on Wednesday, April 1, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. The public hearing was duly advertised in the Cape Cod Times on March 25, 2015.

The purpose of the Proposed Ordinance was to make appropriations for Barnstable County's operating budget for the Fiscal Year 2016, including the operations of the County Assembly, Executive branch, County agencies, boards, commissions, departments and institutions and the maintenance of certain County functions; for interest, reserve funds and serial bond requirements of the County, and for County Capital improvements and to borrow money to pay therefore.

Committee members present: Chair John Ohman, Teresa Martin, Suzanne McAuliffe, Deborah McCutcheon, and Julia Taylor.

Public Hearing Opened at 2:05 p.m.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: I would like to open the meeting and I'd like to ask if we can waive the reading of Proposed Ordinance 15-02.

Deborah McCutcheon motioned, and it was seconded, to waive the reading of the committee and public hearing notices. Motion carried. 5-0-0.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you. We enjoy the opportunity to speak with the public about the budget. We're going to give each and every person the opportunity to speak.

I would ask two things. If you would keep it brief because there is a room full of people and we'd like everyone to be able to speak.

And if your point has been made, please just nod that you're in agreement with the previous speaker and give another person a chance because I think there may be a very diverse and multiple people that would like to speak today.

And even though the sign-up sheet is here, if anyone wants to speak to the budget and has not had the opportunity to put on the sign-up sheet but I will give them an opportunity in this meeting to do so. No one will be excluded. Thank you.

We usually start with public officials and there seems to be none here that want to speak.

What I would like to also tell you is that we've written -- we've had six written comments submitted (from Mary Wallace, Dianne Morton, Andi Genser, Walter Eldredge, Jane Haist, Jamie Williamson), one a little bit past the deadline but we're going to accept all six because that's the way it should be. And those will be put into the record and not read at this particular meeting. Thank you.

So the first person I have on this agenda is Jane Teixeira-Henry. Welcome

MS. JANE TEIXEIRA-HENRY: Thank you. Hello. My name is Jane Teixeira-Henry.

I am a Harwich native. I am here to support full funding of the Barnstable County Commission on Human Rights. I'm also here to speak on behalf of Ms. Elenita Muniz.

It is inconceivable to me in view of today's climate of racial tension that there may be an effort to cut portions of the Commission's budget. There is even a rumor that some officials would like to disband the Commission altogether. That would be shameful and morally wrong.

Racial discrimination on Cape Cod is alive and rampant. And the work of the Commission is vital and needed.

As for the reaction of the Commissioners to the outcry and protests against Ms. Muniz's statement on racism, it at first dismayed me. But then again, how could the situation be otherwise in a society where the perceptions of one group are considered more valid, thereby resulting in an automatic override of alternative views.

When a person says something that makes people, "Uncomfortable," there is a reaction to the statement on its surface. Rather than taking the time to delve into the meaning of that statement.

Perhaps one of the reasons Ms. Muniz calls herself a white racist is because she is aware of all the privileges afforded her that is not afforded to people like me. Perhaps those many privileges placed her in situations where she reacted racially thereby making her a racist. Perhaps her personal, cultural, and social ties have made her more sensitive to variations of privilege in multiracial and multicolored groups. Of course I don't know but I can say with confidence that her statement is unique, honest and courageous, and in my opinion, speaks to the root of our American dilemma.

I personally think the core of racism is visual perception. Of all the five senses, there is no sense that we use that is more powerful than sight. Here's an example of how visual judgment works. When I approached the window at the Harwich police station to deliver an accident report, the woman greeted me with, "Is that a restraining order?" There was no "Hello"; there was no, "May I help you?" I'm not accusing her of being a racist; however, in my view, her reaction to me was stereotypical because she judged me on what she saw.

Obviously to her, my color and restraining orders was synonymous. However, I never could categorize as she categorized me because of privileges that are inherent in her world allowing her to make assumptions about people like me that I would never be free to make about her.

Ms. Muniz gets this and she spoke the truth. She understands. The funding of HRC should not be determined by the expressions of an individual who is honest about her feelings. Only through honest expression and open dialogue are we able to fully address racism. For that reason, she deserves to remain on the Commission in her coordinator position and continue her work to do otherwise would also be shameful and morally wrong.

I strongly support full funding for the Commission on Human Rights and Ms. Muniz.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Mr. Chairman.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Ms. McAuliffe.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: I know you don't want -- you want to hear from the public, but I do think that it's very important because we clearly have a room full of people who might have a misunderstanding about what this committee has voted. And I think to save a lot of emotional energy, perhaps we should start with what it was that the Finance Committee voted in regards to the Human Rights Commission so that people aren't -- they may still be upset but they may also understand that I think that there's a rumor out there that people are responding to that is not true.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Go ahead.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: And I would just say that we are not disbanding the Human Rights Commission. That's never been under discussion. The Human Rights Commission is supported wholeheartedly by the Assembly of Delegates and the County. That's not in discussion, number 1.

Number 2, Ms. Muniz wasn't under discussion for anything that she did or said or anything. The fact is that the coordinator of the Human Rights Commission is being considered as a County employee as opposed to an employee of the Commission, the Human Rights Commission. So that is a contracted position. Right now it's a contracted position. There is a committee in place right now looking at bringing that position into the County as part of -- in the County position in the County budget.

The reason that the Finance Committee defunded that position was because it's not going to say as a contracted position. It's either going to be a County position or it's going to be a different position, a volunteer position.

But it was not defunding of the Human Rights Commission. It was not, from my perspective as a member of the Finance Committee, it had nothing to do with what the Human Rights Commission does. It was about employees that are contracted employees who are now coming into or required to come into positions as being County employees.

So I really feel that it's unfortunate that this is taking a whole new life of racism when it's really an employee status issue, not a racial issue.

So I just would like to make sure that people understand that this was not a trying to pull the legs out from under the Human Rights Commission.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you. The next person is Mary Zepernick.

MS. MARY ZEPERNICK: I am Mary Zepernick.

I'm the Yarmouth representative to the Human Rights Committee, and it's good to see some familiar faces.

I have been a community organizer in a couple of places for most of my adult life, and I have never been in area, or in this case 15 towns, that is better organized and does more efficient work in this area than I've ever been and that's including big cities.

I assume you do understand what the Commission does. We've been asked and I think it's important to articulate the distinction whether assuming you know it or not, why do we need a Human Rights Commission when there's an MCAD, Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination? And they're really apples and oranges or maybe a way to put it is almost complementary. MCAD has the whole state as its area to cover, and it has a huge workload as you can imagine, a backlog. Whereas, the Commission operating in all 15 towns has, I guess I could call it the luxury, to really get to know the people they're dealing with to take the time to hear people in a timely and relevant manner.

We have brochures, as you probably know, in Portuguese and Spanish as well as English and they should be in town halls and in various places that people visit around their town. So, one of our tasks is -- representatives are to keep those supplied and to talk about them and so forth.

I think I can stop there. It's just been such a pleasure to work with the leadership of the Human Rights Commission and the Commissioners and my sister and brother town reps.

So there are others who will say more about the Commission, but I have worked for Elenita for, and I know that's not the issue here, but I just have to say my whole time on the Cape. And I

can't say enough about her human relationship and administrative skills. And I appreciate your work, and thanks for having us here.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you, Mary. Barbara Burgo.

MS. BARBARA BURGO: I thank you and good afternoon. Thank you for hearing this. Thank you for that clarification as well. If, in fact, it is a clarification. Like you said, some folks might now actually like it after we heard it.

I am a cultural anthropology major. I got my degree in anthropology. One of my favorite classes was Critical Race Theory, and we were taught also to read between the lines. So I hear you that it maybe was not about the Commission or Elena or the racist remark or her position. But I also heard today that you just said, two or three times, maybe community funded, maybe County funded, I'm sorry, County funded, and County funded and then slightly under tone or volunteer.

So, I propose to you here that that is the, I'll call it nicely, the reading between the lines. But to me as a critical race theorist, I'm a CRT all-star from Rhode Island College; I'm going to call it smoke and mirrors.

Section 2. So I'll continue with the way I was going because I hoped this wouldn't be smoke and mirrors because we all well know that when you reduce something to volunteer, it has the same effect as defunding it and getting rid of it. Volunteers do not -- do not get credit enough or have enough power to get anything done as effectively as a fully funded, fully paid position.

I read on your table, on your own documentation, Section 2A under "EXECUTIVE" in all capital letters, "The mission of the County is to promote and sustain a proactive open government that enhances the quality of life for the citizens of Barnstable County."

In all full disclosure, I once ran for City Council in my former city of Taunton. I know how things are written. I am also the past president state of American Association of University Women.

What I feel the operative word missing in the quality of life for the citizens of Barnstable County is for all, and I'd put in parentheses (all), the citizens of Barnstable County.

I submit to you that that is what is missing. Without the Barnstable County Human Rights Commission or the position of the coordinator fully funded the way it was and/or enhance the funding because, as Jane mentioned, Jane Teixeira-Henry, racism is alive and well and here on Cape Cod and actually getting worse as most of us discussed in a meeting this weekend. Getting worse mainly because of the way our government is set up right now with not only a black president but a former black governor. We have gotten much more difficulty that we've ever had before trying to defend or assist folks who have been discriminated against.

The County's most vulnerable citizens might be affected -- will be affected by any defunding of the coordinator position. I am confident.

I traveled to Cape Verde when I was doing my studies and it was a developing nation and I saw how well that they were trying to enhance their government, as you said, promote and sustain proactive and open government and enhance the quality of their citizens. I was proud of that and even prouder to be an American citizen saying that we have evolved so much further. This to me is taking two steps backwards.

My grandmother lived in Harwich most of her life. My mother was born here in Barnstable County, and my distant cousin was the late, great Eugenia Fortes.

I took the day off of work here after moving here three years ago and only being allowed to get a job at basically minimum wage with the degrees that I have and the experience that I have

because there's not much available to us, what I will likely call a triple threat. I am a black, woman, senior and need your help and your support more than ever before in my entire life.

I am not only one who will benefit, but I am connected to hundreds of young, old, multiracial, multicultural seniors and not on Cape Cod who will also benefit from this exemplary arm of your government. Please do not let it go to a volunteer position.

Thank you.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you. John Reed, please.

MR. JOHN REED: Good afternoon. My name is John L. Reed and I'm a resident of Yarmouth and a resident of Cape Cod for the last 40 years.

I have several things to say, some may be kind, similar some may not be so kind. But I wanted to clarify something. As Chair of the Human Rights Commission, there are a lot of things that have occurred. The Human Rights Commission has been in operation for 10 years. In the beginning there was some reluctance to even have a Human Rights Commission. People said, "We don't need one. Things are fine here."

Well, that may be true in some people's minds, but prior to coming into the Human Rights Commission, I dealt with some of the problems on the Cape that nobody wanted to deal with on the streets of Hyannis. Yes, there were problems there. There still are problems here. It has not gone away.

But when I came to the Human Rights Commission and came into this room 10 years ago for both the hearings in front of the County Commissioners, the hearings in front of the human services department, and, finally, the hearing that we're here today in front of the Finance Committee, the Human Rights Commission was located in an office in Cape Cod Council of Churches. It was not here on the complex. It was working its way through.

One would say at some point its next move went to residing in the Heritage Museum that I happen to run. We're both nonprofits because there was not adequate funding from the County.

Now today, we have expanded the role of the Human Rights Commission. One would say should you be rewarded for doing a good job on a limited budget, which we have been. Our budget is a miniscule amount of a total County budget and by rights we should be given more.

All of us are volunteers. There are 9 County -- Human Rights Commissioners, excuse me, and town reps. We don't get paid. We don't get paid anything. The only person that we have is the coordinator. Without a coordinator, how can you get the work done?

We have gone from being on the second floor, being in the basement, to being up there, and produce equality programs. We are not just sitting at a desk taking in intakes for people who call.

If we don't have a coordinator, maybe they should be calling you because somebody has to answer the clarion call, and I don't hear that discussion being said. I hear what I call in between the line doubletalk. One group has one idea about how it should go, another group has another idea how it should go, but nobody asked us.

The hearings of sort are a limited type of hearing. Once the hearing is over, another action takes place. This is the third time I've been in this room, and I am really in a quandary about whether or not does excellence prevail? We have a Human Rights Academy. In 10 years, that Human Rights Academy has covered every high school on this Cape, plus private schools that are doing projects to generate a lot of money.

I was here last year when they said so, "If you need money, why don't you ask for it?" Well,

we're asking for it. We submitted a budget this year. We worked it out with the Commission.

We had a two-column discussion, last year's budget/this year's budget. We submitted a budget only to be told later there's a third budget. At a meeting right here at this table, I was asked, "So which budget is yours?" The one we agreed to because of the issue of the consultant being "a County employee" or a contracted consultant, it became a battle over which one should that person be. Who should that person answer to? And a subcommittee has been formed to decide that.

Now what I don't quite get, and I need somebody to explain to me, when the work of a subcommittee is complete, are the funds going to be put back in to fund that position or are we going to be talking in a neutral position where we don't know where the money's coming from until we look at the other budgets and recoup. I've been involved in politics for a while myself, and one of the things I do know is that in every budget there's a surplus somewhere. I've looked at that budget. I realized that for the small amount of money that we're talking about, we can stop the political games and get down to the real deal, which is fund the position.

If the subcommittee says, "This is what the position shall be," the Human Rights Commission has already decided we would abide by the findings of the subcommittee. But what we will not abide by is having people say we don't need a Human Rights Commission, we need a volunteer to do it. We're all volunteers anyhow. This person does not sit at a desk. This person goes to meetings, represents the County. We represent the County. As a matter of fact, we have represented the County in places where people don't even know what the County government does. They didn't know what we did.

So, what did we do? We went out and put together brochures in four languages. We went out and met with J-1 workers, helped them in some legal cases. We went out -- I've been to court with people, mainly elderly people and poor people. Yes, nobody paid me; I didn't get mileage, but I did it because of the County. I did it because I respect the work of the Human Rights Commission over the fact that as the Chair somebody's got to show leadership. Leaders don't sit back, they step up. And I am a leader who steps up.

Today, I'm asking you, fund the position one way or the other. But if you're not going to do it, make it clear why you're not going to do it. Don't hide behind the issue that the coordinator's comments were the major reason why you didn't do it.

And by the way, on the same subject, if there are other contracted employees, we need to know who they are and why do they get to stay and this one gets to get reviewed. But, you know, I always say this way. What's not said or when we leave the room is when the real conversation takes place. I'm not naive. And I will run against one of you in this room if I have to.

Thank you.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you, Mr. Reed. The next person up is Roland Bessette.

MR. ROLAND BESSETTE: Hi. I'm Roland Bessette. I'm a Human Rights Commissioner. I began in January. I was born down in Fall River. My parents came to this country during the 20th century and then moved to Detroit where I practiced law for many decades; I won't say how many.

I'm familiar with diversity. I'm familiar with discrimination that was basically what I practiced. And I find the Cape a quite different world in some ways but nothing's all that different when you get around the United States.

You have to admit I understand what you're saying in terms of we pulled the budget from this pot or the funding from this pot and we're going to bring it back from that pile later on. But as

somebody said in a movie, "Well, of all the gin joints in all the world, why did she have to come in mine."

When you pull this particular pot of funding, it feeds that voracious beast paranoia which is self-feeding and some people start to think you're going to disband the Commission.

My purpose in talking to you is I read the minutes, and there were two comments that -- questions, more or less, why did the Human Rights Commission get so big? And why are they just redundant doing what MCAD does? Those are fair questions to be answered. The one I'm going to answer is about MCAD.

I think we all know that MCAD works on complaints based on discrimination based on prohibited areas; race, gender, age, all that sort of thing. Human Rights are universal. MCAD doesn't deal with Human Rights. That's for starters.

MCAD is either underfunded or there's a lot of -- or too many unhappy people in Massachusetts because it takes three years to bring a complaint to fruition. If you want a hearing, it can go four years or beyond.

The kind of complaints I've seen in the Human Rights Commission are from people who are old sometimes, who have mental deficiencies, and they need a fast answer because if it's a problem with their apartment complex or their landlord and they need somebody to bridge that gap to mediate for them. If MCAD is going to get in -- if MCAD gets in at all, 12 to 16 seasons are going to pass with them sitting out front after being evicted on their sofa before anybody does anything.

What the Human Rights Commission does, in my view, not only does it serve as an auxiliary to MCAD but it does things that MCAD can't do. The proactive that John talked about, getting out into the schools, planting the seeds with the young people. Getting fast resolutions. We have trained mediators (Inaudible) fast resolutions to real problems that people have. Some of these people -- the nearest MCAD office is New Bedford. A lot of these people will admit they haven't been over that bridge in decades. That's beyond their capability.

So I think that what the Human Rights Commission does is much different than MCAD. It's not a redundancy. It's not a replication. I think MCAD appreciates the fact we're there.

I would end by saying that I don't care what the entity is, federal, state, county, town or a corporation; everybody needs a True North in terms of their ethical standards. And I think that in terms of getting to True North, the Human Rights Commission serves to calibrate some of the direction that this County takes.

That's all I have to say

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you. The next person up is Reverend Beaudreault.

REVEREND DON BEAUDREULT: I'm Reverend Beaudreault and I'm minister of First Parish Brewster Unitarian Universalist in Brewster, Mass. And unlike many people who have already spoken, I'm a new resident here, only 8 months.

What I have discovered is that Cape Cod is not the progressive place I thought it was. I've lived in 14 states and three other countries. And for me, Massachusetts has always been the hallmark of liberty. I've been greatly dismayed by this situation.

Whatever the rumors are, the fact is that people have spoken before me, I agree with just virtually with everything they've said.

When I learned that the Human Rights Commission was in jeopardy by not continuing the position of the coordinator, Elenita Muniz, I was really dismayed by that. I was one of the ones who

spoke at the meeting a few months ago as well.

Human Rights Commission's, one of which I helped set up in Sarasota, Florida. But these Commissions throughout our nation were created to ensure that people like me, an openly gay man with interracial children who is also an agnostic. People who are marginalized by society's assumption including that in God we trust, and only those in the majority have access to full privileges under the law. But they have a way within our local communities to speak our mind when we feel that we are others in whatever marginalized group feel discriminated against is vital to what's called representative government, which starts on the local level. It's really not just for white people like myself; income sufficient people, the elderly, the heterosexual educated employed men, physically and mentally incapacitated for one and for all.

And yes, I'm not a lawyer. I'm an idealist. I wouldn't be a minister if I weren't an idealist. But I sincerely believe in representative government. I was born and raised in Washington, DC, around politicians all my life. I know something about that, and I know something about in between the lines. I know that very well.

My former wife is an Asian woman. My current fiancé, a male, is a Mexican, both have lived in this country, both have felt discrimination their entire time in the United States of America in different parts of this country.

I can't tell you how angry I am for what they have had to experience, the subtleties, the in between the lines, the very evident. People like me listen for those subtleties. We don't have to have the PhD's or whatever you have, put your knowledge on it in an academic way.

One of my daughters is a Human Rights lawyer, by the way. She works in poverty areas helping women, women of color.

Representative government and the idea of such is that we are governed from the grassroots of our local communities inter-statewide and national organizations without local access which seems that will be what would happen with the defunding of Elenita's position. Without community groups which to go -- people in these communities, they're lost in the shuffle. It's already been said before, lost in the shuffle, bigger, more bureaucratic agencies.

Let me say that again, I was born and raised in Washington, DC, around politicians.

This means that those who take a position in governing are dedicated to the idea of justice and liberty for all people, locally and globally.

And in regard to those who govern are accountable to the people. And I have to say to you, Ms. McAuliffe, that if we feel emotion around this issue, we're the people. We have the right to feel that emotion. And I certainly feel it. I'm angry. I'm just saying that. I'm not showing it, but I'm angry. I'm angry for being discriminated against all my life as a gay man.

With regard to this, to ensure this accountability, our government prides itself on checks and balances system. That's why we're here. This is representative government. We're saying to you that we don't like, most of us have spoken, all of us who have spoken so far, do not like what might happen. But in which each governing body and the body politic itself are responsible to make sure that all are working to further our basic principles of governance.

So, representative government and checks and balances, these are foundational concepts in our nation and they're ideals.

The final thing I want to say is that as a minister for 37 years, 37 years, I know that when it comes time for churches to raise money to sustain their spiritual work, people will give if they really want to. That if they are impassioned about something, they will make sure the money is there to

further their cause. They will balance their budgets somehow, by maybe taking from this and putting it elsewhere.

So, I'm asking you who are representing the local people to take into account what I've said in regard to you, representative government on the local level where things really are done and where checks and balances are there throughout the system. But also this impassioned commitment, whatever your ideals are personally and as a group to both philosophically and financially to ensure justice for one and for all.

Thank you.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you. Next I have Paul Houlihan.

MR. PAUL HOULIHAN: Good afternoon. My name is Paul Houlihan. I'm a resident of Sandwich and I have been a Human Rights Commissioner for five and a half years.

At five and a half years ago when I was asked to become a Human Rights Commissioner, we discussed what the roll of the Human Rights Commission was. It was impressed upon me that the mandate was multiple and that the County was serious about implementing that mandate.

And as you well know, the mandate includes looking after people who are aggrieved, following up on issues that are raised by members of our communities. And as the previous speakers have indicated, a number of those people are elderly. A number of them do not speak English, a number of them are disabled, and all of them are without power.

One of the things that the Human Rights Commission does for its mandate was developed by this County government in 2005 is to represent those people who lack power, to give them a shot at a job if they need that, and health care if they need that, and housing if they need that, and income if they need that.

The second mandate of the Human Rights Commission is to work with other organizations and other leaders in the County to ensure that the message from this County that Human Rights is important, Human Rights is critical, and Human Rights will be observed is met and understood by as many residents in this community and these communities as possible.

The third mandate is to educate residents of our County on the fact that human rights exist, what human rights encompass, and we have done that primarily through the development and implementation and growth of the Human Rights Academy.

As John Reed has indicated, the Human Rights Academy has now dealt with well over a thousand going on two thousand students in this County. That's because my colleagues and myself have taken the mandate that this County developed in 2005 and we've taken it seriously, and we've implemented it to the best of our ability.

When I hear that, well, we don't understand why the Human Rights Commission has gotten so big, that wasn't our intention. Well I beg to differ because if you bring together nine Commissioners and 15 community representatives, all volunteer, all professional, all committed, we are going to implement the mandate that you set in 2005 and we are going to grow the work that we do to spread the message that you wanted us to spread.

I'm a Commissioner because my understanding is that this County takes Human Rights seriously and I want to be a part of that, and I appreciate that opportunity.

And I'm very concerned when I read in the minutes, as Roland said two issues that got raised. One is, well, MCAD exists so why don't they just do it because you're duplicating. He has articulated very clearly why that is not the case.

Secondly, as to the issue of why we've grown, we've grown because you brought together a group of professionals that have taken your mandate seriously and have worked like hell to implement this throughout the County.

And the final thing I want to indicate is that we do not want to get put in what's called a trick bag. The trick bag is we will have an advisory committee talk about the future of the coordinator at the same time that this Assembly of Delegates is finalizing its budget. We do not want to be left out in the cold with the message that, oh, we appreciate the Human Rights Commission; we definitely support the Human Rights Commission, but by the time that subcommittee process was completed, there's no more money so it's going to have to become a volunteer position. That would be unconscionable for us to let happen and for your to make happen.

And I am just urging you that there are two roads to go down. We need to go down one of them or the other. One is to maintain the position as a contracted position within the County government, which, by the way, is the cheaper way to go, or the other is to make it an employee position within the County government. We need to be on July 1 in one column or the other, funded one way or the other. Please make that happen. Please support our work.

Thank you, very much.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: I want to allow comment from our most senior member of the Assembly, Julia Taylor.

Ms. TAYLOR: Unfortunately, I have been away and so I've missed the meeting where some of this was voted and discussed. By coincidence at the time while I was away, I had a letter from -- an email from a student at UMass who was in a political science class and he wanted my -- was interviewing me as an elected official and had a lot of questions about -- well, you can imagine what a student would be asking. And when he asked for the time that I felt that I had been able to provide leadership effectively, what was it -- what came to mind?

And I thought, oh my gosh, it really was the leadership that I did provide at the time of the establishment of the Human Rights Commission. It was not a particularly popular project. Several of the Commissioners were not in favor and most of the Delegates were not in favor. I was sought out by some people from my town and others.

And I was very fortunate in being able to give them some advice, and that advice did work in the end. And we were able to get not just the Commission but some little bit of funding. And I think that we can -- the whole County can take -- I'm taking pride. I'm bragging about it. And I think the whole County, however, can take pride that when grass root organizations made the effort to lobby for this, the Assembly and the Commissioners responded.

Of course we had this recent hullabaloo, and, of course, I've gone to the Human Rights Academy; it's quite impressive. And then by chance it turned out that Elenita Muniz became the employee. That was sometime after the start and it happens that I've known Elenita for the 35-plus years and have a lot of respect for her personally.

When the hullabaloo broke out over her remarks, I sort of missed some of that, but in a conversation with several Delegates and several Commissioners, I did get the impression that this could well be a good excuse to make a change. And I was worried about that, and now I'm very worried about that. I hope that won't happen.

I just felt I had to go on the record, as I've said, and I will do everything I can but you're going to have to most of it.

If you're from Falmouth, you have my vote. If you're not from Falmouth, you better start -- especially Barnstable. Anybody from Barnstable? You need that vote.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you, Julia. This is a general budget discussion and anyone is welcome to comment on any part of the budget. With that lead in, Mark Foley.

MR. MARK FOLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We're going to defer our comments at this point. You have lots of interested parties to speak.

We just wanted to let you know that we give you some information, and I think it's been passed out by Marcia. If anyone has questions about the particular fire academy, we'd be happy to answer those at any time. I'll defer for now.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Is that going to hold true for Mr. Russell as well?

MR. MARK FOLEY: Yes. Thank you.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you. Back to the next person, I have Tia Cross.

MS. TIA CROSS: Hello. I'm Tia Cross. I am a Human Rights Commissioner and I came on in January. I have been very thrilled to be on the Commission, and I'm very interested in their work, and I'm looking forward to doing lots more.

Some of this has been mentioned before, but I wanted to say that what the Human Rights Commission does offer is local contact here on the Cape, which can work quickly to intervene and do what is needed as compared to the MCAD backlog.

We can de-escalate any crisis before it blows up. That's our job through mediation or, if it comes to the courts, going to the courts with people.

And MCAD has -- people in MCAD have actually expressed that they're thrilled that the Human Rights Commission is covering the Cape Cod (Inaudible) take some weight of their back. We work cooperatively with the local Chambers of Commerce, the Community Health Network, Area 27, which is the Cape and Islands. We work with the network of social services and faith communities on the lower Cape and in middle schools and high schools.

I work with the Martin Luther King Team Action, which is organizing a panel discussion in June of all the Cape police chiefs who would like to participate to which police officers and the community are invited to forge more bonds between community and police so that something like Ferguson doesn't happen on the Cape.

And each of us Commissioners has gone to our police chief and met with them or is in the process of doing so to let them know that we're Commissioners in the town that we live in -- I mean from that town, and that they can refer cases to us as need be. And that we're really working to create community involvement with the police and vice versa. So the communications are key.

I want to say that Elenita does a huge amount of work for the Commission. She works way more hours than she's paid for. She goes all over the Cape, so it's not a desk job. The coordinator position is crucial and the Commission couldn't function without that job being funded. We wouldn't be able to function.

So if you take away the money for the coordinator, you're basically destroying the Commission because, as somebody has said before, we are all volunteers and most of us have very professional lives.

So I want to end by saying that as Human Rights Commissioners we are working to build

better community connections across town boundaries as we reach out to create a better safer Cape.

Thank you.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you. The next speaker is Jeanne Adams.

MS. JEANNE ADAMS: My name is Jeanne Adams, and I want to thank a representative from Falmouth for her very kind and diplomatic comments about the formation of the Human Rights Commission.

I've been in -- I guess I was part of the group of rabble-rousers or whatever you want to call us that did some planning to get going.

And just to give you a little bit of history, organizing the Commission was based on statistical findings that were done by several different endeavors of the Barnstable County Human Services. And when you look -- I did some investigating of some of the statistics from past reports and when you look at the issues that were common then and increasing over the years, they haven't gone away. In many cases, they've gotten worse.

The nonprofit agencies are struggling to keep up with things like housing issues, like food insufficiency, house -- I said housing.

And the effort now trying to engage more folks in civil participation, teaching children about civics, and I think the high school program is a great way to do that.

And I also think that we really have to do a planning based on what the need is. And there's a need to collect the data, to analyze it, to see what needs to be corrected in the process, if anything, and to make sure we're doing the job. And that can't be done without a coordinator. I think that's critical. I've done a lot of work in the past with volunteers one way or another and they take a lot of care and feeding. They need a support system in place to do their job. It doesn't have to be elaborate but it does have to be there and it has to be in a sense independent. You set your goals and your objectives, but the way the plan -- the steps are taken to accomplish those goals can be varied. And I think that's what happens when you're doing a one-on-one mediation with someone. You try to work out the problem. If you can't work it out, it goes to some of the good resources that we do have in the County. And then you save if you can do it in-house, then it doesn't have to go to the state or it doesn't have to go to the courts causing the towns money, causing part of the businesses money if there's an issue over an automobile that doesn't function right or whatever the issue is.

So I think in this 10th Anniversary year, it would be a real tragedy to defund the position for the support for the Commission.

Thank you.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you, ma'am. Next is Jeanie Mignone.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: So I have this here because I feel like this conflict is really partisan. This broke out during a time when Elenita and a few heads of local police departments were having a conversation at the college. And then suddenly the Cape Cod Times picked it up and, basically, just hung on the all white people are racist comment which then went to talk radio. And from what I understand, it went from a Delegate calling somebody on the HR Commission and insisting that if Elenita didn't resign that funding would be pulled.

So, I just want to say for today -- would you like to clarify?

Ms. MCAULIFFE: I believe it was County Commissioner Sheila Lyons; she's not a Delegate. She's a Commissioner.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Okay.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: No one on the Delegates was involved in any of the personnel issues of Ms. Muniz.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Okay. Would you say that this is appropriate ethical behavior by someone representing the people on the Commission? Is it acceptable to you that this blew up in this way?

Ms. MCAULIFFE: It's not our call.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: It's not your call to have an opinion or it's not your call to -- sorry.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: This is a hearing, not a debate.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Okay. So, I'll get back to it then. So from that time to this time now and why we're here in this room, is it my understanding that that conversation from Sheila Lyons to whoever it was was very blatantly said that if Elenita didn't resign than funding would be pulled.

And now here we are today in this room. So I just want to be clear that it is really complicated for ordinary people to understand the political process. And it's really not okay, and this is a perfect example of white privilege/white power that someone can utilize their position and make such a fuss over a conversation that is going on in the entire United States.

This is huge. This is huge. Our whole country is talking about this issue that has led us here today to debate whether or not funding the Human Rights Commission is necessary. Would you say that black lives matter? Could you answer? Could anyone answer or do you not have to answer? Deborah, do black lives matter?

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: I don't like to be provoked, but as the person, if you read the minutes, who made the motion about this position, I think that everybody here needs to understand that there needs to be a funding restructuring at the Human Rights Commission. That that needs to cover that position is a real position, not as a position that doesn't have pension and doesn't have the various things, the perks that other people in Barnstable County get. That's why I brought that motion.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Okay.

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: Okay. Now wait a second.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Sure. No problem.

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: You asked --

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: No problem

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: Now when this issue arose back in December, I was of the view and am still of the view that the individual involved has remedied this at MCAD and as an attorney who litigated MCAD, I know it's a long time.

But they give straight, honest, good decisions, and they have remedies that are far beyond what you're going to get from this Assembly in this room.

We can't fix what may have been said over the phone. The MCAD has jurisdiction to punish that. All right. So that's not even within my purview.

I made the motion because I believe the argument of restructuring of that position is to the benefit of the Human Rights Commission. No one on this Assembly has ever discussed defunding that commission.

So, as the person that made the motion, that's what I would say about it and that's all I have to say in this hearing.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Okay. And so does that mean you've come to the conclusion that that person hasn't been fully accommodated financially and will that be retroactive?

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: I have nothing further to say.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: I'm going to try to clarify just for the audience too. Right now, at this moment, the Commissioners have presented a budget with this position going from a contractual relationship to a County employee with benefits. That's what stands in this -- let me finish; okay?

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Absolutely.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Right now that's what stands --

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: I'm just trying to remember. I have a point.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Right now, that's what stands in this. This Finance Committee voted on a majority to reconsider that contractual relationship.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: So are you saying that this position will be fully funded as a County employee?

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: I'm saying right now it's fully funded in the budget as it stands at this very moment, right this minute that it's fully funded.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Right this minute.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Yes.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: But it shifts in July.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Well, no. No. It hasn't been discussed. It will be discussed in the next several -- this is what your opinion -- this is your moment to tell us what you want to have happen.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Okay. So when --

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Every member of the Assembly will vote within the limits of their power by census on what will happen in this budget. And the Commissioners will have a say after that.

I mean it's a process that goes on. But as of right now, this position is fully funded with about 14,000 until June 30.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Okay. Well that's --

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: That's what it is. You're asking is what position we are in right now. That's exactly where it stands. It's fully funded.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Right. But the full breath of the issue is whether or not the Human Rights Commission deserves to be funded considering the circumstances within --

Ms. MARTIN: No.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: No.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: It's whether or not you can find the money?

Ms. MCAULIFFE: No.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Then it will be funded and it won't be a volunteer position?

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: That's the discussion right now.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: That's the discussion.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: As of right

now --

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: So it has the potential to be a volunteer -- so you do have the potential to not fund it.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: We can increase it; we can decrease it.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: You could eliminate it.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: We could eliminate it. Right now, it is -- the contractual person will be eliminated by June 30.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: July 1.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: July 1 there will be no contractual. But in the budget, there is a person to be hired by the County at the same exact amount, actually, salary wise.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Is that for a year? Is that for three years?

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: It's always by the year.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Okay.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: So is funding.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: So --

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: And that person will because, whoever they will be, remember that's not been determined either; whoever that person will be will get benefits as well as part of becoming an official employee of the County.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: So you're basically saying if the vote happens in favor of the funding for the HRC, then there will be a position?

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Right. That was suggested.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: The funding if the vote does not go in favor, there will not be a position?

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Well, it's a little more complicated than that but yes.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Yes or no, please.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: If it's not voted in favor of having somebody, then there won't be a person?

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Mr. Speaker. I think what would happen is we are waiting what the committee wants to do. Right now, I think the request is for seven --

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: This is the subcommittee?

Ms. MCAULIFFE: The subcommittee that is looking at bringing the position into the County. We have many contracted positions in the County right now that we have been told are illegal. And they are being brought in, some of them, under County employees because we don't fall within the law on some of our contracted positions.

So one of the reasons, I believe, that they're looking at this particular position is because it's a contracted position and it may fall under those guidelines that will make it not legal. So that's one of the issues that are going on.

I think the other issue and the reason I started off about getting emotional is I think that this, from my perspective, I didn't even know that Sheila Lyons had threatened to cut the funding until you said it. I did not know that.

We are looking at a very tight budget. This came through where there are a lot of positions and I'm not trying to minimize what I've heard today because, believe me, I've learned a lot today.

However, I just want to say that we are not picking on you. You are not a target. There are many, many, many budgets under consideration.

I realize that you -- what this Commission does is very, very important and very, very necessary. So I think right now looking at the leadership of that is going to be critical to see how it goes forward.

I don't believe it's going to be permitted to be a contracted position, as far as I'm aware at this point, because we have other contracted positions that we're not allowed to keep.

So going forward, perhaps they think it's not -- shouldn't be 7/10ths perhaps. The committee decides the full-time position.

And just so people know, there is such a thing that's called a supplemental appropriation so that -- and we've told this to other departments in the County. If it turns out that a position is required or that there is a position that is needed, then you file a supplemental appropriation to the Assembly and a position can be funded at a later date.

I do agree though, it's better if it's in the budget. And I think we are hearing you loud and clear on that.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Thank you.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you. The next person on here is Karen Mazza.

MS. KAREN MAZZA: Hello, my name is Karen Mazza, and I'm here as copresident of the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area, along with my copresident Marilyn Gullett and member Renate Sands, to voice concern about potential reduction of funding in the Human Rights Commission or the coordinator position.

I am expressing the unanimous views of our board. The League values the importance of the work of the HRC and protecting basic human rights, eliminating discrimination and promoting community awareness of issues related to the diversity of our community.

The Cape has a significant population living in poverty, a significant elder population, immigrant population and minority population. We need a local organization that is able to provide prompt assistance in mediating difficulties that our most vulnerable citizens experience.

I, myself, am a resident in the town of Dennis. I recently was at a hearing where our school superintendent testified before the foundations formula committee that 50 percent of the children in the town in every school district are in families living at the poverty level. In Barnstable, it's a little bit lower than that but it's in the mid-40 percent.

We look like a rich community when you drive around and you see the ocean front property but that's not all of Cape Cod. We have tremendous income inequality on the Cape.

To build understanding in the larger community, the work of the HRC needs local coordination of training and outreach. And outreach is important work because it is preventative in nature.

I am impressed by the breath of issues and initiatives that the HRC addresses. The HRC needs the support of a coordinator position at least funded for its present level of service. Indeed in past discussions of the HRC, questions arose about needing more assistance to carry out the work of the HRC.

Beyond its commitment to the protection of equal rights, the League also believes in effective government. And without a coordinator position, the HRC will lack the support to carry out its work and it will be far less effective.

Before I retired I was an assistant superintendent of schools and we did not run our school district with volunteers. We gladly welcomed volunteers to supplement the work of our highly skilled professionals. But when you want the job done, when you want to be able to achieve the results that are in your strategic plan, you need the work and the help of a highly skilled professional. Please keep the position funded.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you. The next person up is Rosanne Shapiro.

MS. ROSANNE SHAPIRO: Hello. My name is Rosanne Shapiro and I live in Harwich.

I'm a retired social worker. I have assisted dozens of clients in my 30 years in the field, most of them elderly, disabled, low-income individuals and families struggling with a variety of complex issues that many of us cannot imagine. I would add that the last eight years of my career was spent providing services here on Cape Cod.

I know how difficult it is for people in survival mode, as were many clients, to feel empowered and heard. The Barnstable County Human Rights Commission with its specific awareness of local issues and problems has been in a position to assist people, like my former clients, and to do so in an expedient way, unlike the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination with its huge geographic area of responsibility and its years-long backlog of cases. Those in need of services cannot afford to wait until their case is ready to be heard.

I also speak as a low-income elder. That's right, I said, "low-income." I often have to make choices about how to spend my limited income, so I know about the need for a tight budget and for sometimes having to do without.

The people of Cape Cod, especially the most vulnerable, cannot afford to do without the Barnstable County Human Rights Commission and a paid coordinator.

Thank you.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you. Vaira Harik.

MS. VAIRA HARIK: Hello, I'm Vaira Harik and I hope you'll permit me to change the subject briefly.

From our colleagues of the Human Rights Commission to the matter that's also before you, which is remuneration of County employees. And so I'm referring to page 4 of your draft minutes that were issued on March 25.

And in addition to being a County employee, I'm also a resident of Cotuit in Barnstable. I'm a senior project manager here at the County. I work for the Department of Human Services, and in addition to my -- and I'm not in a manager position I want to make that clear.

So I can't be seen as directly advocating for merit pay myself. What I'd like to express is concern over the fact that the proposition that the committee's put forth is to eliminate the possibility of merit and step increases for County employees in the next year's budget. And I think that that sends a very disappointing message to County employees, many of whom are working at a significant discount to the private sector in what they do.

Additionally, I think that you're taking away a management tool from the directors in which you've placed your confidence in the County.

If the observation that I've read in the text is that most employees receive these increases. Well, then, maybe the merit -- the system of adjudicating merit or not is something that needs to be looked at because you don't have -- and you don't have a sharp instrument there if everyone's getting merit, you know, that doesn't work that way.

Additional concern I have is that I read here that the total value of all steps have not yet been calculated by finance. And I think that's an important thing for you to know as you make your decision. Whatever the amount is, I'd encourage you to keep some out there so that the best and brightest who work in this County have something to work toward from a merit-based point of view.

Keep the carrot out there because I think it's demoralizing to not have it there. And it also might be less efficient because, you know, you want to keep your great employees happy.

So with all due respect, I would ask you to revisit that decision to only leave COLAs on the table and to remove merit and step-based kind of pay. Maybe in the process of deciding who deserves -- who is deserving of meritorious reward, if that process needs work, then great; rock on.

But I would say leave the carrot out there for some of your best and brightest. Thank you.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you. Next person is Mimi Frank.

MS. MIMI FRANK: Yes, I also had another finance question, and that has to do with the Aquaculture Research Corp., or ARC. I'm a little concerned on this when we're talking and you hear everyone here speaking about finding money to save. My question is why are we considering at the County level even spending this money?

The fact that not only have they asked the County for \$250,000 that would have to be bonded, the cost truly then is not \$250,000. I wonder what the true cost would be when all the bonding figures and how long is that debt going to go on for?

According to everything that I have looked up on Aquaculture Research Corp., and please do not misunderstand me here; I think it is a wonderful company. I do understand that it does supply 90 percent of all of the seeding, whether it be the quahogs or the oysters or whatever for the commercial shellfishermen, and I've been told that every town on the Cape in Barnstable County uses this.

So I guess I'm asking why if Dennis, the Yarmouth, the Dennis Trust, the Conservation Nature Trust and whatever are coming up with money, why can we not maybe ask some of the other towns to come up with that money versus bonding another and going into debt for \$250,000 at the County level. That seems, to me, to be \$250,000 that could be saved, and lots of times people say, geez, that's not much money. To me, that's an awful lot of money.

There are other -- \$3 million is coming from private investors on this. This is a business, I am convinced, will not be lost. If they do not get the 250,000 from the County, there's not a doubt in my mind that they will find that other 250,000. Whether it be from the public or the private sectors or maybe some of the other towns.

Also, when you're talking about the conservation restrictions and whatever, I won't get into all that, but realize this is a private company that is selling out. We don't want them to go out of business, but I don't think at the County level the County government should be bonding for this. I think there are many other funding sources that could be had.

Thank you for your time.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you. That was the last person that had signed up. I know that we have skipped by, through their own volition, Mr. Foley and Mr. Russell; would you like to come back, if they're still in the room?

MR. MARK FOLEY: I think we're all set.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: You're all set?

MR. MARK FOLEY: Thank you.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you. Now, if there is anyone else in the room that would like to speak? Ms. Dagwan.

MS. DEBRA DAGWAN: Thank you and good evening, Delegates. I look around this room and many of you I've interacted with before, quite a few of you, and I know that you are very compassionate about the issues that have come before you when I've been working with you. And I

know that people in this room have come before you this afternoon because they're compassionate about an issue that's close and dear to my heart.

As your Town Council Councilor in Precinct 8 here in Barnstable, I represent a community that has probably the largest diversified community in Barnstable. And the comments that I was receiving from individuals dealt with, which brought me here, to ask why, why now, and why this particular position?

Times are so hard right now. The issues around Human Rights are increasing, and it's just not the time to consider eliminating this position or pushing it to a volunteer position. It needs to be funded.

And I'm here to ask that those of you, particularly those of you who I know and who I have supported over the years, would support this issue as Delegates when it comes before you. I know that I should focus mainly on the Barnstable Delegates because they represent me and represent many of us here, but I'm pleading to them as well as the other Delegates here that I know, individuals that I know and have interacted with.

Please consider the comments that were made this afternoon and not -- and fund this coordinator spot/position and possibly increase it.

Thank you.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you. The next person to come up, would you please identify yourself and be brief, especially if it's going to be not -- a new part of the issue. Thanks.

MS. JUDY FENNER: Hi. My name is Judy Fenner and I'm from Brewster. I guess my one question and it's been brought up that you're considering changing the funding from a subcontractor to an employee position.

And my concern about that is Human Rights are everywhere. And if that person becomes an employee of the County and if there's a complaint from the County on Human Rights, then isn't that a conflict of interest?

And I just wonder if it should remain a subcontractor so that it's not -- it doesn't get muddied in the water. That's my concern.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you. Who's next? Edmund Robinson.

MR. EDMUND ROBINSON: Edmund Robinson; I'm the town representative from Chatham to the Human Rights Commission. I've been in that position for about five years. I've gone through several coordinators and periods where there was no coordinator. And I just want to say no work gets done when there's no coordinator.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Beth, please.

MS. BETH ALBERT: Hi. I'm Beth Albert; Director of Human Services. I'm here as a department head, and I just wanted to go on the record and say, you know, we are really fortunate at the County to work with some of our region's best and brightest. The exceptional work and professional of our employees is something that I'm extremely proud of, and it's something you should be proud of as well.

Our employees represent the County 365 days a year, and I say this all the time -- the County's only as good as its employees.

Step increases are based on performance. They're not automatic. I wanted you to make sure

you understood that. And by removing this benefit an incentive for performance, you're really negatively impacting the motivation and morale of our staff.

To be quite honest, many of employees could be working in the public sector drawing down at a higher salary, but they've chosen to be public servants. And day in and day out, we are committed to serving the public.

In my view as a department manager, suspending step increases for employees is counterproductive and really has a demoralizing impact potentially on employees. And I just want to go on the record and say that.

Thank you.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you. Who's next up there?

Clerk JANICE O'CONNELL: Good afternoon, and I want to say how much I really appreciate the fact that people read those reports and minutes. That's great. That's why a lot of people are here.

I certainly want to echo what was said. And I guess I want to bring to light the fact that the County conducted a study that received the results on this topic. And they did study the wage plans and the plan that the County uses to compensate its employees.

And what they found was that County administrative officials maintain the validity of the classification plan by systematically reviewing reclassification requests and following guidelines provided on the original study that was done in 1998.

The compensation of County employees is relatively competitive. Compensation adjustments made by the County have modest but sufficient to be competitive with other governmental organizations. The compensation plans for all categories of positions are appropriate. The consultants have made no recommendations which would require the adjustment of the current pay plans.

And in addition to that, I was part of a group that completed what we called a Succession Plan Oversight for the County. And one of the things we noted was a common denominator or theme that we heard recur with the different departments that were interviewed. And the comment was that there is an ongoing challenge to operate and manage a department within a political environment that is always subject to change with funding uncertainties and the higher-than-average cost of living on Cape Cod and the challenges this will present as it relates to the County's ability to attract and retain capable staff by working within its existing salary structure. That is tough.

I agree with what Beth has said. I think that when you get to this level, you've got the crème-de-le-crème. You've got the best in department heads. I've had the privilege of working with them and I've got to say they do give their all.

What we don't see here today are what I guess I'd refer to is the rank and file, the hourly staff. They're working. They're not here and it would be an uncomfortable position for them to be placed in to come and want to make comment regarding how they are compensated. They're out there doing their jobs.

One thing that I did learn in my professional studies was the fact that employees are your assets. It's not the land, it's not the building; it's the employees that are truly your best assets. And as someone said previous, I think it was Beth, they're an employee 365 and put the face of the County forward on a daily basis.

And I guess the last follow-up I would say, you know you've got the bus; the County is the

bus, and you've got people on the bus. And I do truly believe that you don't just have people on the bus, you've got them in the right seats on the bus. And I hope that we're able to continue down that path and we don't lose people off the bus because there is a cost for that, although initially, it may appear not to be, you bring someone on that's less expensive there is a cost associated with that as well.

And I just wanted to keep my comments as brief as possible but mention that, in my opinion, the greatest legislators coming from Cape Cod was Tip O'Neill and Ted Kennedy. Whether you agreed with how they voted or not, I do agree with the statement that they made when they said that, "All politics are local and politics are personal."

Clerk JANICE O'CONNELL: So, thank you.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you, Janice.

Assembly Speaker RON BERGSTROM: Hi. I'm Ron Bergstrom, Speaker of the Assembly. I know quite a few people in this room. I'm not going to comment on any of the philosophy behind what a lot of people have said. I just want you to be aware of the process.

John touched on it a little bit but two weeks from now the Assembly, the people in this room will be looking at the Barnstable County budget. That's the budget that was sent to us by the Commissioners. All right?

We don't just look at it and say, well, we think it's a good idea or not. It is what it is. And if it's going to be changed, there has to be an amendment proposed to change it.

So what I'm telling you now is, for instance, the money for the Fire Training Academy, the money for the Human Rights Council is in -- currently in the budget. If somebody wants to get it out of there, they're going to have to file an amendment to get it out of there.

Now I want you to know that if somebody files an amendment to defund this department or any other department, you shouldn't automatically assume that they don't like you. We're under a big deficit. There are fiscal conservatives among us just as there are among very many towns, and it may be a strictly financial position. We have to do things that we don't want to do. But as of right now, that money is in the budget.

And another thing I'd like to mention, I think Suzanne touched on this; the reason that we're looking at this as an employee rather than a contract position is because too many organizations, too many private companies have changed their employers -- their employees from employees to contract employees. And the reason they do that is they want to get out from under the obligations they have to their employees. I mean, Massachusetts might mandate leave, you know, it might mandate certain health benefits, maternity leaves and so on, and some unscrupulous companies come along and said, "Well I don't want to do those things. I don't want to give my employees those benefits. I don't want to give them the time off. I call them contract employees and I won't have to do that."

So the Attorney General looked at it and said, "Wait a minute, you can't do that. Employees have rights. You can't just say magically they're not employed." So we're under the obligation. It includes us as well as anybody else.

So the motivation behind moving her or moving any person from a contract to employee is something that we have to do for her, and there have been discussions about other contract employees.

So I don't want you to think that the 15 members of the Assembly who are going to look at

this two weeks from now are not going to look at the prejudices or anything. It's strictly a bone of a budget. You have Julia; she's got 14 percent so you're starting off right there with 14 percent as far as the Human Rights Coordinator.

I wouldn't prejudice anybody who's involved anybody who's involved in this controversy until you see exactly where the votes go.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would echo that sentiment, and you know that this is unfinished budget and you are citizens and you have the right to lobby and talk to your representatives and I hope you do. We're all easily accessible through the Barnstable County website. And I hope that make your concerns vocal to them as time goes on.

I saw a person back there looking for a second bite at the apple. Could you come up and make it very brief, please?

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Absolutely.

So according to the Attorney General's website, there are three out of five criterias that require one to be determined whether or not they're a contracted employee. And I'm curious, has anyone looked at those and is this what this has been determined on?

Ms. MCAULIFFE: I think that's what they're looking at.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: There was a general assessment made by County Counsel for the entire County employee system, and there were several positions, not just this one, that were determined to be -- if it smells like an employee and it walks like an employee, it's an employee. And we don't want to be out of the law.

So, essentially, one of the gentlemen that came up earlier today said that the contract person was a much more cost-saving benefit to it, which it does, but it doesn't have a legal benefit to it as determined by our County Counsel.

We're not -- most of us are not lawyers, and we have to go with what we think like legal counsel is and that's what the Commissioners had decided. Not the Assembly now, the Commissioners did this and they present the budget to us.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: So it was clear -- there are so many bodies, it's hard for me to keep track of them. So whoever presented this to the Finance Committee here looked at those and decided that Elenita's position on the Human Rights Commission --

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Among others.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: -- was out of line. It was determined legally --

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: That they could be brought up to a different level with benefits. So that the County Commissioners' Budget, which was presented to us last month, contained the exact same amount of compensation for the next person to be built from when that is no longer going to be a contractual position will now contain the same amount of salary and will contain about \$14,500 in benefits. I can give you exact numbers if you need them.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Okay. I'm sorry. Women on the Cape made 80 cents to the dollar of men. So was that considered in the process?

Also, I just want to say its 63 cents for women of color and it goes down to 50 cents for the population of people of color.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: This is not a debate. And --

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: I'm not trying to have a debate. I'm just trying because it's a Human Rights Commission thing. I'm hoping that these things are considered when you are

considering these things.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: And your thoughts have been noted. Thank you.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Okay. Great. And my last thing I want to say, this is power and privilege in action when why people -- when someone states that while people might be racist, we are today debating whether or not we're going to cut the funding for something. This is the power and privilege that we have as white people. And I feel like this is really partisan politics in action.

And as we know through the country, it is not going well --

MR. ED LEWIS: I resent that.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: -- for anybody other.

MR. ED LEWIS: I resent that. I'm sorry.

Chairman OHMAN: Excuse me; you're out of line, sir.

MR. ED LEWIS: I know. I resent that.

Chairman OHMAN: One more person.

MS. JEANIE MIGNONE: Thank you.

MS. BARBARA BURGO: Hi. Thank you and I will be brief as well. I am Barbara Burgo from Brewster.

I thank you for all of the clarification, and I have been in politics a lot and working at the State House for a while as well.

The one clarification that I wanted to make and reiterate is that we just heard today that it absolutely is taking a look not only at the position reverting from contractual to regular.

I worked eight years in human resources as the employment coordinator at Wheaton College, so I understand that.

It is a benefit to the Commission if it is reverted from contractual to a regular position. I thank you.

However, and you knew there was a big but, there is an if; the other thing I heard as I got up here the first time was, "Or it could be volunteer." There is our concern, and I know that's what everyone's stating, "Or it could be volunteer."

If it is going to stay in the budget as -- or revert to a County position with benefits, that is much better. And I want to state this time, and I'm just going to speak on my own behalf out of the box. It would be better for Ms. Muniz.

However, I'm also hearing that the position going to County would be for her or whoever might be in that position. So, again, as a Critical Race Theorist and someone who studied this all my life, and Magna cum laude I got in it, that is if it smells like punishment and retaliation and it looks like punishment and retaliation, we would want to already consider the fact that this might be punishment and retaliation. I had no idea if the position was not going to be funded and volunteer that it would also be considered or going to funding would also be considered that maybe Ms. Muniz would have to reapply for the position. She would be out anyway? Is that what we're saying?

Chairman OHMAN: That's not our purview. That would be the County Commissioners and they have a meeting every week on campus here at 9 o'clock in the morning. And that's a question really for them.

We do not hire. We are the legislative branch.

MS. BARBARA BURGO: Right. So you said the position could just take that position and go into County, but that means then that she is out of a job?

Ms. TAYLOR: We don't know that.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: We don't know that.

MS. BARBARA BURGO: Potentially?

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: The budget is a very dry piece of paper. It just says that there will be a funding -- a funded position within the Human Services budget.

MS. BARBARA BURGO: Okay. Then I will finish with this. I would like to voice my support for her, and the comment, even if it was, I'm not saying that anyone here doesn't like or does like this; people are racists or not, especially white people, but it is systemic racism that we live with amongst all in America. It has been for the last 400 years here, and she did nothing wrong. I applaud her. I congratulated her. And even if it just brought up the discussion of race, she's a hero like I consider Eugenia Fortes to be. She must be rolling over in her grave right now just at the thought of what we're doing here.

So I thank you and I didn't, at the last time, support her in the way I wanted you to hear. I have support for her in this position.

Thank you.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you. From the board.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: I would just like to finish with a comment about the needs that I've heard today. And I hear it that, you know, that there is a need for the coordinator and that there is a need for the local work and stuff.

I will tell you last year when I sat with John Reed and the Human Rights Commission, we tried to increase the hours of the coordinator and that was not allowed at the time. And that was big because of limits of the current coordinator.

So it's not that we haven't thought that there was a need for more hours, we did, and John will attest to that.

MR. JOHN REED: I will.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: We did ask for more hours and it didn't happen. So I learned today is there a need for more hours? And, perhaps, one of the things that comes out today instead of a 7/10ths position, maybe it needs to be a full-time position.

But I think that I don't want people to think that this is about a punishment for something that someone did from this partic -- we weren't involved in that issue. That was a County Commissioner issue.

For me, and I know for other people, unfortunately it's about being in a position of money. You heard people wanting their increases. We also have requests for employees. We have requests for a lot of things and I'm not diminishing the Human Rights Commission but everyone needs money and there's a finite amount.

Thank you.

MS. BARBARA BURGO: Thank you.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: With that, I would take a motion to close the public hearing.

Deborah McCutcheon motioned, and it was seconded, to close the public hearing. Motion carried. 5-0-0.

Chairman John Ohman closed the public hearing at 3:45 p.m.

Committee Discussion and Deliberation:

Chairman OHMAN: Now we will be able to continue just for a few minutes, unless the Speaker has some soul in his heart, some discussion on the budget in general.

Ms. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker.

Chairman OHMAN: Ms. Taylor.

Ms. TAYLOR: Do we have a plan for any other meeting prior to the vote on the 15th?

Chairman OHMAN: We were hoping that we would have enough time at the end of this Public Hearing to discuss it.

Ms. TAYLOR: That's what I'm worried about, yes.

Chairman OHMAN: But the public took precedence and that is the way it should be. So right now we have a very short line and we can have another public meeting. There are three citizens from West Barnstable that would disagree with us, but I believe we have other time to do that.

Ms. TAYLOR: I think we need to.

Chairman OHMAN: Well, I don't think 15 minutes is good for anybody in any position whatsoever. But it being said, I agree with you that we need some further discussion.

And seeing the general meeting of the Assembly of Delegates is going to occur in about 15 minutes.

Ms. TAYLOR: It certainly, again, it's my fault anyway so, everyone has gotten their mind made up about the other issues that we talked about for this one or the Fire Academy or the -- whatever the controversial things are. Do I need to say --

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: I was hoping for much more discussion.

Ms. TAYLOR: Okay. Do we want to talk about this issue now or do we want to talk about some other issue now?

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: I'm at your pleasure. I think there are very big issues to discuss and this is one of them. If you want to talk about it right now while we've got people in the audience, that's fine.

Ms. TAYLOR: Well you know my position, and I do feel that if I were the -- I'm not so as you know, but if I were, I think I would have been concerned having followed all the stuff in the newspaper and then hear that there is this change. I mean I just think it's a normal thing that there would have been this association in the public's mind that this could be a punishment; it could be a lack of understanding of what the Commission wants to do.

I understand where Suzanne is coming from without the money. But given my history with this, I just feel strongly we need to maintain this in the budget and I just wouldn't support eliminating it.

I don't feel, given the budget crunch, that I would have to support a full-time position. I'd be willing to go with what the Commissioners recommended. But to eliminate it, I can't quite bring myself -- I couldn't bring myself to vote on that after --

Chairman OHMAN: Ms. McCutcheon.

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: Just you weren't here for the last discussion on it.

Ms. TAYLOR: I know and I feel bad.

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: And just so you understand, I raised a concern about the impact on

this particular employee for virtually outspokenness and whether that was related to this.

My understanding is that this budget proposes that that contract position will terminate, expire at the end of June.

Chairman OHMAN: The contract position is no longer in the Human Rights Commission's budget.

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: Right.

Chairman OHMAN: As of this moment. It is in the Human Services department.

Ms. TAYLOR: Do we all feel positive that this has to be a noncontract position?

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: I don't.

Ms. TAYLOR: You don't based on your reading of the law? I mean we would --

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: I'm not giving legal advice to this organization.

Ms. TAYLOR: I know but at least you're more experienced in it than me.

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: I don't think it is necessarily, you know, I think that this individual functions very much as an independent entity and did so perhaps under a peril but that was not --

In any event, what I was persuaded with if there was a committee that was looking at what this position was going to be, and that we wanted very much to encourage this committee to do its homework and --

Ms. TAYLOR: And is that going to happen by the 15th?

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: Well, that's why the budget action was taken.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Weren't we told it was going to be?

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: That this would encourage it to be taken before the end of the fiscal year.

Ms. TAYLOR: Yes, but that's not the 15th. We have to vote this the 15th.

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: Well that's right.

Ms. TAYLOR: Well, does anyone have the impression that the Commissioners proposed that it not be a contract position because of Elenita as opposed to the issue of --

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: I can lend a little bit to that. I was at those meetings.

Ms. TAYLOR: Were you at the meetings?

Chairman OHMAN: I was at the meetings, and, no, it was a pretty cut and dry thing. They had a very comprehensive survey of who belonged to the County and who was contracted. I think there are two positions in IT, and I'm sure there are more, that were always considered contractual. And it was found to be at risk from the IRS of determining that these employees, who are not being compensated as employees, and we should bring them under the umbrella of County government regardless of the cost and necessary in making them employees and giving them benefits commensurate with their responsibilities. That's what I understood.

One of the things I was kind of surprised with this room full of people is that Ms. Muniz's comments that were taken so dramatically out of proportion were echoed by the CIA, the director of the CIA, almost word for word within two weeks.

Chairman OHMAN: And no one in this vast audience of educated women said one word about that, and I was a little surprised.

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: You know, I would like to speak to your question. I don't think that you can say that Commissioners had a motive. There's no unification there. I think that different people --- three different opinions, okay. I very much want to see this position continued. I very much want to see the individual in the position.

Ms. TAYLOR: And so you prefer it be a contract, but I just don't know that we can do that. I do think it's important we just put the money in because we're not going to have the final say as to whether it's a contract position or a County position because we're not in the employment side here. So I think all we can do is say we want 35 grand.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thirty-four.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Plus benefits.

Ms. TAYLOR: Or let's put the benefits in and

Chairman OHMAN: Actually, the benefits are in the Human Rights -- it's in the Human Rights budget for some reason, but the employee is in the Human Services budget.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: That makes no sense.

Chairman OHMAN: Read it and weep. It's here.

Ms. TAYLOR: Then my position would be let's go with the budget, and we're not going to be in charge of that category.

Chairman OHMAN: Is that in the form of a motion?

Ms. TAYLOR: Yes, but did we already --

Ms. MCAULIFFE: We took a vote. Now what do you have to do to rescind?

Ms. TAYLOR: I want to.....

Ms. MCAULIFFE: There was a 2 to 1 vote. What do you have to do to rescind a vote?

Chairman OHMAN: Well, I would think that you have to go back to the original motion.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: No. A lot of times to rescind, there's a requirement of a, it depends on the vote; there's a requirement -- it would probably have to be unanimous to rescind. A unanimous of those present or two-thirds of -- see, I don't know the --

Chairman OHMAN: We could ask our --

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Is Janice here?

Clerk O'CONNELL: Do you have the report? Wasn't it -- was it 3-0-0?

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: No, actually it was 2 to 1.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: It was 2-1.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: And now we have the full members here. I know that to rescind votes on the school committee it used to be, you know, you had to get a supermajority to rescind. I don't know if there's anything like that at the County.

Ms. O'CONNELL: Well, I mean, you have three members present, the other two can't vote on it because they can't vote to rescind --

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Rescind, well, why not?

Clerk O'CONNELL: Because they weren't present.

Chairman OHMAN: They weren't here.

Clerk O'CONNELL: They didn't vote on it to begin with.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: But they're members of the committee, and I'm just wondering --

Ms. TAYLOR: I think I just would like to have a new motion which is that the committee, never mind to rescinding, if that's necessary we'll deal with that another day; but **I would just like to make a new motion that the Finance Committee will support the Commissioners budget on the Human Rights Commission employee.**

Chairman OHMAN: As printed in the budget?

Ms. TAYLOR: As printed, yes.

Chairman OHMAN: I'll consider that a motion. Is there a second to that?

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: Well, you know, I will second --

Chairman OHMAN: We can't discuss it until there's a second.

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: I will second it but --

Chairman OHMAN: Thank you.

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: -- I want to speak to it. I am still concerned, as I was concerned at the meeting that we had, that the individual who is the current incumbent may be found wanting for that position.

Ms. TAYLOR: I could be very concerned about that, but I don't think we can do anything about it.

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: I don't know what we can do about it. Well, I don't know what we can do about it but therein lies my concern.

Ms. TAYLOR: I think it's something that it needs further discussion with the Commissioners and certainly something I'd want to bring up with them.

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: I understood that you would have to come back with supplemental appropriations and that was one-way to ensure that we would at least see it again. That was my reasoning there.

Ms. TAYLOR: I get what you mean, but I just think that is dangerous in following that approach.

Chairman OHMAN: Teresa.

Ms. MARTIN: I just wonder if you could share a little bit more for those who weren't there. I know that there's a subcommittee trying to iron this out.

Ms. TAYLOR: Yes, who's on the subcommittee?

Ms. MARTIN: Could you give us a little more information on that because that might help form what we're going to do?

Ms. MCAULIFFE: It's a Commissioner-appointed committee.

Ms. TAYLOR: Yes.

Ms. MARTIN: And do they have deadlines? Do they have -- what's the process?

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Yes, we have been told or I was led to believe that it was going to be very soon.

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: We were told that it was going to be very soon and that there was going to be an effort to bring into line the contract employee with the correct benefits etcetera, etcetera.

And the concern that I had was that, I'm not saying what is true, but there could have been an idea that there was a personnel change intended too.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: I got a different impression and perhaps our Speaker will be able to enlighten us. But I was given to understand is that the Human Rights Commission, and I think one of the very educated speakers out there spoke to this, is what if there is a problem with the County, again, and they have to bring it to you for that?

Chairman OHMAN: Is it that they should have a more independent stance and be more independent of the County. That's one of the rubs that was going on is that they didn't want -- not want to be under the auspices of any particular department with the County so they could maintain their independence. I thought that that was one of the biggest things that were going to be looked over and worked out between the Commission -- Commissioners and the Barnstable County Commissioners and members of the Assembly.

That's what I was given to understand. I have no clue as to what -- I've not been informed of anyone thus far, but I think that's the crux -- one of the cruxes of the matter.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Could we ask Commissioner Cakounes about that subcommittee to see if he knows anything about it?

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Mr. Cakounes, you're in the room.

Commissioner CAKOUNES: Sorry. Is this still the Public Hearing?

Chairman OHMAN: No, there is an intending subcommittee, sir, regarding the Human Rights Commission that was going to be formed and due diligence and as fairly quick manner to address the issues of forthcoming with the FY'16 budget coordinator?

Commissioner CAKOUNES: Yes, that is correct. The County Commissioners have voted to formulate a subcommittee. I apologize I don't have my information in front of me to the amount of members; I believe it was at least five or the minimum amount of five. There was a couple from the Human Rights Committee. I believe our Director from the Human Services Department and a couple of -- I'm just going to leave it as ad hoc members.

And I think we also specified in that creation, members from the Assembly of Delegates. So I think it was actually asked by me out in the hall a little earlier by someone, we do not, to my knowledge, we have not received today some volunteers from the Assembly that want to serve on that.

With that said, Mr. Chairman, I just will specify and tell you that the reason why that committee was formulated is because as you've said many of times today, the County is taking steps to move contracted employees into and under the auspice as County employees.

The problem with this particular situation is is that there's an Ordinance that was approved by the Assembly of Delegates and that Ordinance has specific language in it and that language needs to be updated, if you will, or changed to mirror the County Commissioners budget that we sent to you.

So that's why that committee is being formulated. They're going to be reviewing the actual Ordinances and updating the language on the Ordinance so that our actions that we take in approving the budget and bringing this in as a County employee, it will be reflected in the Ordinance.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: And that would be, just not to put you on the spot, but I think the latest iteration of that Ordinance is County Ordinance 08-12.

Commissioner CAKOUNES: I will say that sounds familiar, yes.

Chairman OHMAN: That's the latest --

Commissioner CAKOUNES: I know it was 08, but I won't go on record saying I agree with 12 but I believe --

Chairman OHMAN: So for anybody on the Assembly that would like to look that up, it's Ordinance 08-12 on September 17, 2008. I have to look that up.

Commissioner CAKOUNES: The actual charge for that committee is in the motion, and again, I apologize; I didn't expect this question. I didn't bring it with me, but not only is this committee charged to make sure that the new Ordinance or the Ordinances amended to reflect the, like once again, bringing this contracted position under the auspices of the County as a full-time employee or an employee, I shouldn't say full-time. But they're not limited to giving us some other suggestions that may -- they may want to see that language changed in the Ordinance.

Because, again, as Ms. Taylor has mentioned, this Ordinance was brought forth a few years back. It was already amended once, and now we feel it's a good time to just take a look at it again

and make sure that all the wording is correct and reflects what we're doing, reflects what's out there in the real world.

And again, it's just an informative committee that's going to be making recommendations to the County Commissioners. It would be up to the County Commissioners to bring forward a formal Ordinance amendment, and then you will have that in front of you for your vote too.

Chairman OHMAN: I didn't really mean to put you on the spot. But since you're there --

Commissioner CAKOUNES: That's okay.

Chairman OHMAN: Since you're there, this committee has not been formed yet, and, therefore, it will probably not be able to impact the budget vote for FY16. It must have --

Commissioner CAKOUNES: I don't think there were any indications that it would be impacting the Assembly's budget vote. This is an action taken by the Commissioners.

And as you are well aware of, the Commissioners have voted a budget, so I don't know what you're talking about.

Then again, its language coming forward recommended to the Commissioners --

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: For some time.

Commissioner CAKOUNES: -- and it is our anticipation that we were going to get this recommendation. I believe the actual charge states a date, a time-specific date, I want to say the first week of June. And then the Commissioners felt that we would be able to take that recommendation, that language, give it to our County Counsel, work on it ourselves, and have in front of you an amendment to that Ordinance probably the first week of July. It might be a week late for a new budget.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Quick question; do you feel that this position that falls within the other contracted positions that this meets the requirements of the law to be an employee and not stay a contracted position?

Commissioner CAKOUNES: I refuse to answer that question at this time only because you will be putting my opinion out there if someone decides to take the County to court saying that an elected official has said publicly that they believe that's the action.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Okay. So we're --

Commissioner CAKOUNES: So you made it too strong so I'm not going to answer that.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Okay. I'm sorry.

Commissioner CAKOUNES: I will say to that matter, if I may? As the newly elected County Commissioner that took office in January, I have reviewed a number of, and I want to say at least 7 contracted employees. This was only one of which has been changed in the budget. There were in the Commissioners' budget at least two or three more from the IT Department that will be addressed, and there was one more that I personally brought forward as a recommendation and it did not get a vote from my fellow Commissioners.

So I do believe you will be seeing this discussion ongoing specifically to contracted employees and either stopping our relationship with them or bringing them into the budget as County employees, specifically because of that state law.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Thank you, Mr. Commissioner. I'm going to ask for an adjournment of the meeting.

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Move to adjourn.

Clerk O'CONNELL: You have a motion on the table. You have a motion and a second that you haven't taken any action on.

Chairman OHMAN: We have a motion on the table. Sorry.

Ms. TAYLOR: Does anyone -- I think that as opposed to not having the money in the budget, it's better to have the money in the budget.

We're going to have another vote some time, apparently, according to Mr. Cakounes, on an amendment until our position is dealt with.

So I think that's our chance if we feel that we haven't formed an opinion about that issue, contract versus employee, we can deal with that when and if they bright forth an amendment to the existing Ordinance.

But it's important to get the money in the budget, I think, and, therefore, I would keep on with my amendment -- I mean my --

Ms. MCAULIFFE: I guess as long as not approving this doesn't give us that we're supporting it. And I'm concerned that we're supporting the change from a contracted to employee when perhaps that's not the best for this position.

Ms. TAYLOR: According to Mr. Cakounes that issue is going to come before us later in the form of an Ordinance. Now we're just putting the same amount of money that's in there for an employee plus some benefit money. If they don't make the change, that money wouldn't get spent. If we don't approve the change, that money wouldn't get spent.

Administrator BRILLHART: Mr. Speaker, just --

Chairman OHMAN: Mr. Brillhart.

Administrator BRILLHART: Just to clarify, the number that's in the County Commissioners' adopted budget is based upon it being a full-time County employee with benefits.

So the decision that you make here is at the maximum end, so to speak. So if the Commissioners decide to look at it as being a -- whether it be a County employee or a contracted, it won't affect the budget.

Ms. TAYLOR: Yes, I think we're not at risk of making that decision if we have any say in it over the money. We're not going to need more -- we're probably not going to want more money.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: We are literally out of time. If there's more discussion, we'll postpone it and go on. If anybody's ready to vote, I'd be very happy to entertain a vote.

Ms. TAYLOR: All right. I'll move the question. Okay.

Chairman OHMAN: Without further discussion, all those in favor of adopting this as printed in the present budget?

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Keep the money in the budget.

Chairman OHMAN: **To keep the money in the budget as specified.**

Julia Taylor motioned, and it was seconded, to support the Commissioners budget on the Human Rights Commission employee. Motion carried. 5-0-0.

Clerk O'CONNELL: And when might you want to meet again?

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Do we have to discuss that at the very moment?

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: Yes, we do.

Assembly Speaker RON BERGSTROM: You're recommending the money be kept in the budget.

Ms. TAYLOR: Amendment to recommend.

Ms. TAYLOR: This is not the Assembly vote.

Chairman OHMAN: Next Wednesday. How about we got for next Wednesday?

Ms. MCCUTCHEON: 4 o'clock?

Ms. MCAULIFFE: Do you just want to say 4 o'clock? I think so.

Chairman JOHN OHMAN: Good. Janice will make it official. Four o'clock on Wednesday, the 8th, for anyone that would like to attend.

Deborah McCutcheon motioned, and it was seconded, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. 5-0-0.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Janice O'Connell, Clerk
Assembly of Delegates