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HUDSON COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

RE:  
REGULAR MEETING : TRANSCRIPT OF  
OF THE :  
HUDSON COUNTY BOARD OF : PROCEEDINGS  
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS :  
:

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O P E N S E S S I O N  
Hudson County  
Administration Building,  
Commissioners Chambers  
567 Pavonia Avenue  
Jersey City, New Jersey  
Thursday, January 09, 2025  
4:30 p.m.

B E F O R E:

Certified Copy

- ANTHONY ROMANO, Chairman
- YRAIDA APONTE-LIPSKI, Commissioner
- ROBERT BASELICE, Commissioner
- FANNY CEDEÑO, Commissioner
- ALBERT CIFELLI, Commissioner
- KENNETH KOPACZ, Commissioner
- WILLIAM O'DEA, Commissioner
- CARIDAD RODRIGUEZ, Commissioner
- JERRY WALKER, Commissioner

A L S O P R E S E N T:  
EDWARD J. FLORIO, ESQ., Board Counsel  
DONATO J. BATTISTA, Hudson County Counsel  
DAVID DRUMELER, Deputy County Administrator  
CAROL JEAN DOYLE, County Commissioner Clerk  
Reported by: Shari Cathey, CCR, RPR

1 THE CLERK: Commissioner Aponte-  
2 Lipski.

3 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Not here.

4 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

5 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Here.

6 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.  
7 Commissioner Cifelli.

8 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Here.

9 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

10 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Here.

11 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

12 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Present.

13 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

14 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Here by

15 Zoom.

16 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

17 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Here.

18 THE CLERK: And Chairman Romano.

19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Here.

20 THE CLERK: Please stand for the  
21 Pledge of Allegiance.

22 (Flag Salute.)

23 THE CLERK: Adequate notice of this  
24 Regular Meeting has been provided as follows:

25 Posting notice of Resolution No. 8-1-2025

1 on the County Commissioner's Bulletin Board, First  
2 Floor, Administration Building Annex, Jersey City,  
3 New Jersey.

4 Copies of the above mentioned resolution  
5 have been sent to the County Clerk and the editors  
6 of the Jersey Journal and the Star Ledger.

7 May I have a motion to approve the minutes  
8 of the Caucus meeting of December 10th, 2024 and the  
9 Regular meeting of December 12th, 2024.

10 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Sponsor.

11 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Second.

12 THE CLERK: Commissioner  
13 Aponte-Lipski.

14 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

15 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

16 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

17 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

18 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

19 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

20 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

21 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

22 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

23 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

24 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.

25 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

1 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

2 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

3 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

4 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

5 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes. Before we  
6 proceed any further, can we do the recognition with  
7 regards to the gentleman here both standing in  
8 front.

9 (Photo Opportunity.)

10 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea, is  
11 Kevin Brown in the audience?

12 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: No, he's not.

13 THE CLERK: I have one laudatory.  
14 Should I read it if he's not here?

15 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yeah, you know  
16 what? Just for the record.

17 THE CLERK: For the record. I have  
18 one laudatory. To honor and commend Kevin Brown for  
19 his years of service and to extend best wishes on  
20 his next endeavor as the new District Director for  
21 the New England District 615 of 32BJ.

22 Whereas, Kevin Brown is an Executive Vice  
23 President of 32B SEIU, has been involved in the  
24 trade union movement since 1987, when he started  
25 working for SEIU as an organizer. During this time,

1 he helped organize 1,000 cleaners who lived in the  
2 working class areas of Washington, D.C. In 1992,  
3 after a successful campaign in Washington, D.C.,  
4 Kevin joined the Local 531 of SEIU in Connecticut  
5 where he had a group of young and eager unionists  
6 help organize more than 2,500 members; and

7           Whereas, in 2001, Kevin Brown moved to New  
8 Jersey to work on the expansion of 32BJ in Garden  
9 State. At the end of his service as State Director,  
10 he led the 15,000 commercial, residential, security,  
11 public school cleaners, airport workers, and school  
12 food service workers. As membership continues to  
13 grow, contracts have strengthened, allowing workers  
14 health care, meaningful benefits, and the  
15 opportunity to rise up.

16           Whereas, under Kevin Brown's leadership,  
17 commercial cleaners approximately mean annual salary  
18 increase to \$38,000. In their latest contract,  
19 security officers have increased their salaries to  
20 \$17 an hour by 2025, and kept their fully  
21 employer-paid health care, in addition to improving  
22 radical justice protections.

23           Whereas, in 2005, Kevin Brown played a  
24 role in the passage of the Hudson County Standard  
25 Wage and Benefits Ordinance, creating a minimum wage

1 and benefits requirements for service workers and  
2 vendors, contractors, and subcontractors; and

3           Whereas, Kevin Brown was instrumental in  
4 the passing of the Healthy Terminals Act, a  
5 revolutionary piece of legislation that gave all  
6 Newark Airport workers access to health insurance at  
7 no cost to the worker, HTA became instrumental in  
8 bargaining a master contract that was signed in  
9 2017. Workers now have family health care and are  
10 on the track to \$25 per hour by 2032; and

11           Whereas, throughout the time, the SEIU  
12 32BJ, Kevin has worked tirelessly to improve the  
13 lives of all working people in New Jersey,  
14 regardless of their union affiliation. He has been  
15 instrumental in working towards raising New Jersey's  
16 minimum wage, paid family leave legislation, and  
17 anti-wage protections, to name a few.

18           Whereas, Kevin Brown previously served on  
19 the Boards of New Jersey Economic Development  
20 Authority and the Community Relations Council of the  
21 Jewish Community Relations Federation of the Metro  
22 West Area, including Essex, Hudson, Morris, Union,  
23 and Sussex Counties; and

24           Whereas, in 2025, Kevin Brown will become  
25 the new district director of the New England

1 District 615 of 32BJ, leading 22,000 building  
2 service workers across Massachusetts and Rhode  
3 Island; and

4 Therefore, be it resolved by the Hudson  
5 County Board of Commissioners that the Board does  
6 hereby extend its highest commendations and  
7 appreciation to Kevin Brown for his dedication and  
8 service to the Executive Vice President of 32B SEIU,  
9 and the Board does hereby extend its best wishes on  
10 Kevin Brown's next professional endeavor with New  
11 England 615 32BJ.

12 THE CLERK: Commissioner  
13 Aponte-Lipski.

14 MS. DAVIS: Please. I just wanted to  
15 add, though. Kevin has a much-deserved,  
16 well-deserved promotion, and it is a shame for New  
17 Jersey, but it's fantastic for SEIU. He's been a  
18 friend, as Commissioner O'Dea knows and I know very  
19 well, for years and years and years, and I'm sure  
20 all of you know, but he's tremendous. He speaks  
21 great Spanish. His daughter's now in college. I  
22 think both kids are in college, so he's having an  
23 easier time in life right now, and he's looking  
24 forward to taking on this challenge.

25 I did talk to him two weeks ago, but I

1 just wanted to commend Kevin on behalf of the County  
2 Executive and myself, and obviously, you're all  
3 commending him also. But he is a true gem, and we  
4 are sorry for his loss, but he has some great people  
5 following him, and that's just us.

6 THE CLERK: Commissioner  
7 Aponte-Lipski.

8 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

9 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

10 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

11 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

12 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

13 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

14 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes. But I  
15 just hope my yes is conditioned upon, I hope this is  
16 not the same Kevin Brown that came to pitch for the  
17 Yankees and blew the World Series. But I vote aye,  
18 thank you.

19 THE CLERK: I assure you he's not.  
20 Commissioner Kopacz?

21 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

22 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea?

23 MS. DAVIS: Yes. I just echo what  
24 Jenny said. He was instrumental in us improving the  
25 standard wage, extending health benefits to those

1 people, and we have contracts in several areas,  
2 including building service workers as well as sick  
3 or vacation time. So he's the real deal, and our  
4 loss is definitely Rhode Island and Massachusetts'.

5 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

6 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

7 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

8 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

9 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

10 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes, I'd just like  
11 to add, echoing what you said. I'm glad for working  
12 with Kevin Brown on these years. I've learned a lot,  
13 and it's for good work, and it's fair that people  
14 treat him that way.

15 THE CLERK: According to the policy  
16 by the Board of County Commissioners. Before I do  
17 that, next order of business is additional  
18 discussion on today's agenda for Administration.

19 MR. DRUMELER: Chairman, if I may,  
20 the County or the Administration wishes to withdraw  
21 Resolution No. 5. After some discussions that were  
22 here with regard to that program, we're going to  
23 tweak it some and work with everyone to try to tweak  
24 it and make it a little better and bring it back to  
25 the Board at a future date.

1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: And we need a  
2 sponsor.

3 MR. BATTISTA: Because it exists.

4 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Make a motion to  
5 withdraw from the agenda.

6 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: O'Dea-Romano.

7 THE CLERK: Commissioner  
8 Aponte-Lipski.

9 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

10 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

11 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

12 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

13 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

14 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

15 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

16 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

17 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

18 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

19 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes. And I said  
20 yesterday to the Administrator, the grant program  
21 that's out there that would tie directly into what  
22 this program would do and has a lot of potentially  
23 more folks if we could put together the right  
24 population. And it's also all about ultimately  
25 ending with somebody getting an actual job. I vote

1 yes.

2 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

3 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

4 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

5 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

6 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

7 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.

8 THE CLERK: According to the policy  
9 set by the Board of County Commissioners, members of  
10 the public are asked to limit their comments to five  
11 minutes when discussing agenda items and three  
12 minutes at the conclusion of the meeting for persons  
13 who submitted a written request to discuss matters  
14 of public interest.

15 At this time, the public may address the  
16 Board on any item on the agenda only. Please keep  
17 your comments limited to five minutes.

18 Are there any speakers on the agenda items  
19 only? There being none, I'd like to have a motion.

20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Cedeño and Romano.

21 THE CLERK: All in favor?

22 (The Board votes unanimously to close  
23 public portion.)

24 THE CLERK: Okay. We have five  
25 ordinances for introduction. Oh, I didn't call the

1 roll, I'm sorry.

2 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: You didn't call  
3 what yet?

4 THE CLERK: For the consent agenda,  
5 I'm sorry. Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.

6 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

7 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

8 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: I have a  
9 question. On No. 7; 7 on the consent agenda?

10 THE CLERK: On the confirmation of  
11 the ordinance?

12 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yeah, where  
13 is that?

14 MR. DRUMELER: Chairman, if I may?  
15 Yeah. Commissioner, that was brought as a late  
16 starter at the conclusion of the regular meeting.  
17 Regular meeting?

18 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yeah.

19 MR. DRUMELER: I added it to the  
20 agenda and announced it. It was a late starter.

21 MS. DAVIS: It was a late starter.  
22 It went on the agenda today.

23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: On No. 7? I'd like  
24 to remove my sponsorship and have it pulled out.

25 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Can we get a

1 roster of who the current members are and whose  
2 terms expire when? Of course, now I'm getting  
3 confused as to the effect of these appointments.

4 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: And the attendance.

5 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Mr.

6 Administrator, will you provide that list?

7 MR. DRUMELER: Of course, I'm sorry.

8 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Let's table  
9 this then until we get that information here.

10 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: We'll just carry  
11 it to the next agenda.

12 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Exactly.

13 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: We'll make a motion  
14 to carry the item to the next agenda.

15 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Second.

16 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Roll call.

17 MS. DAVIS: Why are we carrying it?

18 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I don't have any  
19 information about the people on it. I don't know  
20 any other makeup on the board, which is the question  
21 that I have to ask about yet. It's only two weeks.  
22 The Board doesn't meet, like, every week. And I  
23 assume that the individuals there could remain as  
24 holdovers if there was some meeting between then. I  
25 honestly do not remember this coming up.

1                   COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: I actually do  
2 remember it coming up, but it's such a late start.

3                   COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yeah, maybe it  
4 was so late, but I wasn't paying attention.

5                   COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: There was no  
6 other backup information as to who was getting  
7 replaced, who are the members that are current. I  
8 just have to see the total composition of the board,  
9 that's all.

10                  COMMISSIONER O'DEA: And where  
11 they're from.

12                  COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yeah, exactly.  
13 What town they're from.

14                  MR. BATTISTA: I just want to point  
15 out that the current board, they cannot serve in  
16 holdover capacity. My understanding is there are  
17 other openings on the board, and some of the  
18 meetings have not been able to be held due to the  
19 fact that there was a lockdown.

20                  CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. So the main  
21 concern is who's on the board now, so that this  
22 doesn't affect what we just voted on, correct?

23                  MR. BATTISTA: Well, I think there's  
24 a discussion about tabling.

25                  COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Not tabling, but

1 carrying.

2 MR. BATTISTA: We can't because we  
3 don't have a quorum.

4 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: They're all  
5 on the board.

6 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Time out, time out.  
7 There's two different issues here. There's the  
8 issue of a list that needs to be provided that  
9 Commissioner Cifelli asked for.

10 MR. BATTISTA: Absolutely.

11 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: That's different  
12 from the issue of the appointments that we voted on,  
13 correct?

14 MR. BATTISTA: Correct.

15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay.

16 MR. BATTISTA: I was just responding  
17 to the comment that the people there can remain in a  
18 holdover capacity. I'm saying that we've already  
19 got a legal analysis of this, and they cannot serve.  
20 It's my understanding that the Planning Director is  
21 here, is that if there's not appointments, that's  
22 fine, but that the board cannot meet because they do  
23 not have sufficient time to establish a quorum.

24 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: So the adverse  
25 result of that is that the next planning board

1 meeting would have to be adjourned.

2           COMMISSIONER O'DEA: And if what you  
3 say is true, the terms of the other members expired  
4 a couple of months ago, and there didn't seem to be  
5 an urgency in November or October to replace them.  
6 So I think two more weeks isn't going to change the  
7 end of the world. Look, at the end of the day, I'm  
8 not going to have a problem supporting these  
9 individuals, but I think as a courtesy, two weeks is  
10 not going to change anything. We see who else is on  
11 the board, what areas of the County they represent,  
12 so we have some level.

13           If there are other openings, then great.  
14 Maybe those openings get filled, so whatever the  
15 thing County-wide is, it continues to make sure all  
16 areas have them.

17           CHAIRMAN ROMANO: I think the Chief  
18 of Staff wanted to speak. Go ahead.

19           MS. DAVIS: Well, Donnie addressed  
20 it. I just think you're holding up work for me, and  
21 the terms are up here. The terms are up towards the  
22 end of November, I believe. December is a different  
23 month.

24           COMMISSIONER O'DEA: October 31st.  
25 Okay. So November, December, January.

1 MS. DAVIS: Well, Commissioner, I was  
2 made aware of it in November. There was  
3 Thanksgiving, and then there was Christmas and  
4 Hanukkah and all the holidays, so I don't think  
5 there was that much of this not put forward. It was  
6 done in a timely fashion, in my mind, because of the  
7 holidays. So I'll just tell you, Donnie was  
8 correct. There is no holdover on this board. It's  
9 a very different board than all the other boards, so  
10 you cannot hold over.

11 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: And again, I'm  
12 not looking to hold it over for a long time. As a  
13 courtesy, to wait two weeks, I don't think it's  
14 going to change the end of the world. If someone  
15 tells me there's some item heavy before a planning  
16 board meeting to be held next week, that's a  
17 dangerous development project that's going to lose  
18 their financing, then I'll listen to that. I'll  
19 listen to that.

20 MS. GIARRANTANA: Commissioners,  
21 we'll work to ensure a quorum for this meeting with  
22 who we have as current membership.

23 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Okay.

24 MS. GIARRANTANA: And we'll get you  
25 that list and attendance as well.

1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Right? I just know  
2 that I asked for it. Is that my request? Attendance  
3 thing. It should be coming to a planning board  
4 meeting in person, not through the Zoom.

5 MS. GIARRANTANA: Yes. According to  
6 our bylaws, Zoom participation by our Commissioners  
7 is not allowed. So thank you.

8 MR. FLORIO: Chairman, there is a  
9 motion and a second to carry Item No. 7. The roll  
10 call will be only for that motion to carry.

11 THE CLERK: Commissioner  
12 Aponte-Lipski.

13 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

14 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

15 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

16 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

17 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

18 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Al. Al.

20 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes. Yes.

21 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

22 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

23 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

24 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.

25 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

1 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

2 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

3 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

4 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

5 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes. The board  
6 then is minus two members, correct, Francesca? For  
7 your next meeting next week, just so we know. What  
8 do you need for a quorum?

9 MS. GIARRANTANA: For a quorum, I'm  
10 going to just need five.

11 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. Ensure that  
12 those commissioners that are still --

13 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Especially the  
14 ones who are on our board.

15 MS. GIARRANTANA: Who's that?

16 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yeah.

17 MS. GIARRANTANA: It's Commissioner  
18 Walker and Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.

19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yeah. Tell the  
20 others that they need to be there, because we don't  
21 want to be embarrassed and told that we would have  
22 to leave because of the quorum.

23 MS. GIARRANTANA: Okay. Thank you.

24 THE CLERK: Now, may I have a motion  
25 to approve all the items on the consent agenda.

1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Cedeño and Walker.

2 THE CLERK: Commissioner

3 Aponte-Lipski.

4 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

5 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

6 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

7 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

8 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

9 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

10 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

11 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

12 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

13 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

14 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.

15 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

16 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

17 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

18 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

19 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes. We have five  
21 ordinances for introduction. I-1. Finance and  
22 Administration. Bond Ordinance providing for  
23 various 2025 Capital Improvements and the  
24 acquisition of equipment for the Department of Roads  
25 and Public Property, by and in the County of Hudson,

1 State of New Jersey; appropriating \$39,995,920  
2 therefor, including State and Federal Funds received  
3 from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 in the  
4 amount of \$4,070,000; and authorizing the issuance  
5 of \$34,215,161 Bonds or Notes to finance part of the  
6 cost thereof.

7 Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.

8 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

9 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

10 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

11 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

12 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

13 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

14 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

15 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

16 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

17 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

18 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.

19 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

20 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

21 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

22 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

23 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

24 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.

25 THE CLERK: The ordinance has been

1 introduced. I-1. Roads and Public Property. An  
2 ordinance amending Chapter 200, Article 8.11 of the  
3 Administrative Code to establish a restricted  
4 Parking Space on John F. Kennedy Boulevard, City of  
5 Bayonne for Andrew H. Gutterman.

6 Roll call. Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.

7 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

8 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

9 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

10 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

11 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

12 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

13 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

14 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

15 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

16 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

17 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.

18 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

19 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

20 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

21 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

22 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.

24 THE CLERK: I-3. Roads and Public  
25 Property. An ordinance amending Chapter 200,

1 Article 8.11 of the Administrative Code to establish  
2 a restricted parking space on Hudson Street, City of  
3 Hoboken for Pedro Ruiz.

4 Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.

5 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

6 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

7 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

8 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

9 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

10 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

11 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Al.

12 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

13 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

14 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

15 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

16 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.

17 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

18 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

19 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

20 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

21 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

22 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.

23 THE CLERK: Ordinance I-4. Roads and  
24 Public Property. Ordinance amending Chapter 200,  
25 Article 8.11 of the Administrative Code to establish

1 a restricted parking space on Hudson Street, City of  
2 Hudson for Blanche E. Fernandez.

3 Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.

4 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

5 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

6 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

7 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

8 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

9 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

10 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

11 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

12 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

13 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

14 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.

15 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

16 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

17 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

18 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

19 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.

21 THE CLERK: Ordinance No. 5. Law.

22 Ordinance establishing --

23 MR. BATTISTA: Well, excuse me.

24 Chairman. There was a replacement, I think they  
25 need to vote on it.

1 THE CLERK: There is a replacement,  
2 and it's on your desk. I'm going to need a sponsor  
3 and a second on that one, since there's a change.

4 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Do we need to  
5 vote to -- do we need to vote on the former  
6 ordinance?

7 MR. BATTISTA: No, no. I think we're  
8 submitting a replacement ordinance. I think you need  
9 to -- it's basically an agenda item that's being  
10 changed. And to highlight it, all we did is change  
11 some language in the penalty portion of the  
12 ordinance.

13 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Do we need a  
14 motion or not?

15 MR. BATTISTA: Yeah.

16 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Motion.  
17 Kopacz.

18 THE CLERK: And a second.

19 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Second.

20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Commissioner  
21 Cedeño.

22 THE CLERK: It's an ordinance  
23 establishing regulations for the use of a County  
24 building by the public.

25 Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.

1 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

2 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

3 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

4 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

5 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

6 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

7 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Al.

8 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes. I noticed  
9 that this has been signed off on by the Law  
10 department, right?

11 MR. BATTISTA: Correct.

12 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: All right. I  
13 vote aye then.

14 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

15 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

16 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

17 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: No.

18 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

19 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

20 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

21 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

22 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.

24 THE CLERK: This concludes the items  
25 of business on today's agenda. Are there any

1 comments from the Commissioners on the business on  
2 the Board?

3 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Chairman, I just  
4 want to, for a couple of days, there was no heat in  
5 the warming center. And I don't fault any of our  
6 internal people from the county government side.  
7 But I do fault, I guess, secondarily, Air Systems.  
8 Primarily Mitsubishi. Today's day and age, there's  
9 no reason one why such a new system should be down.

10 And secondly, it's reprehensible, in my  
11 opinion, that it was down for as long as it was.  
12 Makes absolutely no sense. I had a lot of  
13 conversations with Eddie Nestor. I had  
14 conversations with Ralph Sax. It took them this  
15 long to figure out what was wrong. And it took days  
16 to get a programmer to be available. I mean, that's  
17 unacceptable.

18 First, I just want, for the record, can  
19 you confirm that the entire building is heated  
20 again, fully heated?

21 DIRECTOR D'ALESSANDRO: Yes.

22 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So I appreciate  
23 from the staff perspective what was done. I spent a  
24 lot of time there yesterday and this morning. I  
25 spoke to many of the people that are clients there.

1 And up until there not being heat there, they had  
2 nothing but good things to say about the warming  
3 center. And you know that's one of my pet projects  
4 that goes back many years with where they've been  
5 and where the County really stepped up to fill the  
6 gap that Jersey City created where they walked away  
7 from the one that they had -- they had established.

8 But we should seek any and all legal  
9 action that we may be able to take against  
10 Mitsubishi. This is a brand new system. How low  
11 was the cost of the system? What was the estimated  
12 cost of the system?

13 DIRECTOR D'ALESSANDRO: 1.4.

14 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: \$1.4 million  
15 system. When was it installed?

16 DIRECTOR D'ALESSANDRO: It was  
17 completed this summer.

18 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Installed less  
19 than one year ago. First winter that we had this,  
20 something like this happened. And then the fact  
21 that Mitsubishi was not able to make its programmer  
22 available until this morning, in my mind is we  
23 should take an action against it. There's no reason  
24 why they couldn't have made him available sooner.

25 And when I spoke to Ralph yesterday, and

1 one of the reasons he explained was the guy's three  
2 hours away at some seminar. And the seminar ended  
3 at five.

4 MR. SAX: That's what I heard. I  
5 don't know if it's completely accurate. However,  
6 although there wasn't anybody on site, they were --

7 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: You need to go  
8 to the mic, and then I'll ask you a question.

9 MR. SAX: Okay.

10 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Most people have  
11 swatted off nothing, but go ahead.

12 MR. SAX: Although they weren't  
13 on-site, they were communicating by phone and  
14 online. So they were troubleshooting the system,  
15 and it took a while. I'm not a technician. I don't  
16 know what they had to go through, but they were  
17 there. They had it up and running Tuesday when they  
18 left, but it crapped out again overnight, and that's  
19 what got us to yesterday, and finally to today, the  
20 final resolution.

21 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Well, I would  
22 tell you this. I wasn't there Tuesday night. I  
23 don't know what time it was up and running. It went  
24 down, but by Wednesday morning, those places were  
25 cold, and the ones on the fourth floor were in at,

1 remained in the 50 degrees, whatever you want to  
2 say, 54, 55. I wasn't going to -- I didn't want to  
3 go into a challenge match of exactly what it was,  
4 but it was not at a temperature that anyone should  
5 be attempting to sleep in. It's the equivalent of  
6 sleeping in your car.

7           And I am diligent in going after any  
8 landlord in Jersey City that doesn't have heat, and  
9 that day, Director DeFilippo can attest to, there  
10 was a building, a senior building, which they  
11 postponed until tomorrow where they weren't going to  
12 have hot water for like a day, and there's been  
13 issues with heat, and I was asking to open the  
14 Gallows Center up. So this is something that's  
15 important to me.

16           And the fact that when I met the person  
17 from Air Systems yesterday, and the lack of an  
18 answer that he gave me was embarrassing. He had no  
19 clue, no idea. I don't know. When a system like  
20 that goes down, people should work around the clock  
21 until it gets up again, and I know that did not  
22 happen. I know there was not around the clock work  
23 being done, and that is a failure on the part of Air  
24 Systems, and that's a failure on the part of  
25 Mitsubishi, and they should be held accountable.

1           Now, are you going to refute that they  
2 worked around the clock?

3           MR. SAX: No.

4           COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Well, then  
5 that's my problem. A brand new system fails, and  
6 they decide whatever, four o'clock, five o'clock,  
7 they're not going to come. I don't know whether the  
8 guy had to be there, he was ultimately remotely. In  
9 fact, it might be worse, Ralph, because as you  
10 relayed to me today, the guy from Mitsubishi was  
11 remotely engaged, never had to physically come here.

12           The issue yesterday was, well, it's three  
13 to four hours away, and his seminar ended whenever  
14 it ended. Well, he could have remotely started  
15 whatever time that seminar ended yesterday, and I'm  
16 not sure whether a seminar is more important than  
17 bringing heat back to a building that had 170 people  
18 staying there, as well as, I don't know, 30? How  
19 many people worked there, 30 people? Between the  
20 vendor and corrections. So 200 people restoring  
21 heat or going to a seminar?

22           So, literally, I'd like to see whatever  
23 contracts and agreements there are. I want to see  
24 any and all agreements. I'd like the Law Department  
25 to review it. But I'm of the position that we

1 should take some kind of legal action because, you  
2 know, and I'm not going to mention who it was, but  
3 people in this room were there. There were some  
4 people that worked for this government that were  
5 kind of like, Hey, they should be happy they have a  
6 place even if it's 50 something degrees, right? And  
7 he was there. I'm not going to mention anybody's  
8 name. That bothered me. That bothered me.  
9 Everybody, everyone, you know, no one's any  
10 different or any better than anyone else.

11 MR. SAX: That would bother me also.

12 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Thank you. But  
13 I wonder whether those folks from Mitsubishi have  
14 that same type of an attitude. So I want to see  
15 whatever contracts and agreements are. I want to  
16 find out why a system like that failed, failed six  
17 months after it was installed, and why it would take  
18 that long for it to come on. And then, after it  
19 failed, how come it took so long for people to  
20 realize that it was off again? Because people would  
21 tell me, No, the heat's back on.

22 I'm like, I'm here in the building. The  
23 heat's not on.

24 Well, I don't know about that. Oh, we've  
25 got to bring the guy back in.

1                   COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: I think  
2 there's a legal difference between what lawyers  
3 might call strict liability or negligence or failure  
4 to abide by a contract. If it's strict liability,  
5 if there's a problem, it's the vendor's problem,  
6 it's their fault, irrespective of what the cause  
7 was, irrespective of what the response was, they  
8 have to make reimbursement or compensation for that.  
9 If it's a matter of, they were on notice, the vendor  
10 was on notice with Mitsubishi or Air? I'm sorry,  
11 Bill?

12                   COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Air Systems.

13                   COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Irrespective  
14 of who didn't respond, if their response was poor,  
15 that's another issue. But it's still liability. So  
16 I think it's important to nail down exactly what the  
17 timeline was when the installer and manufacturer  
18 were on notice that there was a problem and how  
19 timely was their response. We're talking about  
20 people in one degree weather. Come on. I mean,  
21 correct, if their response was we couldn't get our  
22 tech out there because he was at a seminar, that's  
23 not good enough. Come on.

24                   So we need to have some chapter and verse  
25 as to what their response was. Because again, it

1 might not be strict liability, meaning like if the  
2 temperature went below 65 degrees and then they're  
3 automatically responsible. I don't know that.  
4 What I know is, though, that they're on notice by  
5 calls from the County to them that there was a  
6 problem, and they were dilatory in responding, and  
7 that's on them. But we need to have that timeline.  
8 So I agree with Bill.

9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Go ahead, Jenny.

10 MS. DAVIS: Just wanted to clarify  
11 that the County did bring in 22 heaters, I believe,  
12 at least. And if they were not sufficient, I  
13 understand. I just wanted to clarify. No one was  
14 left in freezing cold the whole time. But I do  
15 agree that that attitude, Commissioner, is  
16 absolutely unacceptable. Government here to serve  
17 does not reflect anyone in this room. I know that  
18 point. That we're here to serve and everyone  
19 deserves help. So I absolutely think that's  
20 reprehensible.

21 And I did want to tell you that Kevin  
22 Brown is very appreciative because I texted him  
23 telling me we're singing his praises and he says  
24 he's freezing up north right now. So Kevin says hi.

25 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: How's the

1 signal? Is it any good? Is anybody still hitting?

2 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: And then just to  
3 note, because I appreciate -- because Ralph, I think  
4 I reached out and asked for those heaters, right?

5 MR. SAX: We had heaters there and  
6 you were checking to see if we could get additional  
7 ones, which we did.

8 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Now they remain  
9 in the building so you don't have to, if they're  
10 ever needed, they're there. But in both places, the  
11 size of them and the amount you're allowed to have  
12 in a large room has an insignificant impact in a  
13 large room when you can see that.

14 MR. SAX: Certain rooms, yes.

15 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Those large  
16 rooms, those two large rooms.

17 MR. SAX: We also have to be careful  
18 not overloading the rooms.

19 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: We've discussed  
20 that. I'm just saying what makes this more urgent  
21 is that even those rooms have a minimal amount of  
22 effect in some of the rooms where individuals will  
23 sleep, which is what I was going to say. But again,  
24 I think the County, from a staff perspective, was  
25 good. They were there when they were there. I

1 honestly think Ed just waited for me to leave last  
2 night and then he came. He might have even been  
3 waiting outside. I don't know. But 10 minutes  
4 after I leave, hell, where are you? So I don't  
5 know. But he was there and he was diligent and  
6 Ralph was diligent.

7 But I think that Mitsubishi failed. I  
8 think we should take some action against it, and I  
9 think we should publicize it. Because if this  
10 group's out there selling million and a half dollar  
11 systems and these kind of things are going to  
12 happen, we need to let the public know. Mitsubishi.  
13 Cars and all.

14 THE CLERK: Any other comments from  
15 Commissioners?

16 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Go ahead, Jerry.

17 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Mitsubishi, we  
18 actually we train our HVAC students on the  
19 Mitsubishi system. Just to let you know that. But  
20 my question is, it's only a year so I'm quite sure  
21 there's a warranty there. But we have a service  
22 agreement with them? Warranty?

23 MR. SAX: Right.

24 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Okay. That's  
25 good. So I -- look, so I want to just put on a

1 record in reference to the Gateway Tunnel. Now the  
2 Gateway Tunnel was started in Hudson County, and one  
3 of the things that I've been reading up on it and  
4 trying to figure out how the job plays to get more  
5 opportunity for my constituency. There is 90,000  
6 jobs that's going to be created, and these jobs are  
7 going to be anywhere between 9 and 10 years.

8 My question is, what guarantees that we  
9 have from Hudson County perspective to guarantee  
10 some jobs? Because they started in Hudson County  
11 with this project. So what leverage do we have with  
12 the commission, if any, and could we put together a  
13 letter where we can have somebody come to our next  
14 meeting that represent the commission? I know they  
15 were in the search for a new CEO for that project,  
16 but I think they have somebody that's temporarily in  
17 place.

18 But I would love to figure out how to get  
19 them to come here and how we can get our fair share  
20 of our constituency to be on jobs because there's  
21 going to be career jobs. And I think, as I read it,  
22 the lowest paying job as a laborer is going to be  
23 \$40 with benefits. So this is something that's a  
24 great opportunity for Hudson County to take  
25 advantage. Not just New York City, and particularly

1 because it started in Hudson County. So I just  
2 would love to try to figure out how to make that  
3 connection with the commissioner.

4 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Jerry, I sit on  
5 the board that was created as an advisory board by  
6 the federal, whatever the federal labor people are.  
7 And I'll get you to come to one of the meetings. In  
8 fact, they have a regular meeting. I had to go to  
9 New York for it. I was screaming the same things  
10 you were to get minorities and women on the job, and  
11 then tell them how you got to deal with some of  
12 these issues.

13 So yeah, I guess there's a certain grant  
14 recipient. And Pat Kellerher said something else.  
15 So yeah, we should just, I'll forward you with the  
16 meeting. And then we should try to talk directly to  
17 that, the people in our ministry that you invited to  
18 do it.

19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Jenny, could you  
20 please make the board aware of the relationship with  
21 the Port Authority with the upcoming closing of the  
22 PATH in the month of February so all the  
23 commissioners can make their constituents aware of  
24 what that is?

25 MS. DAVIS: Yeah, I'll get you a

1 whole, I can get you a whole briefing on the PATH  
2 closures, but that's really affecting Hoboken more  
3 than it is Jersey City. But it will affect Jersey  
4 City, obviously. So yeah, happy to get some back.

5 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. Bob, are  
6 there any other?

7 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: I just want  
8 to say, I met with the Gateway this morning, and  
9 we'll be looking at it on Saturday. It's coming  
10 under my district, so I can come get it with my  
11 phone. So I can reach out and have them contact us  
12 and maybe come have a meeting with us and discuss  
13 this. They're open to a lot of different things.

14 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I mean, New York  
15 City is very aggressive when it comes to these  
16 things, and I think we should get our fair share.  
17 If we're going to be 90,000 jobs, it should be  
18 40,000 in New Jersey. So Jenny, the key is going to  
19 be to get the unions involved to do the right thing.  
20 And when I went to the first meeting, I was  
21 extremely vocal about it.

22 And they had one of those moments where  
23 there were a lot of, a number of African-American  
24 groups represented. They came to me and said, thank  
25 you for saying this. I'll be blunt, like literally,

1 because I had to leave the meeting earlier, and two  
2 people came out to the city and said, sometimes  
3 because they get money from the government, they're  
4 like, Hey, I don't want to rock the boat too much,  
5 but I'll connect you two, because there's an  
6 ongoing, like monthly meetings, both for that, and  
7 there's a smaller project that's going on that's, I  
8 think we'll do, from North Arlington, the roadways,  
9 and they're learning about that. That's a smaller  
10 project. So they have a committee for both of them.  
11 They meet in New York.

12 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Okay. Go  
13 online.

14 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Continue, Madam  
15 Clerk.

16 THE CLERK: Are there any further  
17 comments from the Chief of Staff to the County  
18 Executive?

19 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: I have one  
20 question.

21 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Go ahead, Al.

22 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Tangential to  
23 the conversation about the Gateway project, but  
24 Jerry mentioned that -- mentioned about how  
25 aggressive New York City is for its interests. As

1 everybody should know, I think on Sunday, the  
2 congestion plan went through in New York City for  
3 access below 60th Street, and I think that affects a  
4 lot of Hudson County residents. Is there a contact  
5 entity or person that we can talk to? I know there  
6 was lawsuits, and there was a hearing on Friday  
7 afternoon in the Federal District Court, so  
8 obviously the injunction was not approved.

9 So the congestion pricing plan costs \$9  
10 per car when you go through it. But that makes, I  
11 think, inadvertently -- not inadvertently, more  
12 Hudson County residents than any other county in the  
13 state. So is there any contact person or entity  
14 that we can talk to about that position of that? It  
15 might be closing the door after the cow has gone  
16 out, but it just seems to me that New Jersey  
17 residents are getting disproportionately hurt by  
18 this plan.

19 So is there any entity or place where we  
20 can talk to somebody about that?

21 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Donnie or Dave, do  
22 you have an answer for Commissioner Cifelli on that?

23  
24 MR. DRUMELER: No, we don't. I don't  
25 know who the contact would be.

1 MR. BATTISTA: See if we can  
2 ascertain.

3 MS. DAVIS: I can find you one.

4 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you, Jenny.  
5 Jenny's going to find you somebody, Al.

6 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: I'm just, for  
7 Anthony -- you and I, just on a personal level, we  
8 have to go to medical appointments through Lower  
9 Manhattan, up beyond 60th Street to our facilities.  
10 I go several times a month. And it's just, I don't  
11 know, but multiply that by thousands of other New  
12 Jersey motorists. It's -- New Yorkers don't pay  
13 when they come through the tunnels in New Jersey.

14 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: You should do an  
15 ordinance to support -- or a resolutions to support  
16 a proposal that they pay when they come here from  
17 New York.

18 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: I get it. No,  
19 I'm on board with that. It's like tariffs, Bill.

20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. Continue,  
21 Madam Clerk.

22 THE CLERK: This is the time for  
23 persons who submitted a timely written request to  
24 address the Board on any matter of public interest.  
25 Please remember to limit your comments to three

1 minutes.

2 Mr. Chairman, I have no speakers that  
3 signed up. There being held for their business to  
4 come before the Board, may I have a motion to  
5 adjourn?

6 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Motion.

7 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Second.

8 THE CLERK: All in favor? Meeting is  
9 adjourned.

10 (Whereupon the proceeding is then  
11 concluded at 5:22 p.m.

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I, SHARI CATHEY, CCR, RPR, License No. 30XI00234700, and Notary Public of the State of New Jersey, hereby certify that the proceedings herein are from the notes taken by me of a Regular Meeting of the Hudson County Board of County Commissioners, held on Thursday, January 9, 2025; and that this is a correct transcript of the same.



SHARI CATHEY, CCR, RPR  
A NOTARY PUBLIC of the  
State of New Jersey  
I.D. No. 2283786  
Commission Expires 2/4/27

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