

HUDSON COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

RE:

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

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 23, 2025  
4:30 p.m.

B E F O R E:

**Certified Original**

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. Commissioner Baselice.

3 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: We can't hear you.

4 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

5 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Here.

6 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

7 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Here.

8 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

9 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Here.

10 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

11 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Here.

12 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

13 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Here.

14 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.  
15 Commissioner Walker.

16 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Here.

17 THE CLERK: And Chairman Romano.

18 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Here.

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

21 (Flag Salute.)

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

24 Posting notice of Resolution No. 8-1-2025  
25 on the County Commissioner's Bulletin Board, First

1 Floor, Administration Building Annex, Jersey City,  
2 New Jersey.

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

6 THE CLERK: May I have a motion to  
7 approve the minutes of the Caucus Meeting of  
8 December 23rd, the Regular Meeting of December 23rd,  
9 the Reorganization Meeting on January 2nd, 2025.

10 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Madam Clerk, before  
11 I recognize Commissioner Rodriguez and Commissioner  
12 Lipski are in chambers.

13 THE CLERK: Thank you. May I have a  
14 motion to accept?

15 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Moved.

16 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Second.

17 Basalice-Romano.

18 THE CLERK: Commissioner  
19 Aponte-Lipski.

20 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

21 THE CLERK: Commissioner Basalice.

22 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

23 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

24 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

25 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

1 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.  
2 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.  
3 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.  
4 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.  
5 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.  
6 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.  
7 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.  
8 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.  
9 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.  
10 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.  
11 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.  
12 THE CLERK: The next order of  
13 business is additional discussion on today's agenda,  
14 and I've turned it over to the Administration.  
15 MR. DRUMELER: Mr. Chairman, we have  
16 nothing further to do.  
17 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Continue, Madam  
18 Clerk.  
19 THE CLERK: According to the policies  
20 set by the Board of Commissioners, members of the  
21 public are asked to limit their comments to five  
22 minutes when discussing agenda items and three  
23 minutes at the conclusion of the meeting for persons  
24 who submitted written requests to discuss matters of  
25 the public interest.

1           At this time, the public may address the  
2 board on any item on the agenda. Please keep your  
3 comments limited to five minutes.

4           CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Madam Clerk. I'd  
5 just like to do the recognition of the proclamation  
6 so we can clear the chamber.

7           THE CLERK: Okay.

8           CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Here's how we're  
9 going to do it. We'll read your name, please come  
10 up, and we'll give the proclamation to Arjumand, and  
11 then after the picture, you can get the microphone  
12 in the back and get the proclamation. Yep, it's  
13 been erected. Ahmed Shedeed. Ahmed Shedeed. Hamed  
14 Elshanawany.

15           COMMISSIONER O'DEA: We have more  
16 than you, so we got to have them all come up?

17           CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yeah, just have  
18 them all come up as we call their names. Dr. Rafiq  
19 Chaudhry. Dr. Arshad Chatha. Hussain Choudhri.  
20 Umar Chaudhry. Mussab Ali. Saad Admani. Mansoor  
21 Syed. Intiaz Syed. Mohammed Irshad Malik. Ali  
22 Akhtar. Adel Mustafa. Arjumand Juweria. Mohammad  
23 Malik. Maryam Riggins. And Dr. Saquiba Syed.

24           My apologies for the pronunciations.

25           (Photo Opportunity.)

1 MS. JUWERIA: Thank you. Thank you.  
2 Good evening everyone. Esteemed Commissioners and  
3 my dear friends. My name is Arjumand Juweria. I'm  
4 a pharmacist by profession and a dedicated community  
5 activist. I'm proud to have received the  
6 Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award from our  
7 former President Joe Biden as well as the New Jersey  
8 Governor's Medallion Award from our Governor Murphy.

9 I would like to express my heartfelt  
10 gratitude to Hudson County Executive Mr. Craig Guy,  
11 Commissioner and Chairman Anthony Romano, and  
12 Commissioner Bill O'Dea, who is the primary sponsor  
13 of this bill. Your unwavering support has been  
14 instrumental in making this proclamation a reality,  
15 and I truly appreciate your commitment to our  
16 community. Thank you for your leadership and  
17 dedication.

18 Today I'm filled with pride and gratitude  
19 as we gather to celebrate the approval of the  
20 Proclamation for Muslim Heritage Month. This moment  
21 is not just about recognition. It is a powerful  
22 affirmation of the rich cultural heritage,  
23 contributions and values that the Muslim community  
24 brings to our diverse society.

25 Last year, I undertook a significant

1 journey across all 12 towns of Hudson County,  
2 engaging with mayors and council members. Through  
3 countless e-mails, messages and phone calls, I  
4 sought to emphasize the importance of honoring  
5 Muslim Heritage Month. I am deeply appreciative of  
6 the warm receptions and open dialogues I had during  
7 this time, which helped to foster understanding and  
8 collaboration.

9 I want to express my heartfelt thanks to  
10 each of you for your support in passing this  
11 proclamation. Your commitment to recognizing the  
12 contributions of the Muslim community reflects our  
13 shared values of unity, respect and inclusivity.  
14 Together, we send a powerful message that diversity  
15 is not merely acknowledged, but celebrated.

16 Muslim Heritage Month is an opportunity to  
17 reflect on the incredible achievements of Muslim  
18 individuals and communities throughout history, from  
19 scholars and artists to activists and innovators.  
20 The Muslim community has played an integral role in  
21 shaping our world. This month not only honors those  
22 contributions, but also encourages us to engage in  
23 meaningful dialogues that bridge cultural divides.

24 As we celebrate this month, let us also  
25 recognize the importance of education and awareness.

1 By sharing stories, traditions and experiences, we  
2 can foster understanding and respect among all  
3 communities. It is crucial that we continue to work  
4 together to dismantle stereotypes and  
5 misconceptions, creating an environment where every  
6 individual feels valued and embraced.

7 Thank you once again for your support in  
8 approving this important proclamation. Together,  
9 let us honor the rich history of the Muslim  
10 community, celebrate our diversity, and work towards  
11 a future where unity and understanding are at the  
12 forefront of our values. Thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Can you just  
14 tell us two events? I know you have an event next  
15 week, I take it.

16 MS. JUWERIA: Yes.

17 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: At the college.

18 MS. JUWERIA: Next week we have two  
19 events, one at Dickinson School and one at Hudson  
20 County Community College. And we are planning a  
21 huge event next year in libraries, schools,  
22 colleges, universities, and religious organizations  
23 regarding Muslim education.

24 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: If you can, you  
25 might give the information to the clerk so she can

1 send it to all the Commissioners.

2 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: And you have  
3 more than two events, right?

4 MS. JUWERIA: Yes, I'm going to share  
5 about Dickinson School on January.

6 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Just tell the Clerk  
7 that you'll e-mail.

8 MS. JUWERIA: Thank you. Thank you  
9 so much.

10 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you. And you  
11 told us that you have food, so enjoy.

12 MS. JUWERIA: Yes. We have light  
13 snacks here. Please enjoy after this meeting.

14 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you.

15 MS. JUWERIA: Thank you.

16 THE CLERK: Chairman, I need to add a  
17 resolution, No. 31.

18 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I'll sponsor a  
19 resolution regarding the collective bargaining  
20 rights of healthcare workers.

21 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: I'll second it.

22 THE CLERK: Okay. Commissioner  
23 Aponte-Lipski.

24 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

25 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

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COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.  
THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.  
COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.  
THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.  
COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.  
THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.  
COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.  
THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.  
COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.  
THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.  
COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.  
THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.  
COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.  
THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.  
CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.  
THE CLERK: Just to repeat, according  
to policy set by the Board of County Commissioners,  
members of the public are asked to limit their  
comments to five minutes when discussing agenda  
items, three minutes at the conclusion of the  
meeting for persons who submit a written request to  
discuss matters of public interest.  
At this time, the public may address the  
Board on any item on the agenda only. Please keep  
your comments limited to five minutes.

1           Are there any speakers on the agenda items  
2 only? Mr. Chairman, I don't see any.

3           CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Anybody? Any  
4 speakers on the agenda items? Okay.

5           COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Motion to  
6 close.

7           THE CLERK: May I have a motion to  
8 close -- we'll approve all the items on the consent  
9 agenda.

10          CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Walker and  
11 Rodriguez.

12          THE CLERK: Commissioner  
13 Aponte-Lipski.

14          COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

15          THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

16          COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Aye. Except  
17 for 1.

18          THE CLERK: Except for which one?

19          COMMISSIONER BASELICE: 1.

20          THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

21          COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

22          THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

23          COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

24          THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

25          COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

1 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

2 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Abstain on 8.

3 Aye on the rest.

4 THE CLERK: Which one?

5 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: 8.

6 THE CLERK: 8. Commissioner

7 Rodriguez.

8 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

9 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

10 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

11 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

12 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.

13 THE CLERK: We have no ordinances for  
14 introduction, but we have five ordinances for a  
15 second reading.

16 Ordinance 1. Bond Ordinance providing for  
17 various 2025 Capital Improvements and the  
18 acquisition of equipment for the Department of Roads  
19 and Public Property, by and in the County of Hudson,  
20 State of New Jersey; appropriating \$39,995,920  
21 therefor; including State and Federal Funds received  
22 from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 in the  
23 amount of \$4,070,000; and authorizing the issuance  
24 of \$34,215,161 Bonds or Notes to finance part of the  
25 cost thereof.

1  
2           This is the fixed time for public hearing  
3 of this ordinance, which was introduced at the  
4 meeting of January 2nd, 2025, advertised by required  
5 by law together with a notice of hearing for this  
6 time. It's been posted on the County Commissioner's  
7 bulletin board and made available to the general  
8 public.

9           Are there any speakers on this ordinance?  
10 Motion to close?

11           CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Cedeño and Walker.

12           THE CLERK: All in favor? Opposed?

13           (The Board votes unanimously to close  
14 the Hearing.)

15           THE CLERK: On the final adoption,  
16 Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.

17           COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

18           THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

19           COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

20           THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

21           COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

22           THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

23           COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

24           THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

25           COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

1 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.  
2 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.  
3 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.  
4 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.  
5 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.  
6 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.  
7 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.  
8 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.  
9 THE CLERK: The ordinance has been  
10 adopted. Commissioner Basalice?  
11 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: I'm good.  
12 THE CLERK: Ordinance No. 2.  
13 Ordinance amending Chapter 200, Article 8.11 of the  
14 Administrative Code to establish a restricted  
15 Parking Space on John F. Kennedy Boulevard, City of  
16 Bayonne for Andrew H. Gutterman.  
17 This is the time fixed for the public  
18 hearing of this ordinance, which was introduced at  
19 the meeting of January 9th, 2025, advertised as  
20 required by law together with a notice of hearing  
21 for this time. It's been posted on the County  
22 Commissioner's bulletin board and made available to  
23 the public.  
24 Are there any speakers on this ordinance?  
25 I see none. A motion to close the hearing?

1 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Motion to  
2 close.

3 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Go ahead, Don.

4 MR. BATTISTA: The original ordinance  
5 that was introduced contained an error in the plate  
6 number of the vehicle for the individual in whom the  
7 space has been given. The correct number is 883  
8 6HG. I would ask that someone would move to make  
9 amendments.

10 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Kopacz and Lipski.

11 THE CLERK: This is a vote on the  
12 amendment. Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.

13 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

14 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

15 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

16 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

17 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

18 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

19 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

20 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

21 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

22 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

23 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.

24 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

25 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

1 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.  
2 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.  
3 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.  
4 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.  
5 THE CLERK: I'd like to have a motion  
6 to close the hearing.  
7 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Motion.  
8 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Second.  
9 THE CLERK: All in favor? Opposed?  
10 (The Board votes unanimously to close  
11 the Hearing.)  
12 THE CLERK: This is on the final  
13 adoption. Commissioner 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.

6 THE CLERK: The ordinance has been  
7 adopted. Ordinance 3. Ordinance amending Chapter  
8 200, Article 8.11 of the Administrative Code to  
9 establish a restricted Parking Space on Hudson  
10 Street, City of Hoboken for Pedro Ruiz.

11 This is the time fixed for the public  
12 hearing of this ordinance, which was introduced at  
13 the meeting of January 9, 2025, advertised as  
14 required by law, together with a notice of hearing  
15 for this time. It's been posted on the County  
16 Commissioners' bulletin board and made available to  
17 the general public.

18 Are there any speakers on this ordinance?  
19 I see none. Can I have a motion to close the  
20 hearing?

21 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Cifelli-Rodriguez.

22 THE CLERK: All in favor? Opposed?  
23 (The Board votes unanimously to close  
24 the Hearing.)

25 THE CLERK: This is on the final

1 adoption. Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.

2 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

3 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

4 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

5 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

6 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

7 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

8 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

9 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

10 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

11 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

12 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.

13 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

14 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

15 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

16 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

17 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

18 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.

19 THE CLERK: The ordinance has been  
20 adopted. Ordinance No. 4. Ordinance amending  
21 Chapter 200, Article 8.11 of the Administrative Code  
22 to establish a restricted Parking Space on Hudson  
23 Street, City of Hoboken for Blanche E. Fernandez.

24 This is the time fixed for the public  
25 hearing of this ordinance, which was introduced at

1 the meeting of January 9, 2025, advertised as  
2 required by law, together with a notice of hearing  
3 for this time. It's been posted on the County  
4 Commissioners' bulletin board and made available to  
5 the general public.

6 Are there any speakers on this ordinance?  
7 Seeing none. Can I have a motion to close the  
8 hearing?

9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Lipski and  
10 Rodriguez.

11  
12 THE CLERK: All in favor? Opposed?  
13 (The Board votes unanimously to close  
14 the Hearing.)

15 THE CLERK: Vote on the final  
16 adoption. Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.

17 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

18 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselite.

19 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

20 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

21 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

22 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

23 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

24 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

25 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

1 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

2 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.

3 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

4 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

5 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

6 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

7 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

8 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.

9 THE CLERK: The ordinance has been  
10 adopted. Ordinance 5. The Ordinance Establishing  
11 Regulations for the Use of the County Building by a  
12 Public.

13 This is the time fixed for public hearing  
14 of this ordinance, which was introduced at the  
15 meeting of January 9th, 2025, advertised as required  
16 by law, together with a notice of hearing for this  
17 time. It's been posted on the County Commissioners'  
18 bulletin board and made available to the general  
19 public.

20 Are there any speakers on this ordinance?  
21 We have a speaker, Chairman.

22 MR. BLOOMBERG: Okay. Good evening.  
23 Happy New Year. Nice to see you all. My name is  
24 Mark Bloomberg from West New York. I really just  
25 wanted a couple of clarifications on this. To a lay

1 person like myself, I didn't understand all the  
2 legalese in it, but my understanding is that you're  
3 essentially -- that this is written primarily to  
4 address recording in County spaces, rather than the  
5 all public areas.

6 So if you could clarify that more  
7 generally, how would it apply to the press? How  
8 would it apply to recording of members of law  
9 enforcement? And does it apply at County parks?  
10 Thank you.

11 MR. BATTISTA: This is intended to  
12 address County buildings, and it's not a restriction  
13 on recording. It's just a way to balance the right  
14 of conducting business, the right of the employees  
15 performing the work, and the right of the public to  
16 know what's going on in the County building.

17 So this is not a prohibition, nor is it  
18 driven by anything other than the balancing of those  
19 two main interests. The right of the public, the  
20 right of the business to be conducted, and the right  
21 of the employees to work in their environment  
22 without any restriction. I don't know if that  
23 answers your question.

24 MR. BLOOMBERG: Yeah. For the most  
25 part it does, and I don't have a position on it one

1 way or the other. At this point, I'm just trying to  
2 understand it. And so -- okay. So but  
3 specifically, can you speak any further like around  
4 law enforcement or -- and would parks be included if  
5 there was a building in the park?

6 MR. BATTISTA: This is only for  
7 purposes of a building.

8 MR. BLOOMBERG: Okay. Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Only if there  
10 was a building in the park where there was County  
11 business.

12 MR. BATTISTA: Exactly.

13 THE CLERK: Are there any additional  
14 speakers on this ordinance?

15 FULL COURT PRESS: Full Court Press.  
16 Hudson County.

17 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: State your name for  
18 the record.

19 FULL COURT PRESS: Full Court Press.  
20 Hudson County. I don't wish to waive my Fourth  
21 Amendment right, right? Constitutionally, no, I  
22 don't think so. Unless I'm placed under arrest.

23 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: This isn't  
24 being placed under arrest.

25 FULL COURT PRESS: All right. So I

1 wish to remain anonymous. I understand. And I wish  
2 to remain anonymous out of fear of retaliation. Is  
3 that okay? Are there any objections to that,  
4 Chairperson?

5 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Fear of  
6 retaliation? Okay.

7 FULL COURT PRESS: I mean, I never  
8 have to identify myself. All right. I don't wish  
9 to waive any of my rights, specifically my First  
10 Amendment right, freedom of press. And this law  
11 ordinance establishing regulations, I'm not really  
12 quite sure what it's necessary for, considering we  
13 have established laws regarding recording in public,  
14 recording of public officials, recording the County  
15 buildings. We have a constitutional right to do it  
16 as long as it's subject to a time, place, and manner  
17 restriction, right?

18 So if we're not interfering in business,  
19 there's no need to adopt an ordinance for that. We  
20 already have an ordinance, right? If you break the  
21 law while doing it, you're subject to removal.  
22 Other than that, it seems completely unnecessary.  
23 It's just another added way to try to, I think, take  
24 away people's rights, including press. If I'm not  
25 interfering with business, if I'm not obstructing

1 anything, if I'm not doing anything illegal, there's  
2 no reason to even have an ordinance, because all  
3 those are already in place. So that's really all  
4 I've got to say on that. Thank you.

5 THE CLERK: Are there any further  
6 speakers on this ordinance?

7 MR. TRUTH: Yes. Hello, everybody.  
8 I'm Leroy Truth of Leroy Truth Investigations. And I  
9 just have a couple questions. Is -- by a show of  
10 hands, how many of you support the First Amendment  
11 of the press, the right to record and observe and  
12 document the public servant in the course of their  
13 business? Just a show of hands.

14 Bill O'Dea, you're awesome by the way.  
15 Jerry Walker. Mr. Romano. You can't speak for  
16 everybody. Everyone didn't raise their hands.  
17 Cifelli didn't. You hate the First Amendment,  
18 Cifelli?

19 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Excuse me,  
20 sir?

21 MR. TRUTH: You hate the First  
22 Amendment?

23 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Do I hate the  
24 First Amendment? No. I went to law school.

25 MR. TRUTH: Then you definitely hate

1 the First Amendment.

2 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: But the First  
3 Amendment, as you know Constitutional Law, the First  
4 Amendment is not absolute. Like, you know, Oliver  
5 Wood Malone said, you can't shout fire in a crowded  
6 meeting here. So there's theories, there are  
7 constraints on the First Amendment. So when you ask  
8 an absolute question like, do you love or hate the  
9 First Amendment? That's a nonsensical question.

10 MR. TRUTH: No, it's not nonsensical.  
11 It's my question, and don't disrespect me. Now,  
12 number two is I hear there's a lot of meetings going  
13 on about us, about if First Amendment activists or  
14 people who just want to observe the government in  
15 action, that there's all kinds of meetings, how to  
16 handle us, how to remove us from meetings. So when  
17 it comes to the First Amendment, is there an issue  
18 if you're doing business, anyone's doing business,  
19 and we just come to observe?

20 We're not interacting with anyone. We're  
21 not disturbing anyone. We're not physically  
22 interfering. But I have heard there's a whole bunch  
23 of meetings that have happened in the last couple  
24 days. Since I went to Esther Suarez's office, I'm  
25 going to talk more about that later, the criminal

1 fire code violations out there.

2 So I don't understand why there's an  
3 ordinance proposed for this when the First Amendment  
4 is very clear, freedom of press, because this is  
5 what you're addressing. We're not talking about  
6 saying fire in a crowded building. We're talking  
7 about basic freedom of press. And I hope each of  
8 you will support and respect that. We're peaceful,  
9 and we expose corruption, and the only circumstances  
10 that happen is because they are created by people  
11 like Senator Mayer's staff, for example. They  
12 create the circumstances. We just document them.  
13 Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you.

15 THE CLERK: Are there any additional  
16 speakers on this ordinance? There being none, I ask  
17 for a motion to close.

18 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Lipski and  
19 Rodriguez.

20 THE CLERK: All in favor? Opposed?  
21 (The Board votes unanimously to close  
22 the Hearing.)

23 THE CLERK: On the final adoption.  
24 Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.

25 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

1 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

2 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

3 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

4 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

5 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

6 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

7 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

8 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

9 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

10 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: No. We survived

11 a long time without the ordinance. I'm sure we can

12 continue to survive without the ordinance like this.

13 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

14 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

15 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

16 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

17 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

18 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.

19 THE CLERK: The ordinance has been

20 adopted. This concludes the item on the business on

21 today's agenda. Are there any comments from the

22 commission on the business?

23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: No. 8, Director

24 Toon, did you have an answer for Commissioner O'Dea?

25 I also have messages for Julio Garcia, the Director

1 of PACO at the end of each hearing.

2 MS. HULINGS: Hi, Chairman. Are you  
3 referring to PACO there?

4 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: No, no. I'm  
5 referring to the PACO. Is that correct?

6 MS. HULINGS: Yes. So there was an  
7 e-mail sent out with all the backup information  
8 regarding the contacts and the dates and the e-mails  
9 and the phone calls and messages that were not  
10 returned.

11 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I tried to reach  
12 out.

13 MS. HULINGS: All right. If you need  
14 anything else, let me know.

15 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Thank you. And  
16 also for Donny Battista, HRH runs a CarePoint in  
17 Hoboken and in Jersey City, Christ. They fired the  
18 Chief Medical Officer that's been in the hospital  
19 for you, Dr. Rimmel, last week. Just so you know,  
20 when you're dealing legally, you'll be dealing with  
21 the head of the management running the hospital  
22 right now.

23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Joe, am I going to  
24 get my report tomorrow on the building? Go ahead.  
25

1 MR. DRUMELER: Yeah. We're  
2 finalizing the construction report and we should  
3 have the updated report for the minority business  
4 enterprises as well.

5 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: It's not weird  
6 when we call them every other day. I don't want to  
7 tell them to try to come and videotape you in the  
8 next 20 days before you open the door.

9 MR. DRUMELER: I spoke to him earlier  
10 today, too.

11 THE CLERK: Are there any other  
12 comments from the Commissioners? Are there any  
13 comments from the Chief of Staff to the County  
14 Executive? She just left.

15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Patty McCarthy's  
16 on. Patty, anything?

17 MR. McCARTHY: No comment at this  
18 time. Thank you.

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

24 We do have speakers, Mr. Chairman. The  
25 first one is John Felice.

1 MR. FELICE: Good evening,  
2 Commissioners. My name is John Felice. I'm a  
3 volunteer for the American Red Cross. I have  
4 multiple roles with the American Red Cross. One of  
5 them is working with elected officials and  
6 stakeholders in the community.

7 I've had the pleasure of working with my  
8 good friend, Ed Florio. I was a County Commissioner  
9 in Bergen County from 2010 to 2016. And now I  
10 dedicate my time to the American Red Cross, and I'm  
11 very happy to do so. In fact, thank you for your  
12 support. Thank you for your service to the  
13 community. And in fact, thank you for letting us  
14 have an office. I believe the American Red Cross  
15 wanted a New Jersey chapter in the County building.  
16 I've not seen it yet, but I hope to do it someday.

17 Thousands of people have been helped by  
18 the Red Cross over the last few years. Whether it  
19 be a home fire, an apartment building, or a flood,  
20 we are here to do two things. To prevent and  
21 alleviate human suffering. And everything we do is  
22 surrounded around that mission. The American Red  
23 Cross is the largest volunteer organization in the  
24 world. In the world; 95-percent of all the people  
25 involved in the Red Cross are volunteers.

1 I am here tonight to say thank you for  
2 your support and helping your residents throughout  
3 Hudson County. And we are here 24 hours a day, 7  
4 days a week, 365 days a year. The colleagues I work  
5 with, volunteer with, love helping people, and  
6 completing the mission of the Red Cross. So I'm  
7 going to leave a folder for each of you. Just  
8 outline how the Red Cross is constructed in New  
9 Jersey. And also some of the things that we can do  
10 to help in preventing fires.

11 Like I was involved with forest fires up  
12 in northern New Jersey. But education to senior  
13 groups, and just making and preventing these  
14 disasters that happen anytime, day or night. So I  
15 don't want to keep you, because I know you have a  
16 busy schedule, as I once was a commissioner, and I  
17 know the time that you spend. So thank you.

18 Just remember, we're here. Mike Minelli,  
19 someone may know of him. He is a disaster program  
20 manager for Hudson County and Essex, and I think  
21 another county. So you might hear his name. He's a  
22 paid employee. But we're all here to support him in  
23 our mission that the Red Cross has dedicated itself  
24 to. Thank you very much.

25 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you, John.

1 THE CLERK: Just put the folders over  
2 here.

3 MR. FELICE: Yes. Thank you.

4 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So John, first  
5 of all, I've always had the greatest respect for the  
6 Red Cross. I'd like to hopefully get to some of  
7 you. Last week we had an event at 1113 Gifford  
8 Avenue. So there was a fire; 43 households affected  
9 in the apartment building. We didn't get involved  
10 until the end of the week.

11 My understanding is at one point the Red  
12 Cross was there, and I think that based on  
13 information they got, the ability to offer refuge to  
14 individuals in a hotel didn't occur the way it was  
15 supposed to. What happened at that point in time  
16 was that the landlord of the building told the  
17 residents that they could go to a hotel, and I think  
18 that's what was related to the Red Cross.

19 However, there was a caveat to it. It  
20 said you can go to a hotel, pay for it, and then  
21 deduct it from your rent. The problem was people  
22 that are on a fixed income, really don't have the  
23 type of capital to be able to go to a hotel for five  
24 days, for six days, for seven days, lay out the  
25 money, and then deduct it from their rent.

1           So what occurred in that building was  
2 after the fire, there was no electricity in that  
3 building for five days, and I'm going to give a  
4 shout out to Commissioner Flores from the Department  
5 of Community Affairs. On Saturday when I texted her  
6 and told her of the situation, she literally had an  
7 inspector from the State get there on Saturday and  
8 Sunday, which is unprecedented throughout my career.  
9 And based on that, they got an electrician in there.  
10 And I think as of today, we have almost all of the  
11 units have electricity in them.

12           So my concern was because of whatever  
13 information was given initially, there was no  
14 assistance. Because this is my contention, you guys  
15 operate under a false representation, and I'd like  
16 to be able to have information in the future to be  
17 able to contact someone like you directly when I run  
18 into a situation like that. It was really sad. I  
19 mean, many of those people, many of those people are  
20 immigrants. Many of them, you know, people have  
21 children. There's no electricity in their homes.  
22 We're literally now trying to get them food because  
23 all their food is spoiled. And many of them, if  
24 you're on food stamps, you have nothing from now  
25 until the end of the month.

1 I just wanted to put that on the record.  
2 I don't know how you do that, but in some cases,  
3 there should be some level of follow-up with tenants  
4 because you can't trust what landlords represent.

5 MR. FELICE: Mr. Chairman, if I may  
6 just respectfully respond. As a disaster action  
7 team responder, when we go to a fire, irrespective  
8 of any status, any community, we're called by the --  
9 Red Cross is called by the OEM or the fire chief on  
10 the scene, and we respond. And what we do is we  
11 take every client, and if they accept a financial  
12 donation from the Red Cross, we also provide them a  
13 blanket, a hygiene kit, and also we give them a  
14 debit card and a certain amount of money depending  
15 on the size of their family.

16 We also get them into -- we give them a  
17 case. A day later or two days later, a caseworker  
18 from the Red Cross calls up and follows up to see  
19 about their immediate follow-up needs. The Red  
20 Cross, we provide immediate assistance for  
21 short-term recovery, and irrespective of anything,  
22 they're wealthy or they're not. And so when we go  
23 on scene, we don't necessarily concern ourselves  
24 with, well, you know, the super's going to provide  
25 them with X, Y, Z or something. We're going to

1 provide them with that assistance. And that's very  
2 important that they realize that.

3 But also, if there's a concern,  
4 Commissioner, that you have, we will certainly  
5 follow up. You can certainly call me, and I'll put  
6 you in contact with our disaster program manager,  
7 Mike Minelli, to follow up on that case and to make  
8 sure. As it stands, our policy is we get on scene,  
9 we do an intake. We provide our folks that have  
10 been affected by a fire or whatever with a financial  
11 donation, and then we get them an assistance if  
12 someone follows up with them in the case of, let's  
13 say, they lost their eyeglasses or they lost their  
14 medication.

15 And we also provide them with a list of  
16 services in the respective county, like Board of  
17 Social Services, Salvation Army, other organizations  
18 that can assist in their recovery. So my experience  
19 over the last two and a half years doing disaster  
20 action team, we go on scene, we provide those  
21 services, that contribution to that client,  
22 irrespective of whether the super says, Oh, you can  
23 stay in a hotel. We gave them a debit card for a  
24 certain amount or ETF, and then they take that and  
25 use it for their recovery. So I would like to

1 follow up.

2 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yeah, and again,  
3 I'm going to have Corey follow up with you. I mean,  
4 in this case, the fire was in the basement of the  
5 building.

6 MR. FELICE: Okay.

7 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So I don't know  
8 whether because it was in the basement of the  
9 building, you then are responsible for 40 units in  
10 the building to go to each and every one of those  
11 apartments to try to offer that assistance to them.  
12 It was the basement of the building. But the net  
13 result of it was one, two days to get all the smoke  
14 out of the building. And then secondly, no  
15 electricity, literally until the first unit got back  
16 on electricity.

17 MR. FELICE: If I may, there are  
18 certain levels of fire classification, uninhabitable  
19 to destroy. And if people cannot live there, if  
20 they fall within the category of uninhabitable, then  
21 they can receive a donation from the Red Cross. So  
22 here again, we will follow up, and I look forward to  
23 doing that and making sure that you have all the  
24 answers.

25 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: And again, I

1 don't know all the rules, but obviously no  
2 electricity, right? Probably uninhabitable.

3 MR. FELICE: I don't know the details  
4 of that, but we will follow up. Thank you very  
5 much, Commissioners.

6 THE CLERK: Thank you. The next  
7 speaker I have is Peshu Patel. Next speaker is the  
8 Full Court Press.

9 FULL COURT PRESS: Hello again.  
10 Thank you. So back to the ordinance that you just  
11 voted for. I want to thank you both for voting for  
12 that. Yeah, it's kind of mind-boggling. I think  
13 it's such a silly thing, because if someone was  
14 recording covertly, you wouldn't even know. So  
15 that's only a law to punish those for recording  
16 overtly, out in the open. But if someone wanted to  
17 do it in secret, no repercussions whatsoever, and  
18 there's nothing you can do to stop them.

19 So it's really a silly thing, and I think  
20 we're going to challenge that one. I know we're  
21 going to challenge that one. But anyway -- and I  
22 agree with you. The First Amendment is limited,  
23 like yelling "fire" in a public place. But speaking  
24 of fires in a public place, during a recent visit to  
25 the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office, I noticed a

1 glaring fire safety violation. The stairwell on the  
2 sixth floor is behind a set of locked doors.

3 This isn't just a minor oversight. It's a  
4 life-threatening hazard in any emergency. What's  
5 even more concerning is that I noticed this within  
6 minutes of being in the building. Yet, fire  
7 inspectors who are trained to spot these violations  
8 must have seen it as well. This begs the question,  
9 why has nothing been done? Is it being ignored?  
10 Cover up? Or is this business as usual in Hudson  
11 County?

12 Based on my activism in Hudson County,  
13 I've come to learn that the government here has an  
14 unsettling habit of covering up issues, especially  
15 when it comes to protecting their own. It's not  
16 just this fire safety violation. There's a  
17 consistent pattern of turning a blind eye when it  
18 comes to holding each other accountable. Whether  
19 it's questionable contracts, mismanagement of funds,  
20 or violations like this one, the priority always  
21 seems to be protecting the system rather than the  
22 people.

23 Meanwhile, instead of addressing the real  
24 problems, they go out of their way to retaliate  
25 against activists like me and my colleague Leroy,

1 who dare to point these issues out, and they don't  
2 stop at legitimate pushback. They latch on to the  
3 most trivial, ridiculous things to try and jam us  
4 up. For example, a misfiled public record request,  
5 suddenly they act like I've committed a federal  
6 offense. Did I park one inch over the line in front  
7 of Town Hall? I'm practically treated like a  
8 traffic noise. Did my tone sound even slightly  
9 impatient at a public comment? Now I'm disrupting  
10 public order.

11 All this effort to nitpick the tiniest  
12 infractions while they sit on glaring issues that  
13 affect public safety and trust. What does that say  
14 about the leadership? This behavior doesn't just  
15 reflect poorly on individual departments. It's  
16 emblematic of a culture where protecting the  
17 government's image is prioritized over serving the  
18 public. They spend more energy retaliating against  
19 those who expose the truth than actually fixing the  
20 problems being exposed.

21 And the locked stairwell? It's a perfect  
22 metaphor for how this County operates. An obvious  
23 danger ignored or brushed aside while they focus on  
24 punishing the people who try to call it out.

25 MR. FLORIO: That's three minutes,

1 sir.

2 FULL COURT PRESS: Can I finish my  
3 statement?

4 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: You can finish.

5 FULL COURT PRESS: Thank you. By  
6 choosing inaction, you're playing with people's  
7 lives. Lock stairwells can mean the difference  
8 between life and death in an emergency. The fact  
9 that this issue hasn't been resolved, and likely  
10 wouldn't have been brought up if I hadn't noticed  
11 it, underscores a systemic failure.

12 To those in charge, stop protecting each  
13 other at the expense of the public. Unlock those  
14 stairwells. Fix the building. And while you're at  
15 it, maybe spend less time retaliating against  
16 activists for pointing out your failures, and more  
17 time doing the jobs you were elected or appointed to  
18 do. Because at the end of the day, the public isn't  
19 as blind as you think, and eventually, something is  
20 going to give. Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you.

22 Counsel, do me a favor. When the speakers come up,  
23 tell them when they're going to start.

24 THE CLERK: My next speaker is Leroy  
25 Truth.

1 MR. TRUTH: Hello everyone.

2 MR. FLORIO: Sir, before you begin,  
3 you have three minutes. I'll let you know when your  
4 time has expired.

5 MR. TRUTH: Can I have more like that  
6 other gentleman?

7 MR. FLORIO: Well, he was responding  
8 to an inquiry from the Commissioner, so he had to  
9 get enough.

10 MR. TRUTH: I'm not sure I can do  
11 this in three minutes. So number one, ladies and  
12 gentlemen, honored to be here, and the Hudson County  
13 Prosecutor's Office must be shut down immediately.  
14 There is a fire hazard where you cannot, if you're a  
15 member of the public, it is a death box. There are  
16 elevators there with a sign that my friend Full  
17 Court Press found the other day, and the sign says,  
18 go to the stairs in case of a fire.

19 Well, the only problem is, the stairway is  
20 behind locked doors. And that building is out of  
21 code. It has to be shut down immediately until they  
22 unlock those doors. It is a death threat. And to  
23 continue on that, imagine this. I want to drive  
24 this home. I've been there for three days, and no  
25 one has fixed it. There are people who would be

1 shut down instantly if you were a restaurant or a  
2 bar with no egress to a stairwell. It has to be  
3 shut down immediately until that door is unlocked  
4 tomorrow.

5 Imagine this. A young mother, a battered  
6 woman fleeing an abusive relationship, walks into  
7 the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office. She has her  
8 three small children with her, a one-year-old, a  
9 three-year-old, and a four-year-old. She's  
10 desperate for safety, desperate for help. She sits  
11 in the public lobby waiting, hoping for justice.  
12 And then a fire breaks out, and Esther Suarez, the  
13 most corrupt Prosecutor in the country, along with  
14 Senator and Mayor Brian Stack, in conspiracy to kill  
15 investigations they want to.

16 A fire breaks out. The elevators  
17 immediately shut down, as they do during a fire, and  
18 go to the first floor. Flames begin to spread, and  
19 smoke fills the room. The young woman, the young  
20 mother, looks around for the stairs. There are  
21 signs everywhere saying, In case of fire, use the  
22 stairwell. She finds the stairwell doors and  
23 desperately pulls, but the doors won't open.  
24 They're magnetically locked. Bulletproof glass  
25 blocks her escape.

1           She starts banging on the doors with all  
2 her strength. Her knuckles bleed. Her hands break.  
3 But the doors don't budge. Her young children  
4 scream, choking on the smoke. She screams too,  
5 begging for help. As the flames inch closer, and  
6 then they burn. Her children burn. They die a  
7 slow, grisly, agonizing death. She dies too,  
8 knowing there was a way out, if only the Hudson  
9 County Prosecutor's Office had obeyed the law.

10           So I'm demanding you shut her office down,  
11 as of tonight, and it doesn't open until the lobby  
12 has the two doors open, so that the public can go to  
13 the stairwell. They're in major violation of code.  
14 Will you all do that? I mean, it's blatant  
15 violation. There's no -- it's binary. It's ones  
16 and zeros.

17           COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Fortunately, as  
18 legislators, we don't have that problem.

19           MR. TRUTH: You're going to call the  
20 fire marshal?

21           COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yeah. Mr.  
22 Chairman, like, somebody needs to get back to us  
23 tomorrow in response to what's been put before us.  
24 And if you don't get back to us tomorrow, then, you  
25 know, I don't, as an elected official, I have an

1 obligation to reach out to the local fire marshal.

2 MR. TRUTH: I mean, it's against the  
3 law.

4 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: The local  
5 building department, yeah, I mean, it doesn't make  
6 any sense if people aren't able to access this.

7 MR. TRUTH: No. And Esther Suarez  
8 didn't catch that? It's insane.

9 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: There's all the  
10 more reason why the building should, the new  
11 building needs to be open.

12 MR. TRUTH: Oh, by the way, in that,  
13 and I really appreciate you, Mr. O'Dea. You've got  
14 my vote for mayor as well. And when is the new CEO  
15 going to be issued for the building?

16 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I've been asking  
17 for that for a while. We're waiting for that.

18 MR. TRUTH: Now also, by the way,  
19 when I called the Jersey City Fire Department to ask  
20 them to come, the number's out of order. Online,  
21 you do a Google search, Jersey City Fire Department.  
22 I have videos on my Facebook. I encourage all of  
23 you to join my Facebook, Leroy Truth, and my  
24 YouTube, Leroy Truth Investigations. And when I  
25 call, number after number, it's all on my video

1 yesterday, dee-dee-dee, this number's out of order.  
2 Call the next one, this number's out of order. It's  
3 insane. I could not get a hold of a live fire  
4 person to meet me there so I can personally show  
5 them the profound violation because that building,  
6 that section cannot still be there serving people.  
7 They can't. All right. So thank you for your time.

8           And even, one last thing, Mr. Cifelli,  
9 even though I disagree with you, you at least spoke  
10 with me, as opposed to Mayor Brian Stack, who's so  
11 corrupt and stands there like a new idiot. So I  
12 appreciate the communication, and this is one of the  
13 best meetings I've attended. So thank you.

14           THE CLERK: Our next speaker is Mark  
15 Bloomberg.

16           MR. FLORIO: You have three minutes,  
17 Mr. Bloomberg.

18           MR. BLOOMBERG: Thank you. Just a  
19 quick note, John from Red Cross left. One thing  
20 that the Red Cross does, blood donations. I have a  
21 very difficult time finding places to donate blood  
22 in Hudson County. I know Hoboken does it a lot,  
23 but, like, I'm traveling 25 minutes to actually do  
24 it. So just --

25           CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Hoboken does it

1 regularly.

2 MR. BLOOMBERG: Yeah. That aside,  
3 okay, so I actually, here tonight, I wanted to thank  
4 Sam Schroeder, Schroeder, apologies if I've got his  
5 name wrong, and the County for making Tuesday  
6 night's public hearing available for participation  
7 by video, and it likely resulted in significantly  
8 more feedback than if the event had been limited to  
9 in-person only.

10 So I want to follow up on my request from  
11 last month about making Commissioner's meetings a  
12 hybrid offering to encourage greater public  
13 participation. Work schedules, parenting duties,  
14 travel time, disability, limited street parking,  
15 those are just some of the reasons why a video  
16 offering would benefit many County residents. Just  
17 think how nice it would have been for all the people  
18 who are honored here tonight if their loved ones and  
19 people that they've impacted could have actually  
20 watched that live.

21 I'd also remind you about my previous  
22 request at the same time last month to make meeting  
23 minutes available online as we already do with  
24 meeting agendas so that residents don't have to file  
25 an OPRA request in order to keep updated. Residents

1 should be able to readily stay abreast of what  
2 transpires here, especially regarding feedback from  
3 other residents on business that's been brought  
4 forward. It would be so helpful to be able to look  
5 back and see what's been discussed here.

6 For example, just summarizing what I've  
7 said here tonight, it doesn't have to be a huge  
8 thing, not word for word, but just saying Mark  
9 Bloomberg requested hybrid meetings and making  
10 meeting minutes available. So I know, Commissioner  
11 O'Dea, you were talking about potentially  
12 investigating it. I'm asking again if any of you  
13 are willing to move forward on it.

14 Then just two other really quick things,  
15 and hopefully you won't lose all train of thought.  
16 One is I e-mailed each of you last night regarding a  
17 proposal about a driveway project in Braddock Park.  
18 I'd really appreciate it if you read that and let me  
19 know who might be able to look at it because it  
20 could save a lot of trees that would needlessly get  
21 cut down otherwise.

22 Then lastly, I want to publicly  
23 acknowledge the Jersey Journal tonight just for all  
24 the hard work that they've done over the last 150  
25 years. I'm really surprised that it hasn't been

1 mentioned by any of you, given that their last day  
2 is at the end of this month. Again, thank you for  
3 listening. If you do have any feedback regarding my  
4 primary point about hybrid meetings and publishing  
5 the meeting minutes, I'd greatly appreciate it.  
6 Thank you.

7                   COMMISSIONER O'DEA: A couple of  
8 points. As for the Jersey Journal, I was just  
9 probably going to do that at the first meeting. I'm  
10 certainly disheartened by the closure. Having one  
11 time many, many years ago been a Jersey Journal  
12 delivery boy, 12 and 13 years old.

13                   On the other issues, why wouldn't we put  
14 our minutes online? It's a no-brainer. Can I  
15 suggest to the Chair that why don't we do a step at  
16 a time, which is why can't we at least initially  
17 make the meeting available for people to watch?  
18 Then after that, we can discuss people that watch  
19 being able to speak as part of the meeting. I would  
20 strongly suggest, and I don't know what. I don't  
21 think we need to do a resolution. I think the Chair  
22 needs to do it.

23                   There's zero downside in letting this  
24 thing be available to the public by Zoom. What's  
25 wrong with letting people watch the meeting at 4.30

1 every second or fourth Thursday of the month? Can  
2 anyone explain to us why we don't just do it? I  
3 know there are two issues. In my world, I'd like  
4 you to be able to watch and I'd like you to be able  
5 to speak. I got spanked when we had a meeting that  
6 allowed that, and it went to one o'clock in the  
7 morning and I got to take the meeting over at 11:30,  
8 but that comes with the territory.

9 For now, why can't we just do the first  
10 step, which is allow individuals to at least watch  
11 the meeting to see what's going on in County  
12 government, and then whatever, two, three months  
13 down the road, let's have a more detailed discussion  
14 as to how we allow individuals who are watching it  
15 to be able to speak on items that are of interest to  
16 them. So I don't know. Can the Chair just do that?  
17 Should I put up a resolution and see if I can get  
18 you guys to move on to it? Please let me know by  
19 the next meeting. We'll discuss it with all the  
20 Commissioners.

21 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Mr. Chairman,  
22 I think Commissioner O'Dea's suggestion is fine. I  
23 don't see any reason logistically or otherwise why  
24 we can't make the minutes available, and people can  
25 see what they're looking for. I guess the second

1 thing is whether or not people remotely can  
2 participate, and it's true what they say. We've  
3 tried that a few times, and it's a bad experience.  
4 But that's something that will be a work in  
5 progress, because why tune it in such a way to  
6 accommodate everybody. However, the first step, I  
7 think it's a no-brainer.

8 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: We can both  
9 admit it's a video, and letting people watch the  
10 meeting.

11 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: When it went  
12 public, it got nasty. People had a line going from  
13 Germany to California.

14 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: And I think  
15 Bill misstated something. He said we were here  
16 until 1 o'clock. I think it was about 3 o'clock.

17 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: It was so late,  
18 I don't remember.

19 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: And many of  
20 our speakers were people that were from out of  
21 County, that it was more of a national issue. It  
22 had to do with ICE, and having participation in  
23 housing, and that really got out of hand, and a lot  
24 of people were here. We could have been here until  
25 three o'clock the next afternoon. So that has to be

1 something that's more regulated. But I think the  
2 first step, I think that's a no-brainer.

3 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Look, I think we  
4 can figure out how to address what literally is one  
5 time, in all the time that we did it, right? It's  
6 not multiple occasions. It was one time. As you  
7 said, a national issue that right now is front and  
8 center again, right? Front and center again.

9 But you're right. With people that are  
10 not from Hudson County, because once you're remote,  
11 you can be from anywhere in the world. So we'll  
12 figure that out.

13 MR. BLOOMBERG: I agree, and I had  
14 heard about that as well. I didn't participate on  
15 that call. I think the Jersey Journal wrote about  
16 it afterwards. You know, there are things that you  
17 can do. Just like today, I have to sign up two days  
18 in advance. You do something like that. You've got  
19 to sign up in advance. You have to provide your  
20 address and prove that you're actually a County  
21 resident, you know, to put some things in place.

22 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Maybe there's  
23 a way that we can allow that. It's open for  
24 discussion.

25 MR. BLOOMBERG: I'm not saying solve

1 at this minute.

2 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: We have a  
3 motion that we can make for, I guess the word is  
4 closure, where we can actually stop public comment  
5 after a certain number of hours or whatever.

6 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: That's what  
7 you'll have to do.

8 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: I think we'll  
9 have to look into the reality of that. That's a way  
10 to accommodate them.

11 MR. BLOOMBERG: That's totally fair.  
12 I mean, again, look at Tuesday's meeting. If I  
13 could have been here, bad weather and other things,  
14 you know, I like to show up in person. But we had a  
15 really good meeting, and that should be the standard  
16 that we look at. So, again, thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So let's agree  
18 minutes made public, meetings for now, at least  
19 available for people to see them, and then let us  
20 take a little time to figure out how we regulate the  
21 public participation portion.

22 Al, I think you have the easiest point,  
23 which is a lot of places limit the discussion. So  
24 they literally limit it to whatever, two hours on a  
25 particular item that may be of high controversy. So

1    yeah, I think we can do that. I know other places,  
2    I know the Jersey City Board of Ed. actually limits  
3    the amount of time. So let's figure that out. We  
4    don't need to figure that out to start at least  
5    letting people watch our meetings. So I would ask  
6    that we do the minutes on public, and Zoom for  
7    anyone who wants to watch our meetings, and for the  
8    next meeting, there's no reason why we shouldn't.

9                   CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you. Next  
10 speaker, please.

11                   MR. BLOOMBERG: Thank you all. Stay  
12 warm.

13                   THE CLERK: We have no further  
14 speakers. So there's no other business to come  
15 before the Board. Do we have a motion to adjourn?

16                   CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Motion.

17                   COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Second.

18                   THE CLERK: All those in favor?  
19 Opposed? We're adjourned.

20                   (Whereupon the proceeding is then  
21 concluded at 5:32 p.m.)  
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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

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 23, 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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