

HUDSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

RE:

CAUCUS 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,
County Commissioners Chambers
567 Pavonia Avenue
Jersey City, New Jersey
Tuesday, February 25, 2025
4:30 p.m.

B E F O R E:

CERTIFIED ORIGINAL

ANTHONY ROMANO, Chairman
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:

CARMEN E. MENDIOLA, ESQ., Board Counsel
DONATO J. BATTISTA, Hudson County Counsel
ABRAHAM ANTUN, County Administrator
WILLIE ORTIZ, County Commissioner Clerk
Reported By: Shari Cathey, CCR, RPR

1 THE CLERK: Commissioner

2 Aponte-Lipski. Commissioner Baselice.

3 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Here.

4 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

5 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Here.

6 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

7 Commissioner Kopacz. Commissioner O'Dea.

8 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Here.

9 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

10 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Here.

11 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

12 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Here.

13 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

14 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Here.

15 THE CLERK: L-1, to congratulate and
16 commend Kelly Carroll on being honored as the Hudson
17 County Teacher of the Year 2024-2025.

18 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: We've got Carrie.

19 THE CLERK: For the record,
20 Commissioner Rodriguez is present via Zoom.

21 Resolution No. 1, 2025 Emergency Temporary
22 Appropriations N.J.S.A 40A:4-20.

23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Baselice Romano.

24 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 2.

25 Resolution accepting grant funds from the New Jersey

1 Department of Law and Public Safety Division of
2 Administration from the SFY25 arrive together
3 Critical Incident Model Grant, \$136,800.

4 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Sponsor.

5 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Second.

6 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 3.

7 Resolution authorizing an application and acceptance
8 of funds, if awarded, from the New Jersey Department
9 of Human Services Inclusive Healthy Communities
10 Grant Program, July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2027;
11 not to Exceed \$250,000.

12 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Sponsor.

13 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Second.

14 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 4.

15 Resolution accepting grant funds from the New Jersey
16 Division of Criminal Justice from the 2024 New
17 Jersey State Body Armor Replacement Grant,
18 \$53,049.56.

19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Romano-Walker.

20 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 5.

21 Resolution accepting FY2025 Grant Funds from the
22 State of New Jersey Department of Human Services
23 Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services for
24 Medication Assisted Treatment for Substance Abuse in
25 New Jersey County Jails, October 1, 2024 to

1 September 30, 2025, \$688,548.

2 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Sponsor.

3 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Second.

4 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 6.

5 Resolution accepting a FFY24 Hazardous Materials
6 Emergency Preparedness Grant from the United States
7 Department of Transportation through the State of
8 New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety,
9 October 1, 2024 to September 30, 2025, \$20,000.

10 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Sponsor.

11 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Second.

12 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 7.

13 Resolution authorizing the award of Educational
14 Services Contracts, Non-Fair and Open with Hudson
15 Pride Center and La Reina + Company to provide
16 Specialized Training Services to Continuum of Care
17 Members, January 1, 2025 through June 30, 2025,
18 \$15,200.

19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Sponsor.

20 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Second.

21 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 8.

22 Resolution authorizing payment to Inclusion
23 Solutions LLC for surveying, training and assisting
24 staff for ADA Accessibility regarding all poll sites
25 in Hudson County as required by the United States

1 Department of Justice, \$76,090.

2 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Thank you for
3 that. Question. I have a question about the
4 polling places. Did you notify us of any polling
5 place location changes?

6 MR. HARPER: Yes, absolutely. I
7 thought I checked on it.

8 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yeah, yeah.
9 You said this evening, because it was a situation of
10 that, I guess, Indoamerican Community Center, and it
11 was -- I think they only were going to Sacred Heart,
12 something like that. But I'll call you up on it,
13 but it was a lot of confusion, man.

14 MR. HARPER: There was one more over
15 there, VFW over there. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

16 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yeah. So,
17 thank you.

18 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 9.
19 Resolution approving a Non-Fair and Open Contract
20 with Full Service Mailers, Inc. for the provision of
21 Election related services on behalf of the County
22 Clerk Postal Computer and Mailing Services, April 1,
23 2025 to March 31, 2026, \$80,000.

24 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Sponsor.

25 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Second.

1 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 10.
2 Resolution authorizing payment to Cellebrite, USA
3 Corp., DBA Cellebrite, Inc. for the purchase of
4 Cellebrite Universal Forensic Extraction Device
5 subscription for the Hudson County Sheriff's Office,
6 February 6, 2025 to February 5, 2026, \$6,900.

7 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Romano-Baselice.

8 THE CLERK: Reslution No. 11.
9 Resolution authorizing payment to Cellebrite, USA
10 Corp., DBA Cellebrite, Inc. for the purchase of
11 Cellebrite Universal Forensic Extraction Device
12 Software Package and Premium License Renewals for
13 the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office, April 13,
14 2025 to April 12, 2026, \$87,835.62.

15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Romano-Rodriguez.
16 Adam, you're talking like an MOU or something like
17 that?

18 MR. SALZER: I do not know. I can
19 find out for you.

20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Are both of you,
21 Sheriff and you, this is for your package?

22 MR. SALZER: Yes.

23 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Assuming the
24 Sheriff has the package, is there a discount or what
25 do we do?

1 MR. SALZER: I don't know
2 specifically what the Sheriff has, but I can find
3 out.

4 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Commissioner Kopacz
5 is on scene.

6 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 12,
7 Resolution approving payment to Teel Technologies
8 for new forensic equipment and renewal of existing
9 licenses on behalf of the Prosecutor's Office, May
10 6, 2025 to May 5, 2026, \$30,557.03.

11 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Sponsor.

12 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Second.

13 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 13.
14 Approve Purchasing Agent's Award purchases made
15 under State Contracts.

16 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Rodriguez-Walker.

17 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I just have a
18 general question. Is somebody here for Purchasing?
19 Who's here for Purchasing? So when you open -- no
20 one's here for Purchasing?

21 MR. ANTUN: Yeah. Yeah. Mr.
22 Chairman, Harold's got it.

23 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: You got it. You
24 got it. So can I ask a simple question? When you
25 open a bid, why can't we now allow people to attend

1 that remotely?

2 MR. ANTUN: Commissioner, we have
3 never discussed having that be done for bid
4 openings. You're talking about the State contracts?

5 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: No, no. I have
6 a general question. So when you put out something
7 to bid, why couldn't we allow there to be a remote
8 way for somebody to be there when the bids are open
9 because you require people to be there when the bids
10 are open.

11 MR. SHOWERS: Yes. They can be
12 there.

13 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I'm sorry. Is
14 somebody else speaking?

15 MR. SHOWERS: Yes. Yes.

16 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: But again, but
17 why not allow them to be there if they'd like to be
18 there remotely so you can see?

19 MR. ANTUN: They never considered it.
20 They never looked into that.

21 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I don't think
22 it's costing anything. You open the bids on a desk
23 table, and that's where the cameras show that people
24 can watch whatever they're doing. We would have to
25 provide some kind of a link.

1 MR. ANTUN: We'd have to evaluate
2 that.

3 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Other places do.
4 Obviously, I'm not making this up.

5 MR. ANTUN: No, no. I'm sure -- as I
6 said, Commissioner, simple answer, we never
7 considered it.

8 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I'm asking you
9 to consider it.

10 MR. ANTUN: Okay.

11 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I think it
12 allows more people to at least see what's going on
13 at the bid process if they have any questions. In
14 fact, if you're not there, it's harder to ask a
15 question if you weren't able to see what happened.
16 You know, if we do consider it, we're not going to
17 open it up to questions because all we do is read
18 the --

19 MR. ANTUN: I understand that.

20 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Okay. But if I
21 wanted to come to a meeting and object, then I was
22 there, I was able to observe, but I couldn't
23 physically be there. That's all I'm asking.
24 I'm not asking that it become a public forum.

25 MR. ANTUN: I got you.

1 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Even if you're
2 live, you're not allowed to ask questions.

3 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. Director
4 Fuller.

5 DIRECTOR FULLER: We will look into
6 retrofitting the room where we open the bids to make
7 that available. I'll speak to what he's talking
8 about.

9 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Harold, did you
10 want to say something?

11 MR. SHOWERS: Yes. I was just going
12 to say that individuals are allowed to ask questions
13 after the fact. Even if they didn't attend, they
14 can request results after the fact. Because it's a
15 public --

16 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: We understand
17 that. We see that all the time. But this is just a
18 simple request. Allow a remote ability for someone
19 to watch bids being opened. Simple request. Thank
20 you.

21 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 14.
22 Purchases made under the Educational Services
23 Commission of New Jersey Pricing System, formally
24 known as "The Middlesex Regional Educational
25 Services Commission.

1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Rodriguez-Walker.

2 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 15.

3 Purchases made under Union County Cooperative
4 Pricing System.

5 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Rodriguez-Walker.

6 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 16.

7 Purchases made under Bergen County Cooperative
8 Pricing System.

9 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Sponsor.

10 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Second.

11 MR. BORACZEK: I'm sorry. The
12 Sheriff. Yeah, the Sheriff. He's got his hand up.

13 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Go ahead. Go
14 ahead, Andrew.

15 UNDERSHERIFF CONTI: Hello?

16 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Go ahead, Andrew.

17 UNDERSHERIFF CONTI: Oh, okay. That
18 purchase for the Prosecutor's office, it's probably
19 for their equipment. And I don't believe that that
20 equipment is mobile. So if we're working on an
21 investigation, and they have an investigation that's
22 definitely confidential, I think when we purchased
23 this, it was because of that. It would be a
24 conflict for us to be involved or for them to keep
25 our equipment as long as they need it.

1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: No, no, no.
2 Andrew, I was asking if you look at the agenda items
3 10 and 11, they're both from the same company. What
4 I'm trying to say is, is there a possibility of some
5 kind of sharing when appropriate?

6 UNDERSHERIFF CONTI: Well, our \$4,600
7 is the payment for the year for the service. Their
8 payment must include the equipment.

9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. Go ahead and
10 continue, Mr. Clerk. Thank you.

11 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 17.
12 Approve Purchasing Agent's Awards.

13 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Rodriguez-Walker.

14 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 18.
15 Resolution authorizing Fair and Open Competitive
16 Contracts with Partners in Prevention under the
17 CY2025 Alcoholism and Drug Misuse Services
18 Innovation Grant Program, March 1, 2025 through
19 September 29, 2025, \$244,756.

20 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Sponsor,
21 Kopacz.

22 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Second.

23 THE CLERK: Resolution 19.
24 Resolution approving a fair and open competitive
25 contract for Years Three through Five with Health,

1 PCP to provide accounting and billing services for
2 Meadowview Psychiatric Hospital, April 1, 2025
3 through March 31, 2028, \$828,000.

4 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Sponsor.

5 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Second.

6 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Were there other
7 bidders or this is just an extension?

8 MR. ANTUN: Commissioner, this was
9 done pursuant to the Competitive Contracting
10 Committee. We awarded the first two years. We're
11 just now asking for the last three years.

12 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Okay. So it's
13 five years?

14 MR. ANTUN: Yeah.

15 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: And the price
16 stayed the same?

17 MR. ANTUN: Yeah.

18 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I don't want to
19 discuss it now or any time, but we need to look from
20 the hospital's perspective with what's happening in
21 Medicare. We've not been able to put people out in
22 the street.

23 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 20.

24 Resolution authorization to amend Resolution Nos.
25 466-8-2022, 128-2-2023, 405-7-2022 and 218-4-2023 to

1 extend Community Development Block Grant CDBG-CV2
2 Grant Funding at No Cost to the County, September 1,
3 2022 through May 31, 2026.

4 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Again, we
5 have -- we pay someone to monitor D.C. for us,
6 right? I hope we're getting information. I hope
7 you're sharing it with us. But this is under --
8 this is under attack also, right?

9 MR. ANTUN: I haven't done anything
10 specific on that.

11 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: This is one of
12 the items that we have to monitor closely based on
13 what's going on in Washington.

14 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 21. This
15 is a replacement, Commissioners. Resolution
16 authorizing grant reprogramming request for One Open
17 Space Trust Fund Grantee PI-01-24 Peninsula at
18 Bayonne Harbor Waterfront Walkway Extension,
19 February 27, 2025 to February 26, 2027 \$500,000.

20 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Sponsor.

21 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Second.

22 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 22.
23 Resolution designating qualified respondents to
24 provide General Real Estate Appraiser Services.

25 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Sponsor.

1 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Second.

2 THE CLERK: I-1. Ordinance of the
3 County of Hudson, State of New Jersey authorizing
4 the guaranty of the payment of the principal of and
5 interest on not exceeding \$52,500,000 aggregate
6 principal amount of County-Guaranteed Housing
7 Revenue Bonds issued by the Hudson County
8 Improvement Authority for the purpose of providing
9 additional security therefor, consenting to such
10 financing and determining certain other matters in
11 connection therewith.

12 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: And I just want
13 to go on record that we should, to the degree that
14 we can humanly possible do this, we should be
15 looking to do this on any aspired LIHTC project
16 that's going to create 20-percent or more affordable
17 housing. Because the programs, the economics, the
18 difference in economics through this bond guarantee
19 versus if they had to go to the private market and
20 borrow money over 10 years for the credit payments
21 is, I'm going to say, 7 or 8 million, maybe 7 or
22 \$8 million a day.

23 It's real money, and that makes the
24 difference between the project mentally and
25 otherwise. I know when this first came up, I spoke

1 to the Administration, et cetera, and they asked my
2 expertise. I had a few days, and I'm glad to see
3 that you guys are here.

4 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman, we'll use
5 the prior sponsors for the ordinances for adoption,
6 and I will now turn it over to the Administration.

7 MR. ANTUN: Mr. Chairman, I have no
8 additional items.

9 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman, I have one
10 additional item. This will be Resolution No. 23.
11 I'll read it by title. A resolution of the Hudson
12 County Board of Commissioners urging the Jersey City
13 Council to remove summer camp fees and restore free
14 access for all children.

15 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Sponsor.

16 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Second.

17 THE CLERK: Okay. Well, that's all I
18 have, Mr. Chairman.

19 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: One thing, real
20 briefly. So to the credit of the County Prosecutor,
21 we consulted on a concern with the ability to do a
22 mental health court, something that I was drawn to
23 over a year ago. Craig in the Administration has
24 been supportive. The Prosecutor at last year's
25 budget hearing was very strongly supportive, and I

1 think we're right there. I think we're on the
2 five-yard line. Speaking to her today, all the
3 pieces, the public defender, the prosecutor, the
4 judiciary, are all lined up.

5 We're at the point where there has to be
6 evaluations done, and who's going to pay for those
7 and who will do them? The "who" will do them exists
8 because they already do them for individuals that
9 may plead not guilty by reason of insanity or mental
10 defect. So the entity already exists, and only by
11 accident.

12 The Clerk and I were speaking to them last
13 week when we were talking about this. We said, Wow,
14 there's already somebody in place. The question is
15 who pays for it? Obviously, I believe that in the
16 long run we need to take the position and get the
17 State to pay for it because they pay for the others.
18 But I think we shouldn't wait. We should do what we
19 call, I don't want to say a test case, but it's like
20 proof of concept. I think we have the ability to do
21 proof of concept.

22 The prosecutor thinks there may be 10 to
23 12 individuals. We should figure out what the cost
24 per assessment would be, and you know, if possible,
25 I could sit in on your public safety meeting on

1 Thursday. And I think we should move this forward.
2 We all want to do this. We're all committed to do
3 it. All the pieces are in place. It's not costing
4 us billions of dollars. We don't need a new judge
5 to the credit of the Assignment Judge Katz and to
6 the judge that is in charge of the recovery court.
7 We said we can handle that side of it.

8 From a programming perspective, there was
9 this concern we don't have programming for these
10 individuals. Not true. To Frank Mazza and Family
11 Services and Reintegration, there's pages of
12 programs that these individuals can go to, and in
13 extreme cases, we already know because individuals
14 from the correctional center have been sent to
15 Silver Lake. So we know what exists based on the
16 level of what treatment individuals may need. They
17 already exist. Don't have to worry about that cost.

18 So we're only down to the Prosecutor,
19 public and federal courts. Individuals have to be
20 done an evaluation assessment in order to qualify.
21 Let's -- you know, whatever. It costs us \$30,000,
22 \$40,000. It may not even be that much. To get
23 those initial done, to prove this works, to prove it
24 saves money from the criminal justice system because
25 now people aren't going through an entire process to

1 go to a trial or a pretrial. Saves money in the
2 correctional center because now individuals who
3 should never be in the correctional center where the
4 conditions more often than not, get worse, not
5 better, are not put -- are diverted out of that
6 system. So there's money savings there. So the
7 savings, in my opinion, will exceed the cost.

8 So I think we can talk about that
9 Thursday. I think if we're willing to take on the
10 first 10 to 12 individuals to prove the concept, to
11 go on record to the State saying we're doing this as
12 a pilot, you should pay for it because at the end of
13 the day, we're saving the criminal justice system
14 from substantial money by doing it. I think that's
15 something we should do, announce, and be proud of
16 here.

17 We'll start. I just had the pleasure of
18 having a meeting with the new assignment judge,
19 Judge Katz. He's a wonderful, wonderful, wonderful
20 person. He has such experience from Essex County
21 and the courts in Newark with two things that are
22 very close, but experiences to help us get those
23 programs going because he said that mental health,
24 hopefully, is the best response. Great. And look,
25 on domestic violence, all I can say is, like, the

1 rule just needs to be changed.

2 If someone files a restraining order
3 against an individual, prior to them lifting the
4 restraining order, they should have to speak to one
5 of the many professional agencies that exist to
6 assist people that are victims of domestic violence
7 to ensure that they're removing the restraining
8 order for a good reason and not being either
9 pressured or threatened to do it and right now, you
10 know, that system isn't placed the way that it
11 should be.

12 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Can I say
13 something?

14 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Go ahead, Al.

15 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: To disagree
16 with Bill, my experience in domestic violence
17 matters is when movements of plaintiffs, whether
18 it's a parent, a wife, a husband, significant other,
19 when they come before the court, and it's a very
20 common scenario where they don't want to pursue the
21 domestic violence complaint either because they've
22 reconciled with the aggressor or the fugitive
23 aggressor or for whatever reason.

24 My experience is that they always have to
25 go, before they go before the judge and tell the

1 judge that they want to retract that or dismiss it.
2 They have to have a counseling session. Now, that
3 counseling session may be preferential, it may not
4 be as intense as it should be, but they just don't
5 go to court unless they're there with an attorney,
6 which is kind of like, I've got a few involved in
7 committing domestic violence, very often lawyers are
8 not involved, but they usually have to be counseled
9 by someone in the domestic violence section of the
10 family court before they're allowed to go to the
11 Court and say, you know, I don't want to go forward
12 with this.

13 And now, I don't disagree with you. The
14 question is whether those individuals have the
15 appropriate licensing to deal with some of this.
16 That's what I said. That's the schematic of it.
17 Whether or not the substance of the counseling is as
18 thorough as it should be, that remains to be seen.
19 And so I agree with you to that extent.

20 But I don't want to think that people just
21 walk in there and say, No, I just wanted to dismiss
22 this against my husband or my wife or my boyfriend
23 or my girlfriend. They go through a screening.
24 Whether that screening is adequate enough, that's
25 the issue, I think.

1 COMMISSIONER WALKER: I just want to
2 make one comment on 15, and the purchasing for
3 co-op. If so, if possible, could they print the
4 information a little bit bigger? I don't have
5 20-20. I can't even.

6 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: There's a backup
7 sheet there.

8 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yeah, you can't
9 even see.

10 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: There's a basket
11 in front of you.

12 COMMISSIONER WALKER: No, not a
13 little basket. A big one.

14 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Anything, Mr.
15 Clerk? Anything on the Commissioners? From
16 directors and staff?

17 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Motion to
18 adjourn.

19 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Motion.

20 THE CLERK: All in favor? We are
21 adjourned.

22 (Whereupon the proceeding is then
23 concluded at 5:01 p.m.)

24
25

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 Caucus Meeting
of the Hudson County Board of County Commissioners,
held on Tuesday, February 25, 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

0	2024 3:16,25	30xi00234700	8
01-24 14:17	4:9	23:4	8 4:21 15:21,22
1	2024-2025 2:17	31 5:23 13:3	80,000 5:23
1 2:15,21 3:10	2025 1:9 2:21	14:3	828,000 13:3
3:25 4:9,17	3:10 4:1,9,17	4	87,835.62. 6:14
5:22 12:18	4:17 5:23 6:6	4 3:14	9
13:2 14:2 15:2	6:14 7:10	4,600 12:6	9 5:18
10 6:1 12:3	12:18,19 13:2	4-20 2:22	9078 23:12
15:20 17:22	14:19 23:8	40,000 18:22	a
19:10	2026 5:23 6:6	405-7-2022	ability 10:18
11 6:8 12:3	6:14 7:10 14:3	13:25	16:21 17:20
12 6:14 7:6	2027 3:10	40a 2:22	able 9:15,22
17:23 19:10	14:19	466-8-2022	13:21
128-2-2023	2028 13:3	13:25	abraham 1:22
13:25	21 14:14	4:30 1:10	absolutely 5:6
13 6:13 7:13	218-4-2023	5	abuse 3:24
136,800 3:3	13:25	5 3:20 6:6 7:10	acceptance 3:7
14 10:21	22 14:22	500,000 14:19	accepting 2:25
15 11:2 22:2	2283786 23:14	52,500,000 15:5	3:15,21 4:5
15,200 4:18	23 16:10	53,049.56. 3:18	access 16:14
16 11:6	244,756 12:19	567 1:8	accessibility
17 12:11	25 1:9 23:8	5:01 22:23	4:24
18 12:14	250,000 3:11	6	accident 17:11
19 12:23	26 14:19	6 4:4 6:6 7:10	accounting
2	27 14:19	6,900 6:6	13:1
2 2:24	29 12:19	688,548 4:1	ada 4:24
2/4/27 23:15	3	7	adam 6:16
20 13:23 15:16	3 3:6	7 4:12 15:21,21	addiction 3:23
20,000 4:9	30 3:10 4:1,9	76,090 5:1	additional 15:9
20-20 22:5	4:17		16:8,10
2022 14:3	30,000 18:21		adequate 21:24
	30,557.03. 7:10		

adjourn 22:18	amount 15:6	assessment	6:7,23
adjourned 22:21	andrew 11:14 11:16 12:2	17:24 18:20	basket 22:10,13
administration 1:7 3:2 16:1,6 16:23	announce 19:15	assignment 18:5 19:18	battista 1:21
administrator 1:22	answer 9:6	assist 20:6	bayonne 14:18
adoption 16:5	anthony 1:14	assisted 3:24	behalf 5:21 7:9
affordable 15:16	antun 1:22 7:21 8:2,19 9:1 9:5,10,19,25 13:8,14,17 14:9 16:7	assisting 4:23	believe 11:19 17:15
agencies 20:5	aponte 2:2	assuming 6:23	bergen 11:7
agenda 12:2	application 3:7	attack 14:8	best 19:24
agent's 7:14 12:12	appraiser 14:24	attend 7:25 10:13	better 19:5
aggregate 15:5	appropriate 12:5 21:15	attorney 21:5	bid 7:25 8:3,7 9:13
aggressor 20:22,23	appropriations 2:22	authority 15:8	bidders 13:7
ago 16:23	approve 7:14 12:12	authorization 13:24	bids 8:8,9,22 10:6,19
agree 21:19	approving 5:19 7:7 12:24	authorizing 3:7 4:13,22 6:2,9 12:15 14:16 15:3	big 22:13
ahead 11:13,14 11:16 12:9 20:14	april 5:22 6:13 6:14 13:2	available 10:7	bigger 22:4
al 20:14	armor 3:17	avenue 1:8	bill 20:16
albert 1:15	arrive 3:2	award 4:13 7:14	billing 13:1
alcoholism 12:17	asked 16:1	awarded 3:8 13:10	billions 18:4
allow 7:25 8:7 8:17 10:18	asking 9:8,23 9:24 12:2 13:11	awards 12:12	bit 22:4
allowed 10:2 10:12 21:10	aspired 15:15	b	block 14:1
allows 9:12		b 1:11	board 1:1,4,20 16:12 23:7
amend 13:24		backup 22:6	body 3:17
		based 14:12 18:15	bond 15:18
		baselice 1:14 2:2,3,23 5:25	bonds 15:7
			boraczek 11:11
			borrow 15:20
			boyfriend 21:22
			briefly 16:20
			budget 16:25

building 1:7	7:16,22 10:3	commissioner	community
c	11:1,5,13,16	1:14,15,15,16	5:10 14:1
c 23:1,1	12:1,9,13	1:16,17,17,23	company 4:15
call 5:12 17:19	14:21 16:4,7,9	2:1,2,3,4,5,6,7	12:3
cameras 8:23	16:18 20:14	2:7,8,9,10,11	competitive
camp 16:13	22:6,14	2:12,20 3:5,12	12:15,24 13:9
care 4:16	chambers 1:8	3:13 4:2,3,10	complaint
caridad 1:17	changed 20:1	4:11,20 5:2,8	20:21
carmen 1:20	changes 5:5	5:16,24,25	computer 5:22
carrie 2:18	charge 18:6	6:23 7:4,12,17	concept 17:20
carroll 2:16	checked 5:7	7:23 8:2,5,13	17:21 19:10
case 17:19	children 16:14	8:16,21 9:3,6,8	concern 16:21
cases 18:13	cifelli 1:15 2:6	9:11,20 10:1,9	18:9
cathey 1:24	13:5 20:12,15	10:16 11:9,10	concluded
23:3,13	city 1:9 16:12	12:20,22 13:4	22:23
caucus 1:3 23:6	clerk 1:23 2:1,4	13:5,6,8,12,15	conditions 19:4
ccr 1:24 23:3	2:6,9,11,13,15	13:18 14:4,11	confidential
23:13	2:19,24 3:6,14	14:20,25 15:1	11:22
cdbg 14:1	3:20 4:4,12,21	15:12 16:15,16	conflict 11:24
cedeño 1:15 2:4	5:18,22 6:1,8	16:19 20:12,15	confusion 5:13
2:5	7:6,13 10:21	22:1,8,10,12,17	congratulate
celebrite 6:2,3	11:2,6 12:10	22:19	2:15
6:4,9,10,11	12:11,14,23	commissioners	connection
center 4:15	13:23 14:14,22	1:1,4,8 14:15	15:11
5:10 18:14	15:2 16:4,9,17	16:12 22:15	consenting
19:2,3	17:12 22:15,20	23:7	15:9
certain 15:10	close 19:22	committed 18:2	consider 9:9,16
certify 23:5	closely 14:12	committee	considered
cetera 16:1	come 9:21	13:10	8:19 9:7
chairman 1:14	20:19	committing	consulted
2:13,14,18,23	commend 2:16	21:7	16:21
3:4,19 4:19 6:7	comment 22:2	common 20:20	conti 11:15,17
6:15,20 7:4,11	commission	communities	12:6
	10:23,25 23:15	3:9	

<p>continue 12:10 continuum 4:16 contract 5:19 12:25 contracting 13:9 contracts 4:14 7:15 8:4 12:16 cooperative 11:3,7 corp 6:3,10 correct 23:9 correctional 18:14 19:2,3 cost 14:2 17:23 18:17 19:7 costing 8:22 18:3 costs 18:21 council 16:13 counsel 1:20,21 counseled 21:8 counseling 21:2 21:3,17 county 1:1,1,4 1:4,7,8,21,22 1:23 2:17 3:25 4:25 5:21 6:5 6:13 11:3,7 14:2 15:3,6,7 16:12,20 19:20 23:7,7</p>	<p>court 16:22 18:6 20:19 21:5,10,11 courts 18:19 19:21 craig 16:23 create 15:16 credit 15:20 16:20 18:5 criminal 3:16 18:24 19:13 critical 3:3 cv2 14:1 cy2025 12:17</p> <p style="text-align: center;">d</p> <p>d.c. 14:5 day 15:22 19:13 days 16:2 dba 6:3,10 deal 21:15 defect 17:10 defender 17:3 definitely 11:22 degree 15:13 department 3:1 3:8,22 4:7,8 5:1 designating 14:23 desk 8:22 determining 15:10</p>	<p>development 14:1 device 6:4,11 difference 15:18,24 director 10:3,5 directors 22:16 disagree 20:15 21:13 discount 6:24 discuss 13:19 discussed 8:3 dismiss 21:1,21 diverted 19:5 division 3:1,16 3:23 doing 8:24 19:11,14 dollars 18:4 domestic 19:25 20:6,16,21 21:7,9 donato 1:21 drawn 16:22 drug 12:17</p> <p style="text-align: center;">e</p> <p>e 1:6,6,11,11,19 1:19,20 23:1 economics 15:17,18 educational 4:13 10:22,24</p>	<p>either 20:8,21 election 5:21 emergency 2:21 4:6 ensure 20:7 entire 18:25 entity 17:10 equipment 7:8 11:19,20,25 12:8 esq 1:20 essex 19:20 estate 14:24 et 16:1 evaluate 9:1 evaluation 18:20 evaluations 17:6 evening 5:9 exceed 3:11 19:7 exceeding 15:5 exist 18:17 20:5 existing 7:8 exists 17:7,10 18:15 experience 19:20 20:16,24 experiences 19:22 expertise 16:2 expires 23:15</p>
--	---	--	--

<p>extend 14:1 extension 13:7 14:18 extent 21:19 extraction 6:4 6:11 extreme 18:13</p>	<p>formally 10:23 forum 9:24 forward 18:1 21:11 frank 18:10 free 16:13 front 22:11 fugitive 20:22 full 5:20 fuller 10:4,5 fund 14:17 funding 14:2 funds 2:25 3:8 3:15,21 fy2025 3:21</p>	<p>good 20:8 grant 2:25 3:3 3:10,15,17,21 4:6 12:18 14:1 14:2,16 grantee 14:17 great 19:24 guarantee 15:18 guaranteed 15:6 guaranty 15:4 guess 5:10 guilty 17:9 guys 16:3</p>	<p>heart 5:11 held 23:8 hello 11:15 help 19:22 honored 2:16 hope 14:6,6 hopefully 19:24 hospital 13:2 hospital's 13:20 housing 15:6 15:17 hudson 1:1,4,7 1:21 2:16 4:14 4:25 6:5,13 15:3,7 16:11 23:7 human 3:9,22 humanly 15:14 husband 20:18 21:22</p>
<p>f</p>	<p>g</p>	<p>h</p>	<p>i</p>
<p>f 1:11 23:1 fact 9:14 10:13 10:14 fair 4:14 5:19 12:15,24 family 18:10 21:10 fanny 1:15 favor 22:20 february 1:9 6:6,6 14:19,19 23:8 federal 18:19 fees 16:13 ff24 4:5 figure 17:23 files 20:2 financing 15:10 find 6:19 7:2 first 13:10 15:25 19:10 five 12:25 13:13 17:2 forensic 6:4,11 7:8</p>	<p>general 7:18 8:6 14:24 getting 14:6 girlfriend 21:23 glad 16:2 go 11:13,13,16 12:9 15:13,19 18:12 19:1,11 20:14,25,25 21:5,10,11,23 going 5:11 9:12 9:16 10:11 14:13 15:16,21 17:6 18:25 19:23</p>	<p>hand 11:12 handle 18:7 happened 9:15 happening 13:20 harbor 14:18 harder 9:14 harold 10:9 harold's 7:22 harper 5:6,14 hazardous 4:5 health 3:23 12:25 16:22 19:23 healthy 3:9 hearing 16:25</p>	<p>i.d. 23:14 improvement 15:8 incident 3:3 include 12:8 inclusion 4:22 inclusive 3:9 individual 20:3 individuals 10:12 17:8,23 18:10,12,13,16</p>

<p>18:19 19:2,10 21:14 indoamerican 5:10 information 14:6 22:4 initial 18:23 innovation 12:18 insanity 17:9 intense 21:4 interest 15:5 investigation 11:21,21 involved 11:24 21:6,8 issue 21:25 issued 15:7 item 16:10 items 12:2 14:12 16:8</p>	<p>21:1 judiciary 17:4 july 3:10 june 3:10 4:17 justice 3:16 5:1 18:24 19:13</p>	<p>licenses 7:9 licensing 21:15 lifting 20:3 lihtc 15:15 line 17:2 lined 17:4 link 8:25 lipski 2:2 little 22:4,13 live 10:2 llc 4:23 location 5:5 long 11:25 17:16 look 10:5 12:2 13:19 19:24 looked 8:20 looking 15:15 lot 5:13</p>	<p>matters 15:10 20:17 mazza 18:10 meadowview 13:2 medicare 13:21 medication 3:24 meeting 1:3 9:21 17:25 19:18 23:6 members 4:17 mendiola 1:20 mental 3:23 16:22 17:9 19:23 mentally 15:24 middlesex 10:24 million 15:21 15:22 misuse 12:17 mobile 11:20 model 3:3 money 15:20 15:23 18:24 19:1,6,14 monitor 14:5 14:12 motion 22:17 22:19 mou 6:16 move 18:1</p>
<p>j</p>	<p>k</p>	<p>m</p>	
<p>j 1:21 jails 3:25 january 4:17 jerry 1:17 jersey 1:9,9 2:25 3:8,15,17 3:22,25 4:8 10:23 15:3 16:12 23:5,14 judge 18:4,5,6 19:18,19 20:25</p>	<p>katz 18:5 19:19 keep 11:24 kelly 2:16 kenneth 1:16 kind 8:25 12:5 21:6 know 6:18 7:1 9:16 15:25 17:24 18:13,15 18:21 20:10 21:11 known 10:24 kopacz 1:16 2:7 7:4 12:20,21 13:4 14:20,25 22:19</p>	<p>made 7:14 10:22 11:3,7 mailers 5:20 mailing 5:22 make 10:6 22:2 makes 15:23 making 9:4 man 5:13 march 5:23 12:18 13:3 market 15:19 materials 4:5</p>	
	<p>l</p>		
	<p>l 1:19 2:15 la 4:15 lake 18:15 law 3:1 4:8 lawyers 21:7 level 18:16 license 6:12 23:3</p>		

movements 20:17	15:12 16:15,19 22:10,17	p.m. 1:10 22:23	placed 20:10
n	object 9:21	package 6:12 6:21,24	places 5:4 9:3
n 1:6,6,19 23:1	observe 9:22	pages 18:11	plaintiffs 20:17
n.j.s.a 2:22	obviously 9:4 17:15	parent 20:18	plead 17:9
need 11:25 13:19 17:16 18:4,16	october 3:25 4:9	partners 12:16	pleasure 19:17
needs 20:1	office 6:5,13 7:9 11:18	pavonia 1:8	point 17:5
never 8:3,19,20 9:6 19:3	oh 11:17	pay 14:5 17:6 17:17,17 19:12	poll 4:24
new 1:9 2:25 3:8,15,16,22,25 4:8 7:8 10:23 15:3 18:4 19:18 23:4,14	okay 9:10,20 10:3 11:17 12:9 13:12 16:17	payment 4:22 6:2,9 7:7 12:7 12:8 15:4	polling 5:4,4
newark 19:21	one's 7:20	payments 15:20	position 17:16
non 4:14 5:19	op 22:3	pays 17:15	possibility 12:4
nos 13:24	open 4:14 5:19 7:19,25 8:8,10 8:22 9:17 10:6 12:15,24 14:16	pcp 13:1	possible 15:14 17:24 22:3
notary 23:4,13	opened 10:19	peninsula 14:17	postal 5:22
notes 23:6	openings 8:4	people 7:25 8:9 8:23 9:12 13:21 18:25 20:6 21:20	preferential 21:3
notify 5:4	opinion 19:7	percent 15:16	premium 6:12
o	order 18:20 20:2,4,8	person 19:20	preparedness 4:6
o 1:6,6,11,19 23:1	ordinance 15:2	perspective 13:20 18:8	present 2:20
o'dea 1:16 2:7 2:8 3:5,12 4:2 4:10,20 7:17 7:23 8:5,13,16 8:21 9:3,8,11 9:20 10:1,9,16 13:6,12,15,18 14:4,11 15:1	ordinances 16:5	physically 9:23	pressured 20:9
	ortiz 1:23	pi 14:17	pretrial 19:1
	p	pieces 17:3 18:3	prevention 12:16
	p 1:6,19	pilot 19:12	price 13:15
		place 5:5 17:14 18:3	pricing 10:23 11:4,8
			pride 4:15
			principal 15:4 15:6
			print 22:3
			prior 16:5 20:3
			private 15:19
			probably 11:18

<p>proceeding 22:22</p> <p>proceedings 1:4 23:5</p> <p>process 9:13 18:25</p> <p>professional 20:5</p> <p>program 3:10 12:18</p> <p>programming 18:8,9</p> <p>programs 15:17 18:12 19:23</p> <p>project 15:15 15:24</p> <p>proof 17:20,21</p> <p>prosecutor 16:20,24 17:3 17:22 18:18</p> <p>prosecutor's 6:13 7:9 11:18</p> <p>proud 19:15</p> <p>prove 18:23,23 19:10</p> <p>provide 4:15 8:25 13:1 14:24</p> <p>providing 15:8</p> <p>provision 5:20</p> <p>psychiatric 13:2</p>	<p>public 3:1 4:8 9:24 10:15</p> <p>17:3,25 18:19 23:4,13</p> <p>purchase 6:3 6:10 11:18</p> <p>purchased 11:22</p> <p>purchases 7:14 10:22 11:3,7</p> <p>purchasing 7:14,18,19,20 12:12 22:2</p> <p>purpose 15:8</p> <p>pursuant 13:9</p> <p>pursue 20:20</p> <p>put 8:6 13:21 19:5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">q</p> <p>qualified 14:23</p> <p>qualify 18:20</p> <p>question 5:3,3 7:18,24 8:6 9:15 17:14 21:14</p> <p>questions 9:13 9:17 10:2,12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">r</p> <p>r 1:11,19 23:1</p> <p>read 9:17 16:11</p> <p>real 14:24 15:23 16:19</p>	<p>reason 17:9 20:8,23</p> <p>reconciled 20:22</p> <p>record 2:19 15:13 19:11</p> <p>recovery 18:6</p> <p>regarding 4:24</p> <p>regional 10:24</p> <p>reina 4:15</p> <p>reintegration 18:11</p> <p>related 5:21</p> <p>remains 21:18</p> <p>remote 8:7 10:18</p> <p>remotely 8:1,18</p> <p>remove 16:13</p> <p>removing 20:7</p> <p>renewal 7:8</p> <p>renewals 6:12</p> <p>replacement 3:17 14:15</p> <p>reported 1:24</p> <p>reprogramming 14:16</p> <p>request 10:14 10:18,19 14:16</p> <p>require 8:9</p> <p>required 4:25</p> <p>reslution 6:8</p> <p>resolution 2:21 2:24,25 3:6,7 3:14,15,20,21</p>	<p>4:4,5,12,13,21 4:22 5:18,19</p> <p>6:1,2,9 7:6,7,13 10:21 11:2,6 12:11,14,15,23 12:24 13:23,24 13:24 14:14,15 14:22,23 16:10 16:11</p> <p>respondents 14:23</p> <p>response 19:24</p> <p>restore 16:13</p> <p>restraining 20:2,4,7</p> <p>results 10:14</p> <p>retract 21:1</p> <p>retrofitting 10:6</p> <p>revenue 15:7</p> <p>right 14:6,8 17:1 20:9</p> <p>robert 1:14</p> <p>rodriguez 1:17 2:9,10,20 4:3 4:11 6:15 7:16 11:1,5,9 12:13 12:22</p> <p>romano 1:14 2:13,14,18,23 2:23 3:4,19,19 4:19 6:7,7,15 6:15,20 7:4,11 7:16 10:3 11:1</p>
--	---	--	--

<p>11:5,13,16 12:1,9,13 14:21 20:14 22:6,14 room 10:6 rpr 1:24 23:3 23:13 rule 20:1 run 17:16</p>	<p>section 21:9 security 15:9 see 8:18 9:12 9:15 10:17 16:2 22:9 seen 21:18 sent 18:14 september 4:1 4:9 12:19 14:2 service 5:20 12:7 services 3:9,22 3:23 4:14,16 5:21,22 10:22 10:25 12:17 13:1 14:24 18:11 session 21:2,3 sfy25 3:2 shari 1:24 23:3 23:13 sharing 12:5 14:7 sheet 22:7 sheriff 6:21,24 7:2 11:12,12 sheriff's 6:5 show 8:23 showers 8:11 8:15 10:11 side 18:7 signature 23:12 significant 20:18</p>	<p>silver 18:15 simple 7:24 9:6 10:18,19 sit 17:25 sites 4:24 situation 5:9 software 6:12 solutions 4:23 somebody 7:18 8:8,14 17:14 sorry 8:13 11:11 space 14:17 speak 10:7 20:4 speaking 8:14 17:2,12 specialized 4:16 specific 14:10 specifically 7:2 spoke 15:25 sponsor 3:4,12 4:2,10,19 5:24 7:11 11:9 12:20 13:4 14:20,25 16:15 sponsors 16:5 staff 4:24 22:16 start 19:17 state 3:17,22 4:7 7:15 8:4 15:3 17:17 19:11 23:4,14</p>	<p>states 4:6,25 stayed 13:16 street 13:22 strongly 16:25 subscription 6:5 substance 3:24 21:17 substantial 19:14 summer 16:13 supportive 16:24,25 sure 9:5 surveying 4:23 system 10:23 11:4,8 18:24 19:6,13 20:10</p>
<p>s</p>			
<p>s 1:6,6,6,19,19 sacred 5:11 safety 3:1 4:8 17:25 salzer 6:18,22 7:1 saves 18:24 19:1 saving 19:13 savings 19:6,7 saying 19:11 scenario 20:20 scene 7:5 schematic 21:16 screening 21:23,24 second 3:5,13 4:3,11,20 5:25 7:12 11:10 12:22 13:5 14:21 15:1 16:16</p>			
			<p>t</p>
			<p>t 1:19 23:1,1 table 8:23 take 17:16 19:9 taken 23:6 talk 19:8 talking 6:16 8:4 10:7 17:13 teacher 2:17 technologies 7:7 teel 7:7 tell 20:25 temporary 2:21</p>

<p>test 17:19 thank 5:2,17 10:19 12:10 therefor 15:9 therewith 15:11 thing 16:19 things 19:21 think 5:11 8:21 9:11 11:22 17:1,1,18,20 18:1 19:8,9,14 21:20,25 thinks 17:22 thorough 21:18 thought 5:7 threatened 20:9 three 12:25 13:11 thursday 18:1 19:9 time 10:17 13:19 title 16:11 today 17:2 together 3:2 training 4:16 4:23 transcript 1:3 23:9 transportation 4:7</p>	<p>treatment 3:24 18:16 trial 19:1 true 18:10 trust 14:17 trying 12:4 tuesday 1:9 23:8 turn 16:6 two 13:10 19:21</p> <p style="text-align: center;">u</p> <p>under 7:15 10:22 11:3,7 12:16 14:7,8 undersheriff 11:15,17 12:6 understand 9:19 10:16 union 11:3 united 4:6,25 universal 6:4 6:11 urging 16:12 usa 6:2,9 use 16:4 usually 21:8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">v</p> <p>versus 15:19 vfw 5:15 victims 20:6 violence 19:25 20:6,16,21</p>	<p>21:7,9</p> <p style="text-align: center;">w</p> <p>wait 17:18 walk 21:21 walker 1:17 2:11,12 3:13 3:19 5:2,8,16 5:24 7:12,16 11:1,5,10 12:13 16:16 22:1,8,12 walkway 14:18 want 10:10 13:18 15:12 17:19 18:2 20:20 21:1,11 21:20 22:1 wanted 9:21 21:21 washington 14:13 watch 8:24 10:19 waterfront 14:18 way 8:8 20:10 we've 2:18 13:21 week 17:13 wife 20:18 21:22 william 1:16</p>	<p>willie 1:23 willing 19:9 wonderful 19:19,19,19 working 11:20 works 18:23 worry 18:17 worse 19:4 wow 17:13</p> <p style="text-align: center;">y</p> <p>yard 17:2 yeah 5:8,8,15 5:15,15,16 7:21,21 11:12 13:14,17 22:8 year 2:17 12:7 16:23 year's 16:24 years 12:25 13:10,11,13 15:20</p> <p style="text-align: center;">z</p> <p>zoom 2:20</p>
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