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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, March 27, 2025
4:30 p.m.

B E F O R E:

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
ABRAHAM ANTUN, County Administrator
CAROL JEAN DOYLE, County Commissioner Clerk
Reported by: Shari Cathey, CCR, RPR

1 THE CLERK: Good afternoon.
2 Commissioner 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.

8 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Here.

9 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

10 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Here.

11 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

12 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Here.

13 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

14 Chairman Romano.

15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Here.

16 THE CLERK: Please stand for the
17 Pledge of Allegiance.

18 (Flag Salute.)

19 THE CLERK: Adequate notice of this
20 Regular Meeting has been provided as follows:

21 Posting notice of Resolution No. 8-1-2025
22 on the County Commissioner's Bulletin Board, First
23 Floor, Administration Building Annex, Jersey City,
24 New Jersey.

25 Copies of the above mentioned resolution

1 have been sent to the County Clerk and the editors
2 of the Kearny Observer and the Star Ledger.

3 May I have a motion to approve the Caucus
4 Meeting for February 25, 2025, and the Regular
5 Meeting of February 27, 2025.

6 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Commissioner Walker
7 and Cifelli, present. Motion by Rodriguez. Second?
8 Second by Cedeño.

9 THE CLERK: Commissioner
10 Aponte-Lipski. Commissioner Baselice.

11 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

12 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

13 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

14 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

15 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

16 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

17 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

18 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

19 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.

20 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

21 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

22 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

23 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

24 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

25 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.

1 THE CLERK: The next order of
2 business is an additional discussion on the agenda,
3 and I turn it over to the Administration.

4 MR. ANTUN: Mr. Chairman, I just have
5 one item for the Board's consideration. It is a
6 resolution amending a resolution that was adopted in
7 February, authorizing the filing of a grant
8 application with the State. The State requested
9 that we -- we amend the resolution to include the
10 grant model.

11 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Sponsor.

12 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Second.

13 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Madam Clerk, what
14 number is that?

15 THE CLERK: 27. Commissioner
16 Aponte-Lipski. Commissioner Baselice.

17 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

18 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

19 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

20 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

21 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

22 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

23 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

24 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

25 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.

1 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

2 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

3 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

4 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

5 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

6 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.

7 MR. ANTUN: That's all I have, Mr.

8 Chairman. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Continue, Madam
10 Clerk.

11 THE CLERK: I have authorizing a
12 contribution to El Sufrio Hispano Americana Sojolde
13 for \$250.

14 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Board as a whole.
15 Board as a whole.

16 THE CLERK: Is there a second? The
17 Board as a whole?

18 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: The Board is to
19 hold. The Board requested it.

20 THE CLERK: Commissioner
21 Aponte-Lipski. Commissioner Baselice.

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: According to the policy
13 set by the Board of County Commissioners, members of
14 the public are asked to limit their comments to five
15 minutes when discussing agenda items and three
16 minutes at the conclusion of the meeting for persons
17 who submitted a written request to discuss matters
18 of public interest.
19 At this time, the public may address the
20 Board on any item on the agenda only. Please keep
21 your comments limited to five minutes. Are there
22 any speakers on the agenda items only?
23 There seems to be none. May I have a
24 motion to approve all items listed on the consent
25 agenda?

1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Kopacz and Cifelli.
2 THE CLERK: Commissioner
3 Aponte-Lipski. 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: Come back to me.
13 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.
14 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.
15 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.
16 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.
17 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.
18 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I vote no on
19 Item No. 11.
20 THE CLERK: 11, no.
21 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: And I vote aye.
22 THE CLERK: The rest yes?
23 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.
24 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.
25 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Commissioner Lipski

1 is in the House, Commissioners, we have two votes.
2 One on the minutes of the last meeting and on the
3 present agenda. We are on the current agenda.

4 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

5 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: On both? On both?

6 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Yes.

7 THE CLERK: And Chairman Romano.

8 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.

9 THE CLERK: We have two ordinances
10 for introduction. The first one is an Ordinance
11 amending Park Rules and regulations of the
12 Administrative Code regarding the rules and
13 regulations governing the use, care, and protection
14 of County Parks. May I have a roll call on this?

15 Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.

16 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

17 THE CLERK: Commissioner Basalice.

18 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

19 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

20 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

21 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

22 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

23 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

24 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

25 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

1 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.
2 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.
3 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.
4 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.
5 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.
6 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.
7 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.
8 THE CLERK: The ordinance has been
9 introduced. I-2, Ordinance amending the Hudson
10 County Administrative Code pursuant to the
11 applicable provision of the optional County Chapter
12 Law N.J.S.A.40:41A-1.
13 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 introduced. We have three ordinances for a second
8 reading. This is the time fixed for public hearing
9 of this ordinance which was introduced at the
10 meeting of March 13th, advertised as required by law
11 together with the notice of hearing at this time.
12 It has been posted on the County Commissioner's
13 bulletin board and is available to the general
14 public.
15 And the first ordinance for introduction
16 is the ordinance establishing the Division of
17 Planning's role and responsibility in assisting the
18 Department of Parks, which acts as the Hudson County
19 Shade Tree Commission per the Hudson County Code.
20 This is the time for speaking for that
21 meeting. Are there any speakers on this ordinance?
22 May I have a motion to close the hearing?
23 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Motion to
24 close.
25 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Second.

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All in favor? Opposed?

(The Board votes unanimously to close the Hearing.)

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

COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

THE CLERK: I didn't hear.

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: The ordinance has been

1 adopted. Ordinance A-2. Roads and Public Property.
2 Ordinance amending Chapter 200, Article 8.11 of the
3 Administrative Code to establish a restricted
4 Parking Space on John F. Kennedy Boulevard, City of
5 Bayonne for Claire B. Konopka.

6 This is the time fixed for public hearing
7 on this ordinance, which was introduced at the
8 meeting of March 13th, advertised as required by law
9 together with the notice of hearing at this time.
10 It has been posted on the County Commissioner's
11 bulletin board and is available to the general
12 public.

13 Are there any speakers on this ordinance?

14 I see none. Motion to close the hearing.

15 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Motion to
16 close.

17 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Second.

18 THE CLERK: All in favor? Opposed?

19 (The Board votes unanimously to close
20 the Hearing.)

21 THE CLERK: On the final adoption,
22 Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.

23 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

24 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

25 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

1 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.
2 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.
3 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.
4 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.
5 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.
6 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.
7 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.
8 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.
9 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.
10 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.
11 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.
12 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.
13 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.
14 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.
15 THE CLERK: The ordinance has been
16 adopted. Ordinance A-3. Ordinance to establish and
17 authorize salary increases for certain County
18 Offices/Positions including the Staff of the
19 Commissioners in accordance with the provisions of
20 New Jersey Law and the Hudson County Administrative
21 Code.
22 This is the time for public hearing on
23 this ordinance, which was introduced at the meeting
24 of March 13, 2025, advertised as required by law
25 together with the notice of hearing at this time.

1 It's been posted on the County Commissioner's
2 Bulletin Board and made available to the general
3 public.

4 Are there any speakers on this ordinance?
5 Motion to close the hearing?

6 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Motion.

7 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Second.

8 THE CLERK: All in favor? Opposed?

9 (The Board votes unanimously to close
10 the Hearing.)

11 THE CLERK: On the final adoption,
12 Commissioner Aponte-Lipski.

13 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

14 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baselice.

15 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

16 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

17 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

18 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

19 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

20 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

21 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

22 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

23 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Before I vote, I

24 just want to put on record that many years ago, I

25 uncovered the fact that under the Janiszewski

1 administration, they put in place a rule where they
2 literally allowed salaries for individuals not
3 covered by unions to go up on an annual basis, which
4 was wrong. In fact, I think it wasn't even legal.
5 But it did exist for many years, and this -- and the
6 prior Administration corrected that.

7 There was a practice of, on an annual
8 basis, voting for increases for those individuals
9 that were not part of the public-established unions.
10 And why I almost always voted for that ordinance,
11 though I never took the increase from it, I thought
12 that was a fair and reasonable practice.

13 I don't think this is. This is voting on
14 salary increases for those individuals for the next,
15 I believe, three years. Our terms will be over
16 before at least one of the years of being under this
17 ordinance. I think it's wrong. I think on an
18 annual basis, as has been the history, an ordinance
19 is voted on. When you vote on that ordinance, you
20 know what the budget is for that year. You know how
21 that budget affects the city, the cities that you
22 represent. And then you vote accordingly.

23 It's wrong. It's not the way it's been
24 done for a long time. I don't understand why it's
25 being done this way. We had multi-year union

1 contracts in the past, but they never did a single
2 ordinance for the lifetime of those union contracts
3 every year, whatever that union contract amount
4 would be, that was put up for a vote and voted on.
5 I think it's bad. I think it's bad government. I
6 think it's wrong for us to vote on increases for
7 ourselves and other non-union individuals that go
8 beyond our terms of office. So I vote no.

9 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Wow.

10 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

11 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

12 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

13 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.

14 THE CLERK: The ordinance has been
15 adopted. This concludes the items on business on
16 today's agenda. Are there any comments from
17 commissioners on the business report?

18 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes. It's Women's
19 History Month. I just want to say to all the women
20 out there on behalf of the Board of Commissioners,
21 we appreciate and are grateful for all the work that
22 you do. Director Hulings has an event in a little
23 while that she has to start attending to, just
24 acknowledging all the women of the County that were
25 nominated. Just giving the information out, it's

1 six o'clock at the courthouse. Anybody else?

2 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I just want to
3 thank the Board for letting us put on the late Item
4 26, which would reduce the threshold for Project
5 Labor agreements. I would ask that we send a copy
6 of this to everyone in the Hudson delegation. I
7 think that all members of the Hudson County
8 Legislative Delegation should come on this bill.

9 Obviously, this is an Assembly bill, and
10 if there's not a bill yet in the Senate, I would
11 encourage Senators Mukherji, Stack, and McKnight to
12 sponsor the introduction of this bill. It will
13 ensure that more of the work that gets done, gets
14 done with union labor and the best possible
15 practice.

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

18 MS. DAVIS: Good evening. This is my
19 day for speaking. I've had three speaking meetings
20 so far. Happy Women's History Month. I'm so
21 delighted that we will be able to celebrate with the
22 Department of Cultural Affairs, the women
23 especially. All of the women on this Board, all of
24 our women Directors, all of the women in Hudson
25 County. It is a privilege and an honor to speak

1 right now on behalf of County Executive Craig Guy,
2 who is sick. So I apologize, it's me and not him.
3 But we are delighted to honor the team of our
4 County. So thank you all for coming at six o'clock.

5 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you, Jenny.
6 Continue, Madam Clerk.

7 THE CLERK: This is the time for
8 persons who submitted a timely written request to
9 address the Board on any matter of public interest.
10 Please remember to leave your comments for three
11 minutes. I have speakers.

12 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: All right.

13 THE CLERK: The first one is Mr.
14 Mitchell.

15 MR. MITCHELL: Oh, thank you so much.
16 All right. Okay. My name is Raymond Mitchell. I
17 live in East Rutherford, and I came to this Board
18 meeting to speak about what happened March 30th,
19 2020. My father's mystery death coming in for an
20 emergency drill, I was told by Hackensack Meridian
21 Hospital.

22 Last time I was here, I couldn't speak for
23 some reason because it was only a three-minute, and
24 I had to go online and stuff like that. Which I
25 think that is a little disgraceful that I can't

1 speak for three minutes to any of you here. So
2 here. I gave this to Anthony Romano. Did you show
3 the Board? I asked. Can you add this? Also, my
4 father's last picture. Let them all see. I need
5 answers on this. The emergency management had a
6 drill, okay? September 19, 2019. Six months later,
7 my dad's dead.

8 I go to Brian Stack. He said he was going
9 to investigate. He gives me these letters. Coming
10 from his Union City Municipal. And inside, it's
11 from his Senator, saying he was going to
12 investigate. I've been going here to Union City
13 meetings. It's all on tape with Leroy. Never, ever
14 got an answer from Mr. Brian Stack. I had to OPRA
15 these letters to find out what happened. I come
16 back with not even a person's name on the OPRA
17 report, okay? And I had to call to find out who's
18 the person in charge, and then she writes her name.

19 Then, the last week I went, Mr. Brian
20 Stack -- I sent out these fabricated letters because
21 it seemed like he never gave them in. I got them,
22 mailed to my house. For some reason, never went to
23 the health department, or the emergency, health
24 department, or human services. And then I get a
25 call January 17, 2025. These letters were submitted

1 to Laverne (ph.) and also Christina Reyes, who's
2 supposed to investigate. And I call them. I can't
3 get a file number or anything. Then it goes to the
4 Attorney General, supposedly. Still can't get it.

5 So I'm here now to find out this whole
6 emergency drill stuff. Did you guys know about the
7 pandemic? Anybody here in 2020? I'm going to start
8 with the woman over here. Did you know about it?

9 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: I've got
10 a name. My name is right here.

11 MR. MITCHELL: Okay. Nice to meet
12 you.

13 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Nice to
14 meet you too.

15 MR. MITCHELL: So anybody who gave
16 that paper? Is that my time?

17 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.

18 MR. MITCHELL: Okay. So can you guys
19 answer? Can you look at the paper and tell me if
20 anybody knows about this? What is going on? You
21 had a week, Romano. Can I get an answer? Can I get
22 an answer? Can I get an answer? What happened?
23 You had a week. What happened? Did you do what?
24 Where's the prosecutor? You said he's going to have
25 the prosecutor here.

1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Next speaker.

2 MR. MITCHELL: Who's the assistant
3 prosecutor?

4 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Next speaker.

5 MR. MITCHELL: Who's the assistant
6 prosecutor? You told me there's going to be an
7 assistant prosecutor. So, where is he?

8 THE CLERK: Next speaker is Tawana
9 Mayer.

10 MR. MITCHELL: I just want to -- that
11 doesn't do anything.

12 MS. MAYER: First of all, my
13 condolences.

14 MR. MITCHELL: I do appreciate it.
15 They all know what's going on. I was set up in a
16 pandemic. That's what it seemed like. That's
17 what's in my discovery. I got fraud on the desktop
18 and everything, right? And Brian Stack knows what's
19 going on. That's what happened.

20 THE CLERK: Next speaker is Tawana
21 Mayer.

22 MR. MITCHELL: All right. So is
23 anybody going to answer if they've seen this or not?

24 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: This is the
25 first time I've seen it.

1 MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. O'Dea.
2 You're the only one that speaks. Everybody else
3 just stays quiet for some reason. And you all want
4 to be public servants. I don't understand about
5 this. Who's helping who? I don't have any help
6 from anybody.

7 MS. MAYER: I'm sorry for your loss.
8 I'm just a Solano Mayer. I work in Hudson County.
9 I am speaking -- I don't know if I can get the
10 injustice out in under three minutes. So, I'm
11 speaking on behalf of my Local 2306. We were
12 promised some retro, some money for the pandemic.
13 They didn't want to title the pandemic money. They
14 called it hazardous pay.

15 There was a list, a mysterious list that
16 came out with 90 workers, right? Cornelius said it
17 came from Pavonia. Pavonia said it came from -- so
18 it's only 90 people who gets the money. That was
19 February, well, March 7th. We were told that we
20 will get ours, our next pay period. That pay period
21 comes up and then we were told, no, get your 2020
22 pay stubs.

23 We bombard personnel, everybody gets their
24 calendar from that year to prove that we were in the
25 building prior to it being shut down. Then we're

1 told, get on this Zoom call, nothing's accomplished
2 on this call. It was nothing but a bunch of fluff.
3 We want our money and we want it now. We're
4 frustrated. I am a HSS employee. I am the first
5 point of contact. I feel like my clients, when they
6 don't have money to feed their children, we don't
7 have the money they need. Look, I don't know when
8 the last time I had a problem with it, because I
9 can't afford eggs, okay?

10 It's bad enough we're in negotiations
11 forever for money we work for. We want to be
12 treated the way the clients are treated. When a
13 client has a problem and all they got to do is say,
14 I'm calling the State. Every administrator in that
15 department will bombard that worker and you must
16 complete that case expeditiously. We want our
17 money, we work.

18 It's bad enough we work in conditions that
19 are deplorable. The grime on the floor is about
20 five inches thick. I wish Elon Musk would ask us
21 what we did all day. We're killing mice, we're
22 killing bad bugs, and we're stomping out roaches.
23 And we can't breathe. We work in a building with no
24 air and they took the fans. And you can't open the
25 window. What they think we're going to do, throw

1 each other out? We are that frustrated, but I don't
2 think we're going to cause harm to ourselves or
3 anyone else.

4 We want our money. Where's our raise?
5 Where's the retro? This is not fair. We are tired.
6 Everybody else gets their raise. We just want to be
7 treated the way the clients are treated. We move
8 expeditiously. I'm the first hit. Ms. Mayer, I
9 didn't get my benefits. I get cursed out, cursed
10 out. This is not fair. And three minutes is not
11 enough time. We need help. We want to resolve. We
12 want somebody to tell us to write. We want to
13 resolve. We want answers.

14 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: You're going to get
15 it from County Counsel.

16 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: After the County
17 Counsel speaks, I'm going to respond.

18 MS. MAYER: Thank you.

19 MR. BATTISTA: This speaker is
20 represented by collective bargaining. Consequently,
21 we certainly can't engage with her? Secondly,
22 active negotiations for new contracts --
23 negotiations --

24 MS. MAYER: He's been on the phone
25 with me for seven years. Seven?

1 MR. BATTISTA: And last week, the
2 issue that the speaker was addressing, regarding the
3 bonus pay is a subject of pending litigation,
4 involving the County. With that, I would be more
5 concerned with the Board on how they respond to the
6 speaker.

7 MS. MAYER: What about that? We
8 don't have the contract. We're not paying for it.
9 We're not paying for it.

10 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Whoa. Whoa.

11 MS. MAYER: What you can argue on
12 this is what you can argue on this. Mr. O'Dea,
13 there was a signed contract saying that the rest of
14 us would get that retro pay, that money. How do you
15 tell people that just because they're looking at it,
16 I'm not -- I'm not. And I'm trying to give it to
17 you, but that's how we feel. Respectful.
18 Commissioner O'Dea. Respectfully.

19 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So here are my
20 concerns. The County settled with 1199, and in
21 fact, what's interesting is based on just settling
22 with 1199 and not the other union, you decided to
23 give raises retro and for the next three or four
24 years. That's interesting because in the past, that
25 wasn't the case. In the past, you take both of the

1 unions and advocate what their increases were before
2 you did it. So you violated your own rule for the
3 past 25 years.

4 MS. MAYER: That's what I'm talking
5 about. It's a serious dispute. It's a serious
6 dispute.

7 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: And you know I'm
8 right. And you know I'm right. Never before, never
9 before, never before did we vote on an ordinance
10 until both of those unions were settled, and you
11 aggregated what the amount of it was. But suddenly,
12 you changed that rule, while you still haven't
13 resolved the issue with the second union. So I
14 don't know.

15 As for the litigation, shame on you for
16 not having this body brought into closed session to
17 advise us as to what the hell is going on with the
18 litigation. The first time I heard about that
19 litigation is when you just said something about it
20 now. You fail -- you fail to always tell us things
21 that we should be told naturally, and it bothers me
22 sometimes that I have to figure out or find out from
23 other sources information to then ask you what the
24 hell is going on. It's just wrong.

25 You can clearly understand how employees

1 of a union are upset and frustrated when what one
2 union settles, two unions settle, issues are
3 resolved as it relates to, they think they call it
4 retention pay.

5 MS. MAYER: Really?

6 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: You shouldn't
7 have to talk about it. Unfortunately,
8 unfortunately, we're not going to get it resolved
9 today, but the reality is we need to find a way to
10 resolve it as it relates to this union, as well as
11 it could be resolved through 1199 back in 2020, to
12 the credit of the County at that time.

13 So then when they got pressure from mayors
14 throughout the County, they got scared and they
15 backed away. And it was a different administration.
16 They made a commitment as it related to whatever we
17 want to call it, hazard payment, whatever it was at
18 the time. The reality is, the other reality is that
19 the funding that came from the federal government at
20 that time came in great part to address the exact
21 issue of compensating individuals who physically
22 went to work because they had to go to work during
23 the COVID crisis. That's the reality.

24 There were unions throughout this country
25 -- there were unions throughout this country that

1 lobbied very, very hard to get that funding approved
2 to address that. Now, I remember what happened back
3 then, and every year I'd bring that issue up. Where
4 are we with this? Where are we with this? To the
5 credit, they started to resolve it with a couple of
6 unions. But you need to resolve it with all the
7 unions because right now, you have a serious morale
8 issue when you've got two people that work next to
9 each other, and they're like, Hey, I got my retro
10 pay. Hey, I got my hazard pay. How you doing?

11 That's what's wrong. So all I would say
12 is, the Administration needs to, sooner rather than
13 later, maybe at the end of this meeting, sit down
14 with us, advise us where we're at, advise us what
15 the issues are, and get our input on how we think
16 those issues should be resolved. Because at the end
17 of the day, we have to vote on whatever is resolved
18 and negotiated. And we've been left out in the cold
19 as it relates to this union.

20 So that's all I have to say. All I say
21 is, keep coming back until we get the issue
22 resolved. Next time, 25 of you sign up to speak, so
23 we can sit here for two hours and listen to what
24 your fight is, because trust me, then you'll get
25 some action. Thank you for coming.

1 MS. MAYER: Thank you for asking.

2 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Welcome to the
3 mental war again. It's safe. It's probably safe
4 using all the water. Oh, we're up. Should we
5 leave? Let's go.

6 MS. MAYER: It makes no sense. None
7 of it makes any sense. None of it. You're asking
8 me before I speak, but my timer is up. So let's go
9 to work.

10 MR. SANCHEZ: My name is Augustin
11 Sanchez, and I am the staff, the union staff
12 representative from AFSCME New Jersey, Council 63.
13 And I have the pleasure -- I have the privilege of
14 representing the members of 2306 who work for the
15 Hudson County Welfare Board. Our members provide
16 essential services to assist the residents of Hudson
17 County. They are on the front lines ensuring that
18 these services are provided to County residents in
19 the time of their need.

20 I'm here to make the Commissioners aware
21 of the current state of employee-employer relations
22 between the management at County Plaza and County
23 Personnel, and asking Local 2306, both management
24 from County Plaza and County Personnel have treated
25 the local leadership, which is comprised of mainly

1 female minorities, with disregard. The local
2 leadership has asked that management and County
3 Personnel provide timely responses in reference to
4 information requests, work conditions, and
5 work-related issues.

6 The current practice with County Plaza
7 management and personnel is to divert, delay,
8 divert, deny, and most recently deceive local union
9 leadership and their members. This is not only
10 frustrating for Local 2306 leadership, but this lack
11 of respect is discouraging for the members and is
12 having a negative impact on the morale of the
13 workers at the Welfare Board.

14 We would like county management to embrace
15 a culture that would engage in clear, concise
16 conversations that would eventually lead to clear
17 resolutions in an effort to show good faith
18 relations between all parties involved. A culture
19 like this will go far in resolving many issues that
20 you heard today, which are currently creating a
21 hostile work environment at County Plaza. I hope
22 that the Commissioners helped address the issues
23 over at County Plaza, and it's been my pleasure to
24 have the opportunity to address these issues to all
25 of you. Thank you very much.

1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you. If it's
2 possible, we need to know where we're at.

3 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Do you all want
4 to move at the end of the public speaking portion
5 that we go to closed session to get an update of
6 what the hell is going on? The fact that we have to
7 break a hundred people into a room to get an update
8 of what's going on.

9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. Next
10 speaker.

11 THE CLERK: Mr. Leroy.

12 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: A partial
13 update.

14 MR. TRUTH: I'll use a bow for
15 everybody when you bow to us. Hello, everybody.
16 I'm Leroy Truth, Leroy Truth Investigations. Please
17 join my new Facebook since Mayor Senator Stack just
18 had it deleted.

19 Who here wants their hazard pay? I'm here
20 to support them. Scores and scores of the people
21 here and not here have been asking me for help to
22 expose this so you all will do what needs to be
23 done. But before I get to the core of what I'm
24 going to share, I've got a couple of questions you
25 can answer at the end of my presentation here.

1 Did Jim McGreevey, who is owned and the
2 total puppet of Mayor Senator Brian Stack, ever work
3 for the County or the County jail system? And is it
4 true that Jim McGreevey allegedly didn't scan in or
5 out of the system while entering and leaving the
6 facility? Did Jim McGreevey, ex-disgraced governor
7 of New Jersey, also get lifetime medical benefits to
8 this day after working for the county for over six
9 months? I believe that was seven years ago. That's
10 messed up. I want responses.

11 Now about the hazard pay, let's do a time
12 machine. I'm going to read an article from John
13 Heines of the Hudson County View, who has lately
14 been doing some very good work. This is going back
15 four years ago. It sounds like we're here today.
16 This is from an article, HudsonCountyView.com.
17 Hudson County employees plead their cases to receive
18 hazardous pay for work during pandemic.

19 Hudson County employees pleaded their
20 cases to receive hazardous pay for work they
21 performed over the past year during the COVID-19
22 pandemic during Thursday evening's Board of
23 Commissioners meeting. We're asking the County to
24 pay the members of Local 2306, Local 1697, hazardous
25 pay. Now this is from four years ago. Others have

1 not. And the idea of paying hazardous pay is not a
2 concept where there's disagreement.

3 Now these negotiations continue, and \$5
4 million according to Bill O'Dea from four years ago,
5 that's all it took, \$5 million of payment over tape
6 to give the hazardous pay, not just to them, but to
7 County Sheriff's officers as well. All of the other
8 departments who have been begging and pleading for
9 four years. And you want to see how messed up
10 government is? It takes four years to get what they
11 were promised four years ago? That's disgusting.

12 And I also heard there was something like
13 \$311 million from the American Care Act or American
14 Rescue Act that was given four years ago. Because
15 at first they said, there's no money for funding.
16 The American Rescue Act comes forth with, I believe
17 over \$300 million. Here's the money. Bill O'Dea
18 identified it would only cost \$5 million to give
19 everyone their hazardous pay they were promised four
20 years ago.

21 And someone said, you know what they said
22 to me? They bought a lot of hand sanitizer; \$299
23 million of hand sanitizer? Hudson County officials
24 must have the cleanest hands on the face of Planet
25 Earth. Three minutes is disgusting. So what

1 answers do you have about this, as well as the Jim
2 McGreevey?

3 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: What were the
4 three questions?

5 MR. TRUTH: Three questions were,
6 thank you Mr. O'Dea -- Commissioner O'Dea. Three
7 questions were, did Jim McGreevey ever work for the
8 County?

9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: No, I'm telling
10 you, we don't talk about personnel. No, you need to
11 -- not talking about personnel.

12 MR. TRUTH: Not getting answers.

13 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: No, they're talking
14 about personnel. That's what they're talking about.

15 (Indiscernible.)

16 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: He worked for
17 the County. He worked for the County.

18 MR. TRUTH: Thank you, thank you,
19 Commissioner O'Dea. These are basic questions.
20 It's not a balanced question.

21 MR. BATTISTA: Mr. Chairman, I
22 understand --

23 MR. TRUTH: And is it true, He didn't
24 scan in and out of the County system while it's a
25 three months. You love me so much but you're not

1 answering any questions.

2 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Shut up. Ladies
3 and gentlemen. Ladies and gentlemen. Please.

4 (Indiscernible.)

5 MR. FLORIO: When one person is
6 speaking, allow the speaker to speak. Commissioner
7 O'Dea has generously offered to -- generously
8 offered to answer a point of question. If it goes
9 into a territory that I think is inappropriate, I
10 will point that out. But in the meantime, please do
11 not overwhelm any of the speakers.

12 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So I don't know
13 the answer to the second question. But I think as
14 an elected official we should be able to know
15 whether or not an employee had to scan in and out
16 and if they didn't, why would they grant them the
17 right to not scan in and out since it is -- since
18 the director of corrections is not the director
19 then. As to what the policy is as to who has to
20 scan in and out.

21 Because it's a correctional center. So
22 almost everybody should scan in and out so you know
23 who's coming in, when they're coming in, and when
24 they're coming out. But I don't know the answer to
25 that. But I'll try to find that out.

1 MR. TRUTH: My third question, thank
2 you Commissioner O'Dea, was, did Jim get lifetime,
3 or does he get lifetime medical benefits to this
4 day, I believe it's been seven years, for only
5 working six months?

6 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So the answer is
7 yes. He worked less than six months, and as a
8 result of that, I worked with the Administration to
9 change the County policy. So now I believe you have
10 to be an employee of the county for a minimum of ten
11 years? Is it ten years? In order to get lifetime
12 benefits. So the answer to your question is yes.

13 MR. TRUTH: I appreciate your
14 answers. Thank you very much. You need to resign,
15 Jim. You're terrible. Thank you, Jim.

16 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you.

17 MR. FLORIO: Commissioner had
18 mentioned something about a closed session. Is
19 there going to be a motion?

20 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Oh, yes. I'm
21 going to make a motion to go into closed session to
22 discuss contract negotiations related to, what's the
23 union?

24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Local 22.

25 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I'll make a

1 motion. Is there a second?

2 THE CLERK: I need a roll call on
3 this. Is there a second, Mr. Chairman?

4 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: I'll second.

5 THE CLERK: Commissioner
6 Aponte-Lipski.

7 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Aye.

8 THE CLERK: Commissioner Baseline.

9 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: Yes.

10 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cedeño.

11 COMMISSIONER CEDEÑO: Yes.

12 THE CLERK: Commissioner Cifelli.

13 COMMISSIONER CIFELLI: Yes.

14 THE CLERK: Commissioner Kopacz.

15 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

16 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

17 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yes.

18 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

19 COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

20 THE CLERK: Commissioner Walker.

21 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Yes.

22 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes.

24 THE CLERK: Will there be formal
25 business after closed session?

1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes. We'll be back
2 and let us know if there's anything they want to say
3 about it.

4 MR. TRUTH: Hey, make sure you guys
5 look at all this because you're all involved now.

6 (Whereupon the Commissioner Board
7 moves to its Executive Session.)

8 MR. FLORIO: Chairman, we need a
9 motion to return to open session.

10 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Motion.

11 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Second.

12 MR. FLORIO: All in favor? Opposed?

13 (The Board votes unanimously to
14 resume the Regular Meeting.)

15 MR. FLORIO: We are now back in open
16 session. Chairman, it is my understanding that
17 County Council is going to present a point of order
18 that should explain part of the circumstances of
19 this discussion today.

20 MR. BATTISTA: Mr. Chairman, the
21 issues that have been raised by the committee relate
22 to the fact that back in 2020, discussions were
23 engaging with the union about the concept of hazard
24 pay slash retention bonuses. At that point in time,
25 discussions encompassed a period starting on March

1 21, 2020 --

2 MR. FLORIO: Please let the speaker
3 speak.

4 MR. BATTISTA: To June 29th, 2020.
5 That was the period of time that the discussions
6 were engaged in regarding payments to people. That
7 was based upon action taken by the Governor of the
8 State of New Jersey in the close down.

9 When bonus payments were given to the
10 union, this particular union and 1199J and the
11 supervisors union, there was a type of graphical
12 error in the union on June 29th, which reflected a
13 loss of the first payment. That was explained to
14 the union and --

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Don't lie to me.
16 Don't lie to me. Don't lie to me. Don't lie to me.
17 I said the other night he took, but he ain't never
18 gonna lie to me. You speak for Rat. You speak for
19 Rat. You speak for Rat.

20 MR. BATTISTA: Not to be rude to this
21 speaker, but I cannot engage in discussion with her
22 because she has a collective bargaining
23 representative.

24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm shaking. I'm
25 shaking. I'm shaking.

1 MR. BATTISTA: The union did not
2 accept what we articulated. In fact, the union has
3 filed an unfair labor practice in PERC, which we are
4 defending. And as I indicated to you, at the next
5 meeting or the next caucus, the Administration had
6 to go into closed session to update you on the
7 negotiations with this union because the
8 negotiations for the contract are ongoing. I hope
9 that clarifies for the Board where we are.

10 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: If you have any
11 questions, would you please provide anyone in the
12 audience a copy of the executive order stating the
13 date of signing.

14 MR. BATTISTA: I propose we will send
15 it to their collective bargaining representative.

16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: We have it. We
17 have it.

18 MR. FLORIO: There is no time for
19 participation, but I hope that --

20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm not looking for
21 it. I'm not looking for it. That was already given
22 to you, sir. That was already given to you.

23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you. I have
24 already advised the court that you should not engage
25 in any dialogue with any member of the public,

1 especially from the dais.

2 MR. FLORIO: There is no other
3 business to come before the Board in this time or
4 motion to adjourn. All in favor?

5 (Whereupon the proceeding is then
6 concluded at 5:56 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, March 27, 2025; and that this is a correct transcript of the same.

Shari Cathey

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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