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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, May 6, 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:

- CARMEN E. MENDIOLA, ESQ., Board Counsel
- ALBERICO DEPIERRO, Asst. Hudson County Counsel
- ABRAHAM ANTUN, County Administrator
- CAROL JEAN DOYLE, County Commissioner Clerk
- Reported By: Shari Cathey, CCR, RPR

1 THE CLERK: Commissioner

2 Aponte-Lipski.

3 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Here.

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 Kopacz.

10 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Here.

11 THE CLERK: Commissioner O'Dea.

12 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Here.

13 THE CLERK: Commissioner Rodriguez.

14 Commissioner Walker.

15 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Here.

16 THE CLERK: Chairman Romano.

17 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Here.

18 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman, County

19 Executive Craig is present.

20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: They Hudson County

21 Commissioners welcome County Executive Craig Guy.

22 Go ahead.

23 COUNTY EXECUTIVE GUY: Thank you for

24 allowing me to make changes to your agenda to

25 present the 2025 Hudson County budget. Before I get

1 started, I'd like to thank Chairman Anthony Romano
2 and his colleagues for allowing me to speak today
3 and address the 2025 budget.

4 You know, we support, we sought input from
5 all the department heads and craft in this budget.
6 I express my sincere gratitude to our County
7 Administrator, Abe Antun, to our County Finance
8 Director and CFO, Cheryl Fuller, and the Department
9 of Finance Deputy Director, John Inagaki, for their
10 efforts in putting forth this budget. I sincerely
11 appreciate and truly your dedication and hard work
12 to this plan does not go unnoticed.

13 I'm proud to say that Hudson County's
14 fiscal house is strong. Our bond rating, which has
15 been stable for many years, is AA Minus by all
16 standards, practically the highest quality rating.

17 As County Executive from day one, my
18 administration has been laser focused on creating
19 opportunity, and this budget I submit to you today
20 continues that focus on opportunity. Opportunity
21 for our County, opportunity for our businesses, and
22 opportunity for every one of our residents.

23 I want to take a moment to talk about my
24 responsibility, specifically the responsibility I
25 and we, this Board, have towards the taxpayers of

1 Hudson County. Some may not realize the connection
2 between what happens in Washington and the 12
3 municipalities of our great County, but the current
4 presidential administration is presenting a dire
5 threat to Hudson County, not to mention the entire
6 United States, with drastic cuts that will hurt
7 everyone in our community.

8 Whether it's cuts to federal programs,
9 imposing crippling tariffs on our businesses, or
10 persistent inflation, economists say we may be
11 heading towards a recession due to the reckless
12 actions of one man and those who blindly follow him.
13 We've already seen President Donald Trump impose his
14 disastrous cuts on Hudson County. Just last month,
15 his administration's decision to cut a crucial grant
16 from the Environmental Protection Agency will weaken
17 water pollution protections and eliminate workforce
18 development initiatives for green jobs in Hudson
19 County. Unfortunately, more of these cuts are bound
20 to come. So we must work together to ensure we can
21 continue service to our community.

22 The great American Statesman Patrick Henry
23 once said, United we stand, divided we fall, and
24 never has this sounded more graphically throughout
25 the country and throughout our County. I'm

1 grateful, terribly grateful, for the work of our
2 Congressional delegation in Washington, and I will
3 continue to work with them to fight for Hudson
4 County in every way I can.

5 With that said, in this budget we've made
6 difficult choices, while continuing to provide the
7 same quality service our County offers and our
8 constituents deserve. Just like every family in
9 Hudson County must be able to balance their own
10 checkbooks, we need to do the same without a budget.
11 That means making tough decisions with how we spend
12 taxpayers' money now and in the future.

13 Despite the economic uncertainty we face,
14 my staff and your staff have done a tremendous job
15 putting together our budget. Times are tough, and
16 we will need to work together with the leadership of
17 all our departments, and we will need the
18 cooperation and fortitude of our constitutional
19 officers as well.

20 This budget ensures the strength of all
21 our vital programs that allow Hudson County to
22 provide the best possible services to our residents.
23 I have to say, I am so proud of the efforts of our
24 County staff. Day in and day out, they work
25 tirelessly to make certain our residents get the

1 help they need. And I know for a fact all of our
2 Commissioners call on them sometimes daily,
3 sometimes several times daily, if not several times
4 during the course of a week, and I'm profoundly
5 thankful for them answering their calls.

6 This budget will continue to fund the
7 critical services and our resources our residents
8 depend on, and fund them without sacrifice in
9 quality. I am pleased to say we are not laying one
10 employee off in this County. We've negotiated and
11 continue to negotiate fair and equitable contracts
12 with our union partners in the Civil Service, and
13 the county continues to meet its pension obligations
14 with the police and fire and our public employee
15 system.

16 I'm also proud to say that with a lot of
17 hard work and difficult decisions, we have developed
18 a budget that results in an average taxpayer in most
19 of our towns seeing only a modest increase in their
20 County taxes, and some municipalities not seeing an
21 increase in their County taxes at all. But I do
22 caution you, and I will say not only caution, but
23 truly beseech our department heads, our directors,
24 and our constitutional officers to keep an oversight
25 on their budgets in not resorting to unfettered

1 overtime, and in understanding that when you ask for
2 budget or staffing increases, we will ask for
3 transparency and justification.

4 Hudson County faces challenges, but I
5 remain excited and optimistic about our County's
6 direction. This budget maintains fiscal
7 responsibility as well, while maintaining the same
8 high quality service our residents have come to
9 expect from our County. All staff remain employed,
10 and all our programs will continue unabated.

11 Service and opportunity will continue in
12 the County of Hudson, despite economic uncertainty
13 and threats of federal funding being called back.
14 We will work with our mayors, our Commissioners, our
15 legislators, our members in Congress, and any other
16 elected officials who will work with us to support
17 our community.

18 We've had some great partners in
19 government working through challenges with us.
20 Most prominent for his seven years in office was
21 Governor Phil Murphy, Speaker of the New Jersey
22 Assembly Craig Coughlin, and New Jersey Senate
23 President Nick Scutari. And I'm hopeful that the
24 next governor of New Jersey will uphold that
25 standard of partnership and care for our Hudson

1 County community.

2 I cannot do the work that we just spoke
3 about without the dedication of our Commissioners.
4 I truly hope you look at this budget with an open
5 mind, ask your questions where needed, and deliver a
6 budget to Hudson County which is satisfying and
7 delivers the same quality service. Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Continue, Madam
9 Clerk.

10 THE CLERK: Please note that
11 Commissioner Cifelli signed on.

12 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you. Also,
13 you have Commissioner Rodriguez on.

14 THE CLERK: I do have her too. Thank
15 you.

16 Resolution 1. Resolution approving an
17 Application for and Accepting Grant Funds, if
18 awarded, from the State of New Jersey Department of
19 Law and Public Safety Division of Administration for
20 the State Fiscal Year 2024-2025 New Jersey Mental
21 Health Diversion Grant Program, July 1, 2025 to June
22 30, 2027 \$2,000,000.

23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Board as a whole.

24 THE CLERK: Okay.

25 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Mr. Chairman?

1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: I have a question
2 for Bill.

3 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So, I want to --
4 I want to --

5 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Bill, speak up.

6 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Can you hear me?
7

8 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes. Yes.

9 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I want to
10 commend the Administration. I want to commend the
11 Prosecutor's office for putting this application
12 together. I know we had some testy conversations at
13 one point, right, Mr. Administrator? Not with you,
14 but whether or not we could get the application
15 together in a timely manner, whether we could get a
16 resolution of the Board to support it, and I'm glad
17 to see that we're doing it, and I think we have a
18 very, very good chance of getting approval based on
19 the layout of how funding is there.

20 And while we're doing that, we should
21 continue to proceed to get a mental health court
22 started. I don't think we need to have all the
23 money in place based on other conversations we've
24 had to start a mental health court utilizing one of
25 the existing courts, and I had a chance to meet with

1 the Assignment Judge and had a good conversation
2 with him from that perspective too.

3 But again, I want to just commend everyone
4 involved for doing this. You know, this has been an
5 important priority for me, and I'm glad to see that
6 we're at the five-yard line on getting the court
7 started, and hopefully, we'll have the dollars to
8 really make it a big success from day one.

9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Thank you.
10 Continue.

11 THE CLERK: 2. Resolution
12 authorizing application and acceptance of Grant
13 Funds if awarded from the Fiscal Year 2025 National
14 Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration's
15 Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal
16 Resilience Grant for Lincoln Park Wetlands
17 Restoration, \$9,560,928.93.

18 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Sponsor.

19 COMMISSIONER WALKER: Second.

20 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Two things.

21 Let's just pray that this doesn't get victimized
22 down in Washington. They may not think wetlands
23 really exist anymore, so let's hope that doesn't
24 happen.

25 But also in committee today, Abe, we spoke

1 briefly about, you know, there's kind of a community
2 group of folks from the wildlife, vegetation, art,
3 tree world that we've met with before to talk about
4 the plantings that we do in the back of the park,
5 and I've asked that Director DeFilippo and Kevin
6 Wong reconvene that group to go over this, not to
7 stop you from submitting it, but if there's a chance
8 to at least share it with them, so I don't want to
9 get to dollars and then find out we put the wrong
10 vegetation on.

11 THE CLERK: 3. Resolution
12 authorizing application and acceptance of 2025 State
13 Health Insurance Assistance Program Grant Funds, if
14 awarded, from the New Jersey Department of Human
15 Services, Division of Aging Services, April 1, 2025
16 through March 31, 2026, \$42,000.

17 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: You've got Lipski
18 and Basalice.

19 THE CLERK: 4. Resolution
20 authorizing an application for Federal Grant Funds
21 through the New Jersey Department of Transportation
22 (NJ DOT) Transportation Alternatives set aside
23 program and accepting said funds, if awarded for
24 bicycle safety improvement on John F. Kennedy
25 Boulevard. \$1,500,000.

1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: O'Dea and Lipski.

2 THE CLERK: 5. Resolution amending
3 Resolution No. 756-12-2024 to reallocate Alcoholism
4 and Drug Abuse Services Grant Funding, January 1,
5 2025 through January 31, 2025, \$3,919.10.

6 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Rodriguez and
7 Lipski.

8 THE CLERK: 6. Resolution approving
9 Professional Services Contract Non-Fair and Open
10 with United Veterinary Care New Jersey, LLC d/b/a
11 Animal Infirmary of Hoboken to provide Medical Care,
12 Health Examinations and Emergency Services for the
13 Sheriff's Office K-9 Police Dogs, March 16, 2025 to
14 March 15, 2026. \$40,000. Resolution approving
15 professional services contract non-fair and open
16 with United Veterinarian Care, New Jersey, LLC,
17 Animal Infirmary of Hoboken to provide medical care,
18 health examinations, and emergency services for the
19 Sheriff's Officer Canine Police Dogs, March 16th,
20 2025 to March 15th, 2026, \$40,000.

21 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Romano and
22 Rodriguez. Who was that? Lipski.

23 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So I'm going to
24 forward to the chair and to the Clerk a request from
25 a local animal organization that does spay and

1 neutering of cats. They're looking for like \$1,000
2 from us. If we can get \$40,000 to just take care of
3 a few dogs that we have, maybe we can help our local
4 nonprofit for \$1,000. I'm going to send this for
5 you.

6 THE CLERK: You got that? That was
7 Romano and Rodriguez.

8 THE CLERK: 7. Approve Purchasing
9 Agent's award. Purchases made under the State
10 contracts.

11 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Rodriguez-Walker.

12 THE CLERK: 8. Purchases made under
13 Bergen County Cooperative Pricing System.

14 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Rodriguez-Walker.

15 THE CLERK: 9. Approve Purchasing
16 Agent Awards.

17 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Rodriguez-Walker.

18 THE CLERK: 9 -- no, 10. Resolution
19 awarding year four of the Fair and Open Competitive
20 Contracts for Housing and Mental Health Treatment
21 Intensive Outpatient Programs for the Hudson County
22 Department of Family Services and Reintegration
23 Reentry Program, June 1st, 2025 to May 31st, 2026,
24 \$195,000.

25 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Walker.

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And who was that? Fanny? Walker and Lipski.

COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Question.

CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Question, Billy.

COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Who does a --
and who does and what's provided to us as it relates
to the performance of the providers?

DIRECTOR MAZZA: Commissioner, you're
talking about a clinical provider and a housing
provider. So there's two different matrix, but the
Department of Family Services maintains the data on
those two programs.

COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Is the data in
the resolution?

DIRECTOR MAZZA: No.

COMMISSIONER O'DEA: But we can
provide that before?

DIRECTOR MAZZA: Yeah.

THE CLERK: 11. Resolution
authorizing Addition No. 8 to Purchasing Agent's
Award-Construction Contract "On Call Contract for
Traffic Signals, Foundations, Conduit and Associated
work in the County of Hudson" Orchard Holdings, LLC,
\$100,000.

CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Rodriguez and

1 Lipski.

2 THE CLERK: 12. Resolution approving
3 a Memorandum of Understanding between the County of
4 Hudson and the New Jersey State Police Office of
5 Emergency Management for the utilization of USS
6 Juneau Based Emergency Operations Center to
7 establish a State Area Command Center, from June 1,
8 2025 to October 10, 2026.

9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Romano-Walker.

10 THE CLERK: Chairman, it goes over to
11 the administrator.

12 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: For the benefit of
13 those with that last resolution. That's in regards
14 to that, there's going to be the fee for the World
15 Cup here. So it's a collaboration effort by the
16 agencies involved.

17 THE CLERK: It goes over to the
18 Administrator.

19 MR. ANTUN: Yes. Chairman, I have
20 several items for consideration.

21 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Go ahead.

22 MR. ANTUN: These relate to the
23 budget. The first item that I have is a resolution
24 authorizing the County Board of Taxation to exceed
25 the County entity budget cap request. The amount of

1 the increase is \$5,345.

2 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: \$5,000?

3 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Wait, what was it
4 again?

5 MR. ANTUN: \$5,345.

6 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: You're exceeding
7 the cap by \$5,000. What if we don't approve it?
8 Will you be able to make the budget work?

9 MR. ANTUN: These are all individual
10 line items, Commissioner.

11 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I've never heard
12 that amount before. That's why.

13 MR. ANTUN: Okay. I have others that
14 are coming. They'll be much larger.

15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: That is the one
16 that says to exceed, correct? The County entity
17 budget?

18 MR. ANTUN: Yes.

19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: So that's going to
20 be number what?

21 THE CLERK: This will be resolution
22 13. Sponsor?

23 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Kopacz and
24 Baselice.

25 THE CLERK: Got it.

1 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: What's the next
2 one?

3 MR. ANTUN: The next one is
4 resolution authorizing the County Clerk to exceed
5 the County budget entity cap. And that amount is
6 \$15,179.

7 THE CLERK: That would be Resolution
8 14.

9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Hold on here.
10 Which one is that? That's the County Clerk?

11 MR. ANTUN: Yes.

12 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: This is cap bank.
13 County Clerk to exceed the entity budget, right?

14 MR. ANTUN: Yes.

15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: That's No. 14?

16 MR. ANTUN: Yes.

17 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: And 13 then was
18 which one?

19 MR. ANTUN: 13 was the County Board
20 of Taxation.

21 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay, thank you.
22 Continue, Madam Clerk.

23 THE CLERK: Do I have a sponsor and a
24 second on 14?

25 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. Rodriguez

1 will sponsor. I'll second.

2 THE CLERK: Okay, thank you.

3 MR. ANTUN: The next one that I have
4 is a resolution authorizing the County
5 Superintendent of Elections to exceed the County
6 Entity Cap, and that amount is \$53,275.

7 THE CLERK: That would be resolution
8 15.

9 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Sponsor.

10 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: And I need --
11 Kopacz. Kopacz?

12 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yes.

13 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: So that would be
14 Kopacz on 15.

15 MR. ANTUN: The next item that I have
16 is authorization for the County Surrogate to exceed
17 the County Entity Cap in the amount of \$53,429.

18 THE CLERK: That would be resolution
19 16. I need a sponsor and a second.

20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Rodriguez and
21 Basalice. You said that was who?

22 MR. ANTUN: Surrogate.

23 THE CLERK: That would be resolution
24 16.

25 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Do you have that?

1 No, we don't have the Surrogate one.

2 THE CLERK: It's in there. It's in
3 there.

4 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes. Go ahead.

5 MR. ANTUN: The next item is for the
6 County Prosecutor's Office to exceed the County
7 Budget Entity Cap, and that amount is \$324,897.

8 THE CLERK: That would be resolution
9 17. I need a sponsor and a second.

10 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Lipski and Romano.
11 What?

12 THE CLERK: 17.

13 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Which one was that?

14 MR. ANTUN: Prosecutor.

15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Prosecutor. Go
16 ahead.

17 MR. ANTUN: The next one is for the
18 County Sheriff to exceed the County Budget Entity
19 Cap, and that amount is \$734,925.

20 THE CLERK: That would be resolution
21 18. I need a sponsor and a second. That's 18.

22 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Right. That's
23 Lipski-Baselice.

24
25 THE CLERK: Got it.

1 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Just a question.
2 I don't remember doing these individually.

3 MR. ANTUN: Yes, we do. Yeah, we
4 have. Yes. Yes.

5 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: When you say
6 they're exceeding, does that mean they're exceeding
7 their budget for the coming year?

8 MR. ANTUN: No. But what happened is
9 a few years ago, the State passed legislation that
10 also imposed the same cap that the general budget is
11 subject to. But there is a mechanism, which is
12 through this resolution, for you to approve those
13 constitutional offices to exceed.

14 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: But does it have to
15 specify what it's being exceeded for, or it's just
16 the general fund?

17 MR. ANTUN: It's just general to
18 their budget. It's not a specific item.

19 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. Go ahead.

20 MR. ANTUN: The next one that I have
21 is a resolution authorizing the establishment of the
22 cap bank for 2025, and that amount is \$2,820,328.

23 THE CLERK: That would be Resolution
24 19. I need a sponsor and a second. 19. Resolution
25 19.

1 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Sponsor.
2 Kopacz.

3 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Second. Romano.
4 Let me ask you this, Abe. When we do the budget
5 hearings, we can ask them what this is for?

6 MR. ANTUN: Oh, sure. It will be
7 part of their budget. You're not going to see
8 something specific for \$50,000. You'll see all the
9 line items, because it's a calculation.

10 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Right. But it's
11 going for next year's budget?

12 MR. ANTUN: No, this is this year's
13 budget.

14 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: That's what I'm
15 saying.

16 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: If you exceeded
17 last year by a certain amount this year, you have to
18 do it now for every office, I guess, right?

19 MR. ANTUN: Exactly.

20 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: How many of
21 these you have?

22 MR. ANTUN: That's the last one.
23 Commissioner, it only affects the constitutional
24 offices.

25 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Oh.

1 MR. ANTUN: Yeah, yeah. It's not --
2 yeah, it's only them.

3 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Did every one of
4 them exceed it?

5 MR. ANTUN: Except for the Register.

6 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: That's my guy.
7 I couldn't -- come on, I couldn't. I couldn't let
8 that one go. I couldn't let that one go. Couldn't
9 let that -- I couldn't let that go. Come on.

10 MR. ANTUN: The last one is the
11 resolution to introduce the budget. And I guess I
12 can read that to you. Be it resolved that the
13 following statements of revenues and appropriations
14 shall constitute the County Budget for 2025.

15 Be it further resolved that the said
16 budget be published in the Star Ledger in the issue
17 of May 24th, 2025, and that the public hearing is
18 scheduled for June 11th at 5:30 p.m.

19 THE CLERK: That would be Resolution
20 20. I need a sponsor in a second. Mr. Chairman.

21 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Sponsor.

22 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Second. Rodriguez.

23 MR. ANTUN: Mr. Chairman, the other
24 thing that -- I'm sorry. Let me finish. I have one
25 more resolution and then I -- I was thinking earlier

1 because I'm looking at your schedule for the. I was
2 going to address that after the next reso.

3 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: All right. Go
4 ahead.

5 MR. ANTUN: Yeah. Because that's
6 something that we need to discuss. The final
7 reso -- the final -- those are all the budget
8 resolutions. The final resolution, though, that I
9 have is a resolution authorizing the County to enter
10 into an agreement with the Mars Company, Improvement
11 Authority so that we can take the next step around
12 the development of Koppers. Improvement authority
13 negotiated a post-closing agreement, and this
14 post-closing agreement requires the County to sign
15 off on it.

16 The post-closing agreement has several
17 conditions. Mars -- I mean, I'm sorry. The
18 Improvement Authority will assist Mars in the
19 obtaining any further required permits. The
20 Improvement -- the County will support and provide a
21 County guarantee for the infrastructure in Spine
22 Road. The County and the Improvement Authority will
23 assist the town of Kearny in the finalization of a
24 Pilot agreement. And the Improvement Authority will
25 acquire whatever parcels are necessary on Route 7

1 for the Spine Road, and also assist with the
2 interaction with New Jersey Transit.

3 In addition to that. We are also putting
4 some additional conditions. One relates to that
5 Mars must enter into a Project Labor Agreement in a
6 form acceptable to the County and the Improvement
7 Party. Mars shall also enter into a First Source
8 Agreement acceptable to the County and the
9 Authority. And that First Source Agreement will
10 also be a condition for any tenants that occupy the
11 warehouse. That is all.

12 THE CLERK: That would be Resolution
13 21.

14 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Sponsor.

15 THE CLERK: And a second?

16 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Second.

17 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: We will discuss
18 this?

19 MR. ANTUN: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yes.

20 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Yes. We're going
21 to go -- you're going to go in closed session for
22 that, an update on the contract negotiations, and
23 then Director Scott.

24 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Can we just
25 generally talk about personnel? Because like I have

1 issues from people that were here at the last -- at
2 the last meeting. I have an issue concerning
3 personnel as it relates to the pay of the people at
4 the communication center -- for the night
5 differential, nighttime differential.

6 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: So bring Elinor
7 Gibney into the meeting.

8 MR. ANTUN: All right. All right.

9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: And Director Scott.

10 MR. ANTUN: Yeah. All right.

11 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: With respect to,
12 the problem is Don Battista. I'll give the
13 gentleman 30 days before I started to unload on you.

14 MR. DEPIERRO: I appreciate doing it.

15 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I'll do it in
16 closed session.

17 MR. DEPIERRO: I'll prepare myself.

18 MR. ANTUN: Just to get back to
19 commissioner O'Dea, what you mentioned. We have
20 proposed budget hearing dates. Obviously, that's
21 something for your approval. You'll get the
22 detailed books on Thursday. But what we are what
23 we're suggesting is that we conduct the meetings
24 with departments on May 28th and May 29th, starting
25 at 1:30. But if you may want to let us know later

1 on, if that's acceptable, if you want, or if you
2 want different dates.

3 THE CLERK: They have the copies of
4 the budget. They're on their desk.

5 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So what I was
6 going to say, I mean, we can figure out the times,
7 the dates of times. But what I was going to
8 suggest, especially now that we're going to allow
9 the Zoom to be seen by the public, is that we do
10 them remotely, and whatever resolution we need to do
11 them, these hearings remotely, we do them just
12 because we've been here for a lot of years. They
13 take a couple hours, sometimes longer, and we watch
14 a lot of directors and constitutional offices sit
15 and have to spend time here.

16 It would be so much easier if we
17 coordinated them by Zoom, and we will be able to let
18 people know. Hey, you're going to be up in 15
19 minutes, you're going to be up in whatever, 30,
20 whatever the timeline is. I think it would allow a
21 lot of these people we need the ability to do it.
22 It would allow us from department to department to
23 bring in additional people that day if we have
24 questions. Because someone from that department
25 isn't necessarily physically here. I just think

1 there's a lot of benefits in today's day and age.

2 Plus we don't have to come here
3 physically. We can be at a remote location on the
4 computer. And however long it takes, I think I
5 don't suggest that for meetings. But for things
6 like a budget hearing, whatever we have to do, we
7 advertise it. Let people watch it when I'm not
8 suggesting they're going to say anything or have any
9 questions. They have their regular time for a
10 budget hearing.

11 But I think it can be done so much better
12 and we can even maybe change times if we need to
13 change times. I've sat through 27 of these. We've
14 got so many people that are here. We start, it
15 takes time, they're here. Who goes first, who goes
16 second. Jeez, I had to stay here for an hour and a
17 half because I didn't go to the third or fourth.
18 Some people take five minutes, some people might
19 take an hour. I just think it's an easier, in
20 today's technology, I would strongly suggest that we
21 look at that as a way of doing it.

22 Because I also think more of us will
23 participate. I think that we don't get seven or
24 eight or nine members when we do it, when you've got
25 to physically come here. Especially if you've got

1 to come here physically in the middle of the day.

2 MR. ANTUN: We'll discuss it.

3 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Yeah, we can
4 discuss it between now and Thursday. I need to put
5 that on the record. And I guess before we go to
6 closed session, I just want to clarify. I spoke to
7 the Chairman and asked whether it's our -- who's not
8 here? Carmen's here, hi.

9 So we agreed that we're going to amend our
10 bylaws to allow individuals to sign up as speakers
11 on any item of public interest up until 12 o'clock,
12 the day of the meeting. So what technically do we
13 need to do that? I was sent a copy of the bylaws
14 with that page. And I spoke to the Chairman.

15 MS. MENDIOLA: Commissioner, yes,
16 we're working on it. I think Mr. Florio had
17 mentioned something about the bylaws.

18 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I mean, we said
19 we were going to do it. I don't want to wait three
20 meetings to get something. I could have written a
21 change, but I figured I would ask.

22 MS. MENDIOLA: I'll reach out to him.

23 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: We should have
24 that as a late starter for that. And then when will
25 we be able to allow the public to see the meetings

1 on Zoom?

2 THE CLERK: That's the second meeting
3 in May.

4 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Oh, okay.

5 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: And what there's
6 two answers with that. Walt, there is no
7 participation by anyone by Zoom. I emphasize that
8 again. There's nobody being able -- don't give them
9 the function to perform that they can chop in.

10 THE CLERK: We will be broadcasting
11 via YouTube live stream, similar to how Jersey City
12 City Council does it.

13 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Correct. So there
14 is no possibility for participation. And also
15 common, the second thing, there is no transference
16 of time anymore.

17 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Fine. That's
18 fine. But people should be able to speak on any
19 matter of public interest. People shouldn't have to
20 say, Oh, I want to speak on this. And then the
21 Chair, whoever the Chair may be, can say, No, we
22 don't want somebody to speak on that. Because the
23 way you read it now has kind of this caveat that you
24 say what you want to speak on. And there's a
25 potential to go, Oh, I'm sorry. There's 10 people

1 that want to speak about this. We don't need to
2 listen to 10 people speak about it.

3 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Nobody denied
4 anybody.

5 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: No, I'm not
6 saying you ever did. I just don't want it to even
7 be something that someone can point to and say that
8 that's what the issue is.

9 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: If we are going
10 down that road, Chair, and that is what we're going
11 to be voting on, I just think we're one of the only
12 bodies that I know of, if there's any other, that
13 has two different speaking portions. Everyone gets
14 a chance to speak before the agenda is voted on, and
15 then that's it. I don't know of any other body,
16 whether it be a Board of Education, City Council,
17 Commissioners, that has two separate speaking
18 sessions. Makes no sense to me. If they want to
19 speak, let them speak before the agenda. But why
20 are we allowing them to speak twice? Makes no
21 sense.

22 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: If you want to
23 let anyone who wants to speak on any matter, whether
24 it's on the agenda or not on the agenda, all at the
25 beginning of the meeting, for five minutes, I'll go

1 with that.

2 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: I mean, that
3 would be my job.

4 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Well, you can't
5 say you can speak five minutes if it's on and only
6 three minutes if it's not. That you can't do.

7 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: I'm fine with
8 that, too.

9 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: There you go.
10 So let's draft that.

11 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Discuss it in
12 closed session on that.

13 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I don't think we
14 could discuss that in closed session. That's not a
15 matter of closed session. I don't want to put the
16 lawyer on the spot.

17 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Well, does
18 everybody, any comments? Somebody? All right.

19 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: I just
20 agree with Commissioner Kopacz. It's very rare that
21 they allow the public to speak twice, and right now
22 in City Hall, they just speak once.

23 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: And what's the
24 time?

25 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: That I

1 didn't find out about.

2 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: I mean, they're
3 allowed five minutes now, correct?

4 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So make it five
5 minutes for anyone to speak on any matter of public
6 interest. Period. On the agenda or not on the
7 agenda.

8 MS. MENDIOLA: Commissioner, I think
9 it's three minutes in Jersey City. I can check on
10 it. I'll follow up by Thursday then.

11 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Okay. In my
12 mind, it's irrelevant what it is in Jersey City.
13 We'll change that next year back to five minutes if
14 we have to. No, but seriously. Like, we're at five
15 minutes. Let's keep it at five minutes, and I have
16 no problem with what Commissioner Kopacz has
17 suggested. Everyone that wants to speak, speaks at
18 the beginning. Five minutes, on the agenda or off
19 the agenda. If they want to speak for three minutes
20 on it and two minutes off it, they can do whatever
21 they want.

22 Hey, I want to speak on Item 2 and 4.
23 This is what I think. And then I want to speak
24 about whatever, the squirrels in the park. That's
25 fine. Does that make sense? I mean, can we make

1 it?

2 COMMISSIONER BASELICE: That's fine.

3 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: So it seems to
4 be everyone's okay with it.

5 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Yeah, I mean, I
6 just -- it just really makes no sense to me to have
7 two different speaking. My colleagues feel
8 differently. I feel free. I'll go wherever the
9 team wants to do. But, you know, I'm good.

10 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Everybody gets
11 five minutes.

12 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: When Billy goes
13 over to Jersey City, it becomes 20 minutes.

14 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: I critique. I
15 critique the city council because they never respond
16 to one speaker. No matter what issue they raise.
17 And that when I was a Councilman, we used to meet to
18 two or three in the morning, but we responded and
19 dealt with every member of the public that I came up
20 there and had a problem. I'll solve it. He's been
21 used to cover those.

22 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman, we've
23 concluded everything on the agenda.

24 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay.

25 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: All I would say

1 is I sent you that about the cat, the cats. I
2 e-mailed you reply to that group.

3 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. Put that on
4 the record. What is it?

5 THE CLERK: It's a program. It's
6 called TNR.

7 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Director Scott and
8 staff stand by and Director Gibney. Also, after we
9 do this contract discussion, we'll do first. No,
10 we're doing the labor --

11 THE CLERK: Labor first.

12 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: And then we'll do
13 the Koppers.

14 MR. ANTUN: Right. Yes. Yes.

15 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Okay. Okay. So
16 we're doing labor first. That's just us without
17 anybody else?

18 MR. ANTUN: Well, it will be the
19 Board and the staff that you need. You know, Miss
20 Gibney, Sean Diaz.

21 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: Oh, that's right.
22 Contract negotiation.

23 COMMISSIONER O'DEA: Oh, I'm going to
24 make a motion that we go into closed session in the
25 room to discuss contract negotiations. Personnel,

1 personnel and labor issued.

2 COMMISSIONER KOPACZ: Second.

3 THE CLERK: All in favor.

4 (Whereupon the Commissioner Board
5 moves to its Executive Session.)

6 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: All in favor?

7 Motion to close.

8 COMMISSIONER APONTE-LIPSKI: Motion.

9 CHAIRMAN ROMANO: All in favor.

10 (Whereupon the proceeding is then
11 concluded at 6:43 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 Caucus Meeting of the Hudson County Board of County Commissioners, held on Tuesday, May 06, 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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